



# Early Design Decisions: Priming Mass Timber Projects for Success

Presented by  
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June 9, 2023

Photo: Structurlam

# Course Description

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Mass timber is a unique, non-commodity building material and, to lay the groundwork for success, certain critical decisions must be made as early as possible. These decisions can have a big impact on cost and can either increase or limit opportunities later in design. There are many cases of project teams that want to realize the full benefits of mass timber, but, because they base their designs on traditional building practices instead of optimizing them for mass timber, end up with avoidable price premiums. This presentation will walk through early project decisions and design steps, focusing on how to optimize projects for mass timber and how one early decision can influence others. Topics will include construction types, fire ratings, column grids and beam/panel spans, acoustics and MEP integration. Completed mass timber projects will be used to illustrate the variety of viable options when navigating these key decisions.

# Learning Objectives

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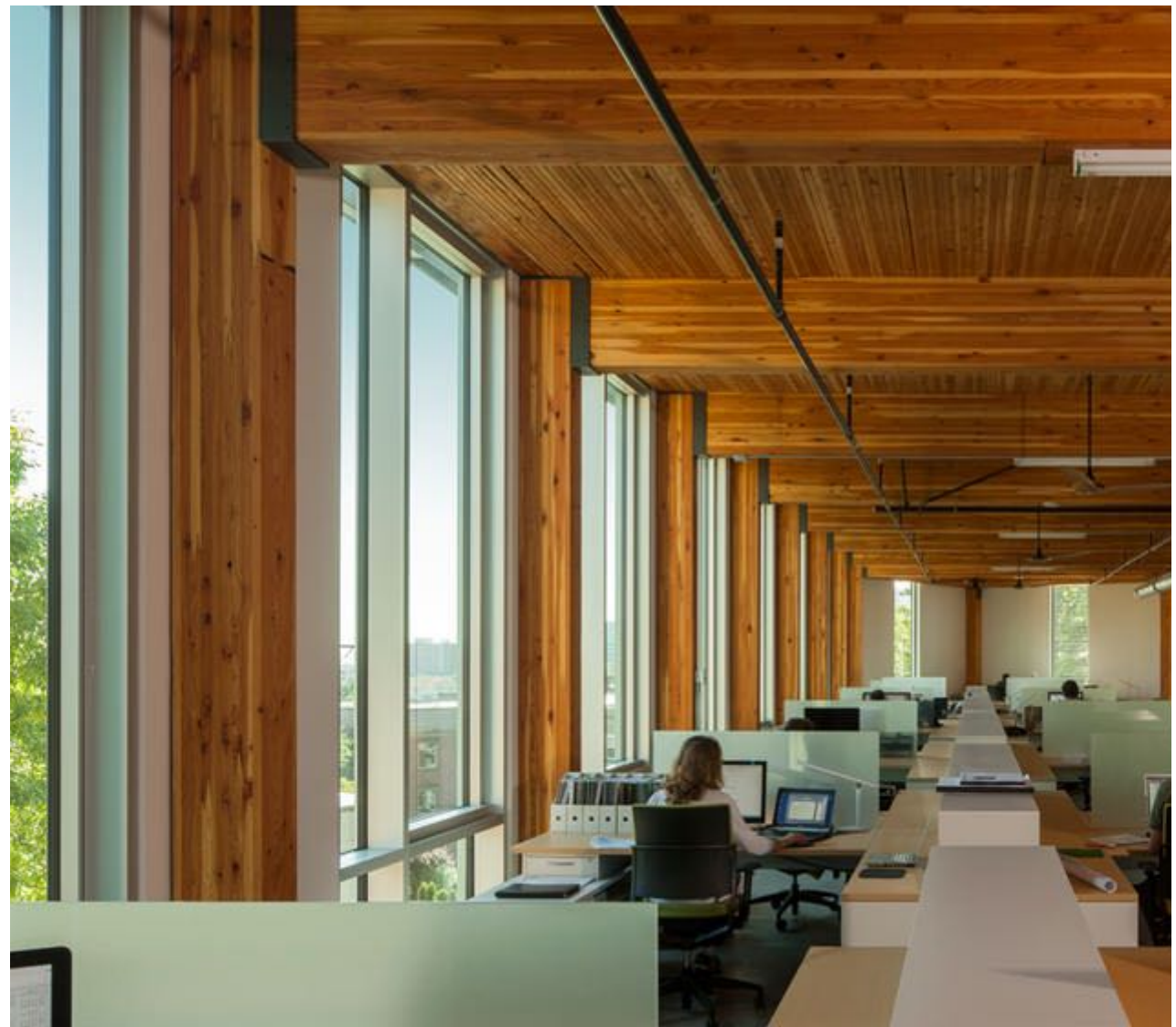
1. Identify construction types within the International Building Code (IBC) where a mass timber structure is permitted.
2. Discuss the impacts of construction type on required fire-resistance ratings of structural elements, noting the impacts that these ratings have on effective member spans and resulting grids.
3. Review code-compliance requirements for acoustics and primary frame connections, and provide solutions for meeting these requirements with tested mass timber assemblies.
4. Highlight effective methods of integrating MEP services in a mass timber building and discuss the relative impacts of each on cost, aesthetics, occupant comfort and future tenant renovations.





# HEAVY TIMBER

Federal Center South, Seattle, WA  
Photo: Benjamin Benschneider



# MASS TIMBER

Bullitt Center, Seattle, WA  
Photo: John Stamets



# Mass Timber Gravity Framing Systems



**Post & Beam**

**Flat Plate**

**Honeycomb**



# Mass Timber Gravity Framing Systems



**Hybrid: Light-Frame Wood**



**Hybrid: Steel**

Glue-Laminated Timber (Glulam)  
Beams & columns



Cross-Laminated Timber (CLT)  
Solid sawn laminations



Cross-Laminated Timber (CLT)  
SCL laminations (MPP)



Photo: Freres Lumber

Dowel-Laminated Timber (DLT)



Nail-Laminated Timber (NLT)



Glue-Laminated Timber (GLT)  
Plank orientation



Photo: StructureCraft

Photo: Think Wood



# Key Early Design Decisions

**What is the Single Most Important Early Design Decision on a Mass Timber Project? Is it:**

**Construction Type  
Fire-Resistance Ratings  
Member Sizes  
Beam & Column (Grid) Layout  
Exposed Timber (where & how much)**

**MEP Layout  
Acoustics  
Concealed Spaces  
Connections  
Penetrations**

**The Answer is...They All Need to Be Weighed (Plus Others)**



# Key Early Design Decisions

Significant emphasis is placed on the word **Early**

**Early** because:

Avoids placing limitations due to construction norms or traditions that may not be efficient with mass timber

Allows greater integration of all building elements in 3D models, ultimately used throughout design, manufacturing and installation



# Key Early Design Decisions

## Early = Efficient

Realize Efficiency in:

- Cost reduction
- Material use (optimize fiber use, minimize waste)
- Construction speed
- Trade coordination
- Minimize RFIs

Commit to a mass timber design from the start



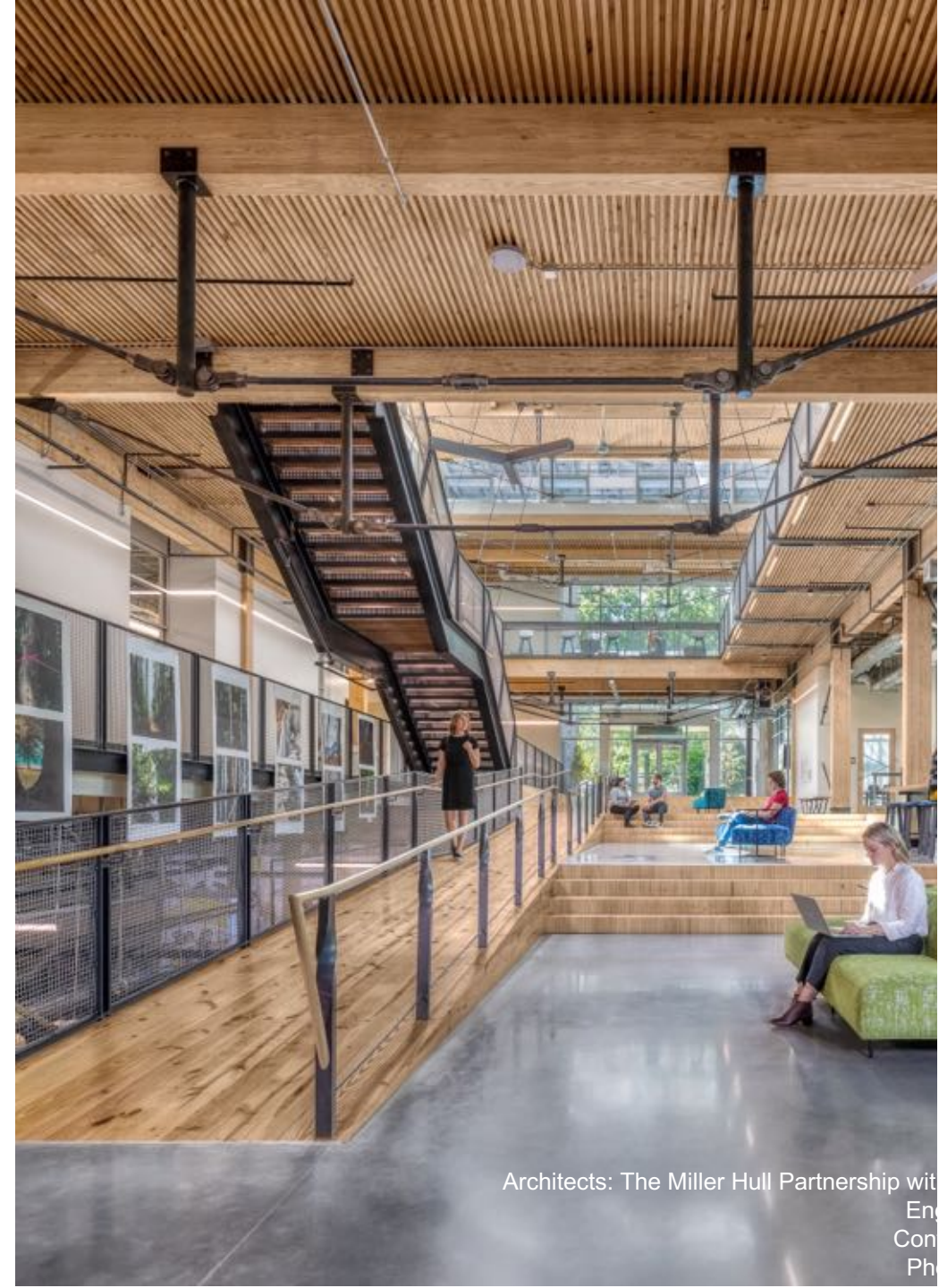


# Key Early Design Decisions

One *potential* design route:

1. Building size & occupancy influences construction type & grid layout
2. Construction type influences fire resistance ratings
3. Grid layout & fire resistance ratings influence timber member sizes & MEP layout

But these are not the only decisions that have to be made...



Architects: The Miller Hull Partnership with  
Eng  
Con  
Ph

# Key Early Design Decisions

Other impactful decisions:

- **Acoustics** can influence member sizes (and vice versa)
- Fire-resistance ratings influence **connections & penetrations**
- **MEP layout** influences the use of concealed spaces

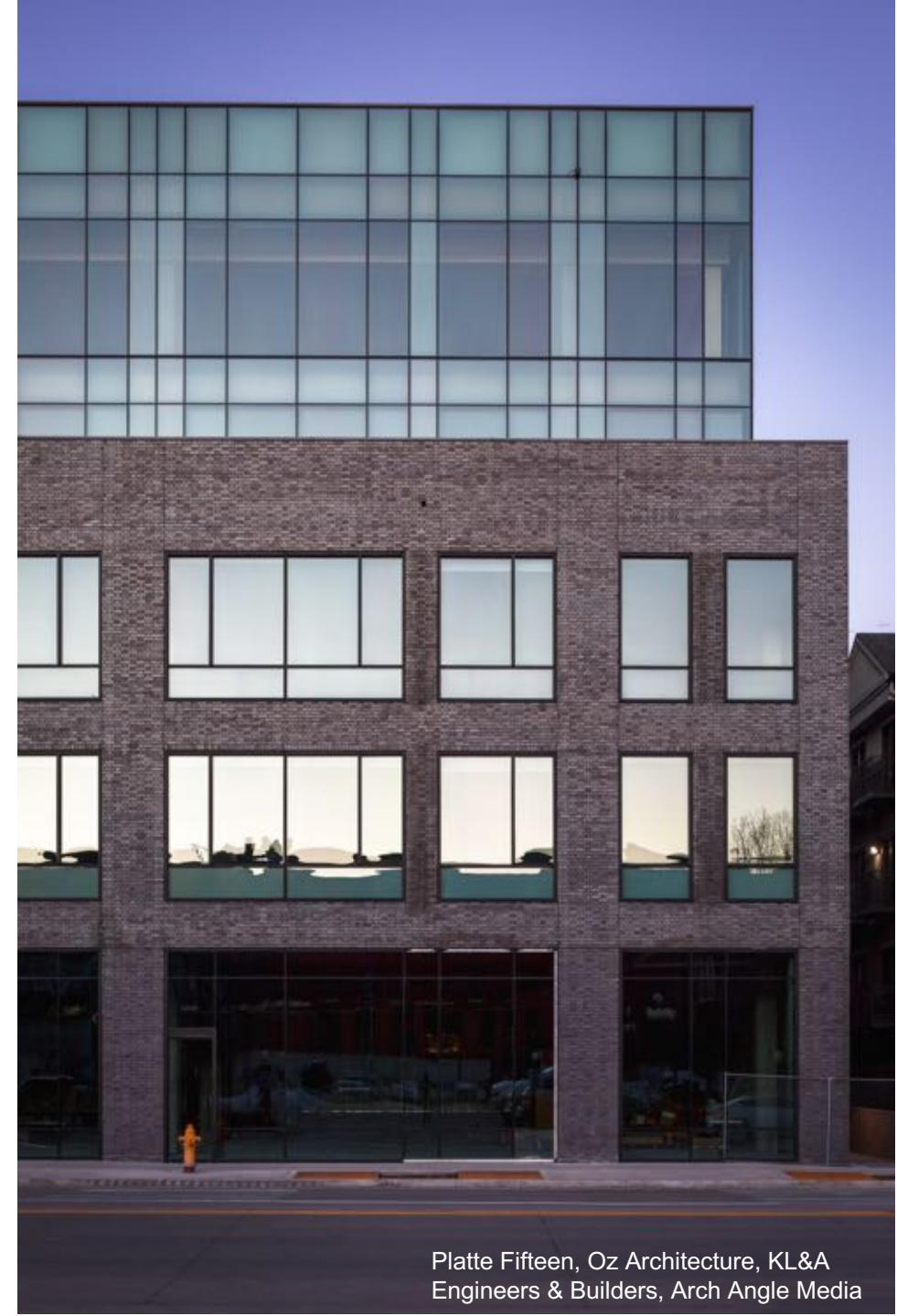




# Key Early Design Decisions

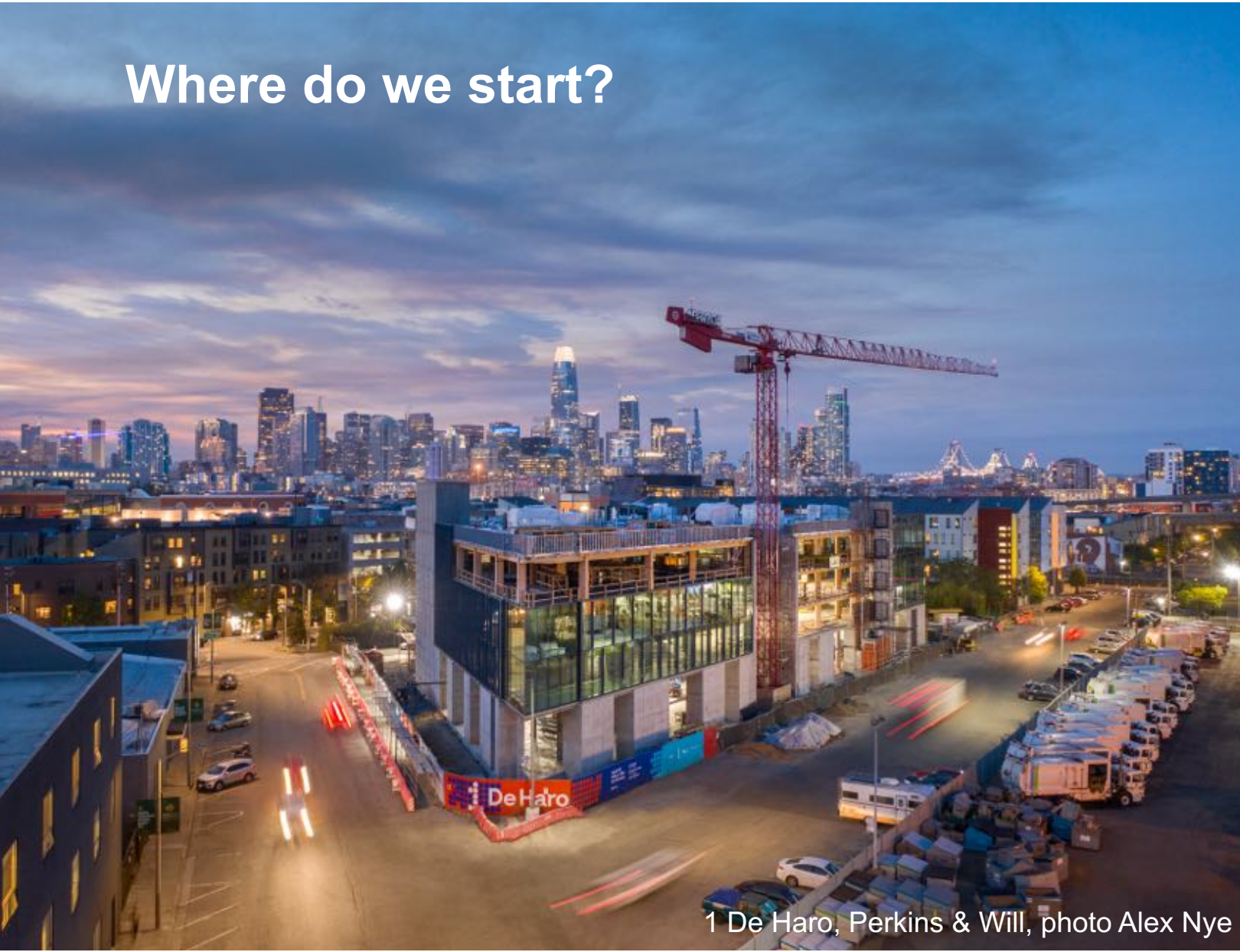
Other impactful decisions:

- **Grid** layout influences efficient spans, MEP layout
- **Manufacturer capabilities** influences member sizes, grid layout & connections
- **Lateral system choice** influences connections, construction sequencing



# Key Early Design Decisions

Where do we start?



1 De Haro, Perkins & Will, photo Alex Nye





# Key Early Design Decisions

## Construction Type – Primarily based on building size & occupancy

	Construction Type (All Sprinklered Values)							
	IV-A	IV-B	IV-C	IV-HT	III-A	III-B	V-A	V-B
Occupancies	Allowable Building Height above Grade Plane, Feet (IBC/CBC Table 504.3)							
A, B, R	270	180	85	85	85	85	70	60
	Allowable Number of Stories above Grade Plane (IBC/CBC Table 505.4)							
A-2, A-3, A-4	18	12	6	4	4	3	3	2
B	18	12	9	6	6	4	4	3
R-2	18	12	8	5	5	5	4	3
	Allowable Area Factor ( $A_t$ ) for SM, Feet <sup>2</sup> (IBC/CBC Table 506.2)							
A-2, A-3, A-4	135,000	90,000	56,250	45,000	42,000	28,500	34,500	18,000
B	324,000	216,000	135,000	108,000	85,500	57,000	54,000	27,000
R-2	184,500	123,000	76,875	61,500	72,000	48,000	36,000	21,000

# Key Early Design Decisions

## Fire-Resistance Ratings (FRR)

- Driven primarily by construction type
- Rating achieved through timber alone or non-combustible membrane protection (or both)?

TABLE 601  
FIRE-RESISTANCE RATING REQUIREMENTS FOR BUILDING ELEMENTS (HOURS)

BUILDING ELEMENT	TYPE I		TYPE II		TYPE III		TYPE IV				TYPE V	
	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	C	HT	A	B
Primary structural frame <sup>f</sup> (see Section 202)	3 <sup>a, b</sup>	2 <sup>a, b, c</sup>	1 <sup>b, c</sup>	0 <sup>c</sup>	1 <sup>b, c</sup>	0	3 <sup>a</sup>	2 <sup>a</sup>	2 <sup>a</sup>	HT	1 <sup>b, c</sup>	0
Bearing walls												
Exterior <sup>a, f</sup>	3	2	1	0	2	2	3	2	2	2	1	0
Interior	3 <sup>a</sup>	2 <sup>a</sup>	1	0	1	0	3	2	2	1/HT <sup>g</sup>	1	0
Nonbearing walls and partitions Exterior					See Table 705.5							
Nonbearing walls and partitions Interior <sup>d</sup>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	See Section 2304.11.2	0	0
Floor construction and associated secondary structural members (see Section 202)	2	2	1	0	1	0	2	2	2	HT	1	0
Roof construction and associated secondary structural members (see Section 202)	1½ <sup>b</sup>	1 <sup>b, c</sup>	1 <sup>b, c</sup>	0 <sup>c</sup>	1 <sup>b, c</sup>	0	1½	1	1	HT	1 <sup>b, c</sup>	0



# Key Early Design Decisions

## Fire-Resistance Ratings (FRR)

- Thinner panels (i.e. 3-ply CLT) generally have difficulty achieving a 1+ hour FRR
- 5-ply CLT or 2x6 NLT & DLT panels can usually achieve a 1- or 2-hour FRR
- Construction Type | FRR | Member Size | Grid Layout (each impacts the other)

Panel	Example Floor Span Ranges
3-ply CLT (4-1/8" thick)	Up to 12 ft
5-ply CLT (6-7/8" thick)	14 to 17 ft
7-ply CLT (9-5/8")	17 to 21 ft
2x4 NLT	Up to 12 ft
2x6 NLT	10 to 17 ft
2x8 NLT	14 to 21 ft
5" MPP	10 to 15 ft



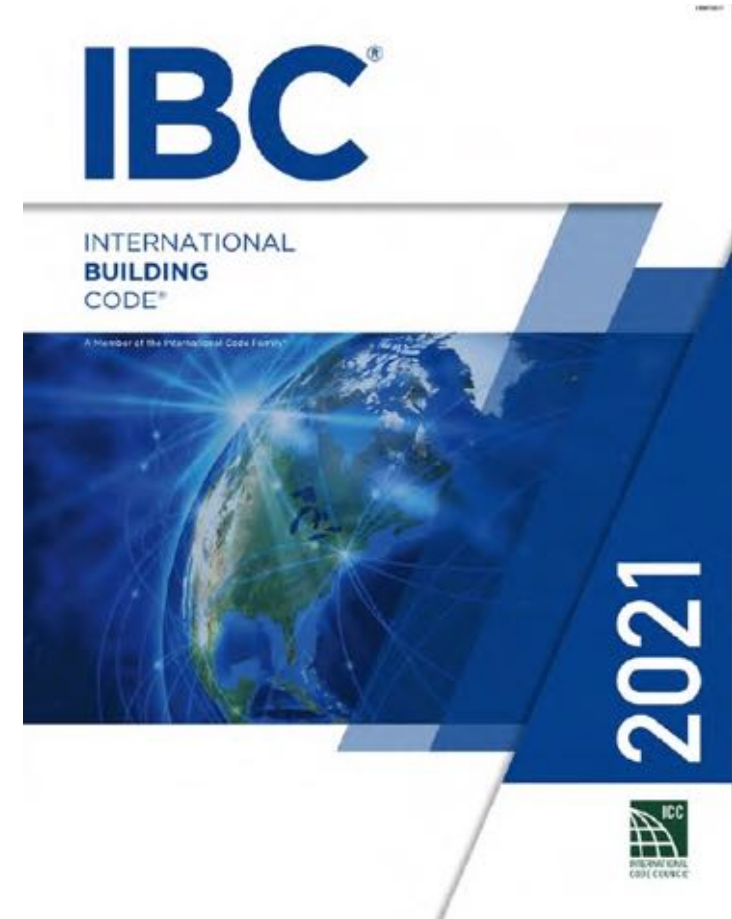
Credit: David Barber, ARUP

# Construction Types

**When does the code allow mass timber to be used?**

IBC defines mass timber systems in Chapter 2 and notes their acceptance and manufacturing standards in Chapter 23

Permitted anywhere that combustible materials and heavy timber are allowed, plus more





# Construction Types

IBC defines 5 construction types: I, II, III, IV, V  
A building must be classified as one of these types

Construction Types I & II:  
All elements required to be non-combustible materials (with a few exceptions)



# Construction Types

All wood-framed building options:

## Type III

Exterior walls must be non-combustible (may be FRTW)

Interior elements can be anything allowed by code, including mass timber

## Type V

All building elements can be anything allowed by code, including mass timber

Types III and V are further subdivided into A (protected) and B (unprotected)

## Type IV-HT (Heavy Timber)

Exterior walls must be non-combustible (may be FRTW or CLT)

Interior elements must qualify as Heavy Timber (min. prescriptive sizes, no concealed spaces for 2018 IBC or earlier)



# Construction Types

**Type IV-HT construction permits exposed heavy/mass timber elements of min. sizes.**

Framing		Solid Sawn (nominal)	Glulam (actual)	SCL (actual)
Floor	Columns	8 x 8	6 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub> x 8 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	7 x 7½
	Beams	6 x 10	5 x 10½	5¼ x 9½
Roof	Columns	6 x 8	5 x 8¼	5¼ x 7½
	Beams*	4 x 6	3 X 6 <sup>7</sup> / <sub>8</sub>	3½ X 5½

**Minimum width by depth in inches  
See IBC Sec. 602.4 & 2304.11 for details**

**\*3” nominal width allowed where sprinklered**

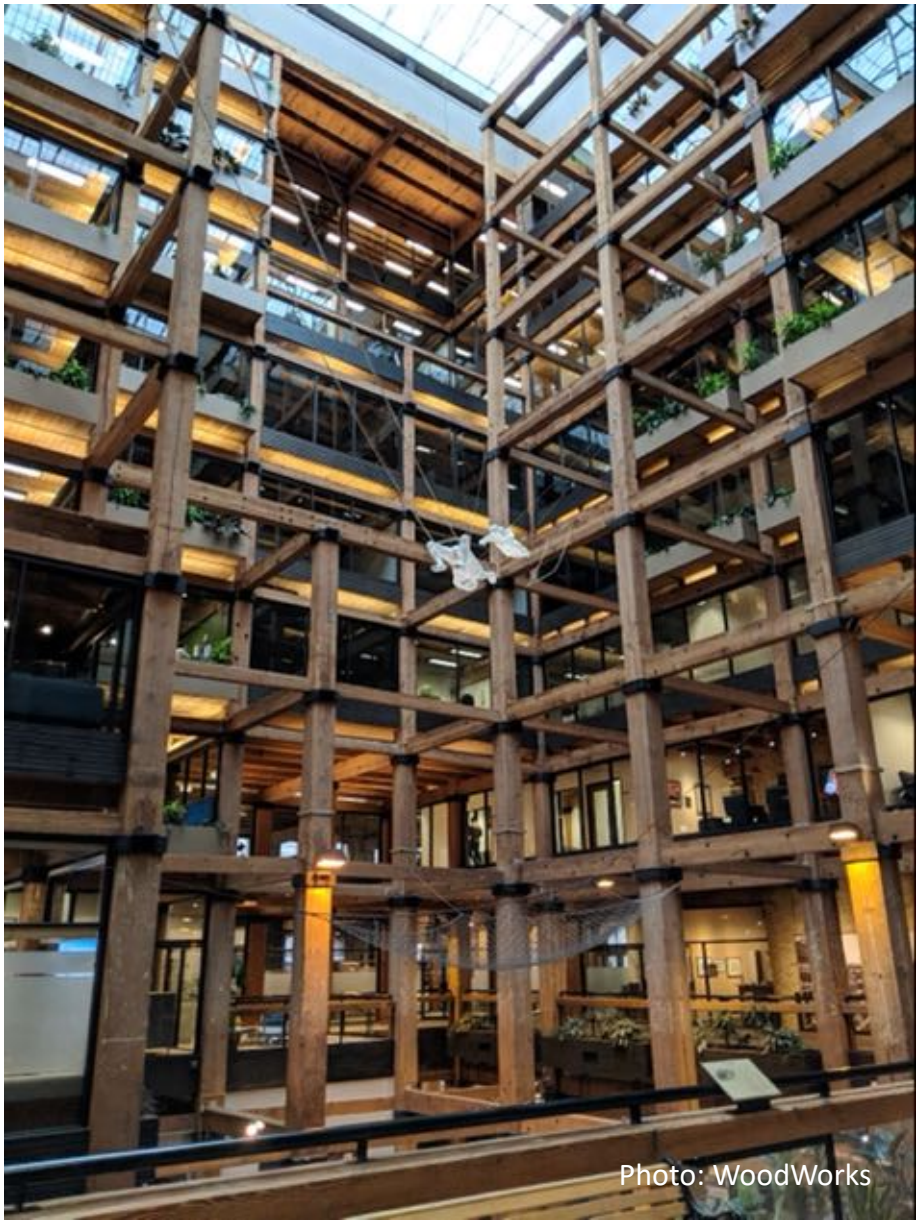
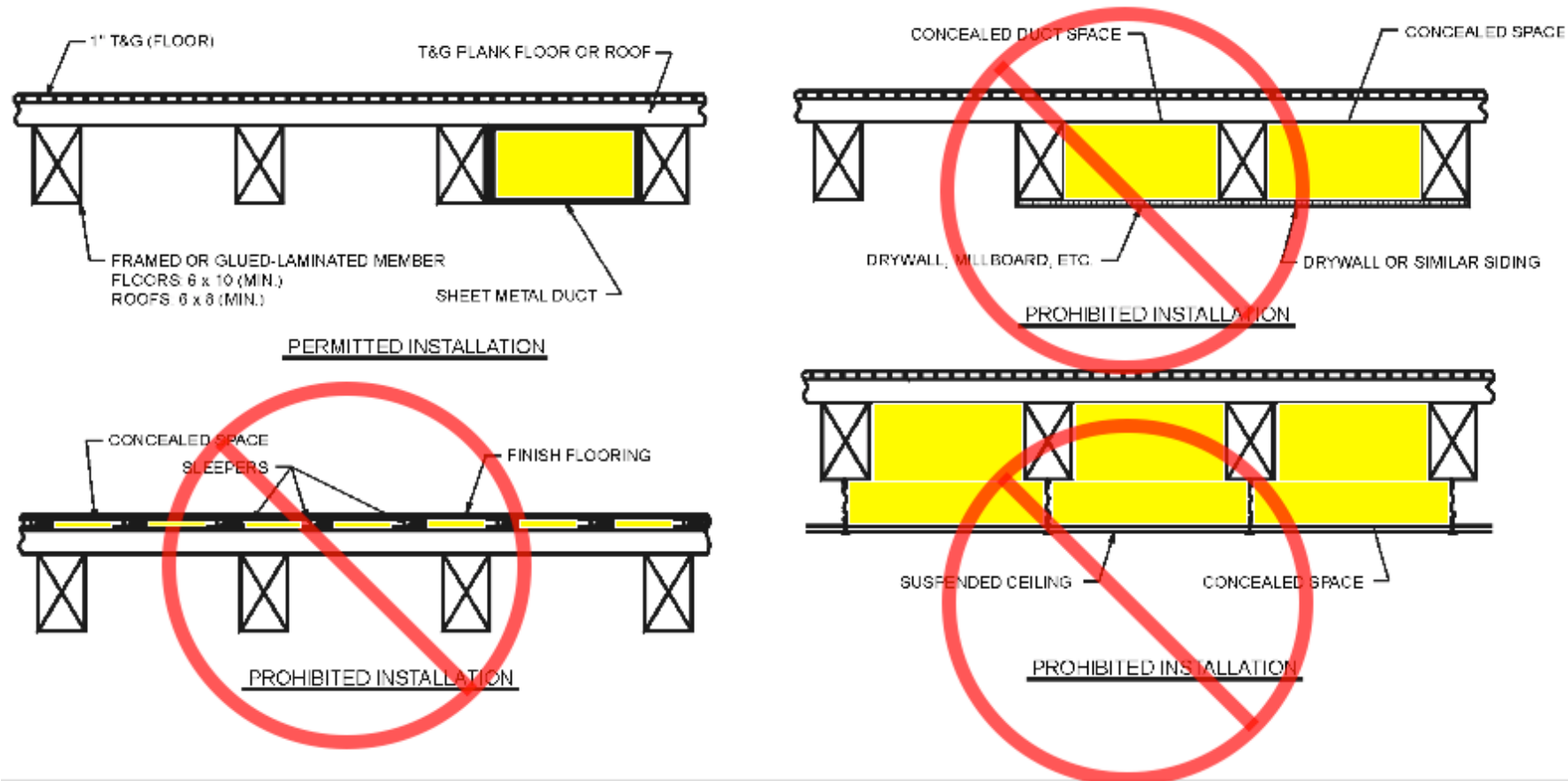


Photo: WoodWorks

# Construction Types

## Type IV-HT concealed spaces

Prior to the 2021 IBC, Type IV-HT provisions prohibited concealed spaces





# Construction Types

## Concealed Spaces Solutions Paper



### Concealed Spaces in Mass Timber and Heavy Timber Structures

Concealed spaces, such as those created by a dropped ceiling in a floor/ceiling assembly or by a stud wall assembly, have unique requirements in the International Building Code (IBC) to address the potential of fire spread in non-visible areas of a building. Section 718 of the 2018 IBC includes prescriptive requirements for protection and/or compartmentalization of concealed spaces through the use of draft stopping, fire blocking, sprinklers and other means. For information on these requirements, see the WoodWorks Q&A, *Are sprinklers required in concealed spaces such as floor and roof cavities in multi-family wood-frame buildings?*<sup>1</sup>

For mass timber building elements, the choice of construction type can have a significant impact on concealed space requirements. Because mass timber products such as cross-laminated timber (CLT) are prescriptively recognized for Type IV construction, there is a common misperception that exposed mass timber building elements cannot be used or exposed in other construction types. This is not the case.

In addition to Type IV buildings, structural mass timber elements—including CLT, glue-laminated timber (glulam), nail-laminated timber (NLT), structural composite lumber (SCL), and tongue-and-groove (T&G) decking—can be utilized and exposed in the following construction types, whether or not a fire-resistance rating is required:

- **Type III** – Floors, roofs and interior walls may be any material permitted by code, including mass timber; exterior walls are required to be noncombustible or fire retardant-treated wood.
- **Type V** – Floors, roofs, interior walls and exterior walls (i.e., the entire structure) may be constructed of mass timber.
- **Types I and II** – Mass timber may be used in select circumstances such as roof construction—including the primary frame in the 2021 IBC—in Types I-B, II-A or II-B; exterior columns and arches when 20 feet or more of horizontal separation is provided; and balconies, canopies and similar projections.

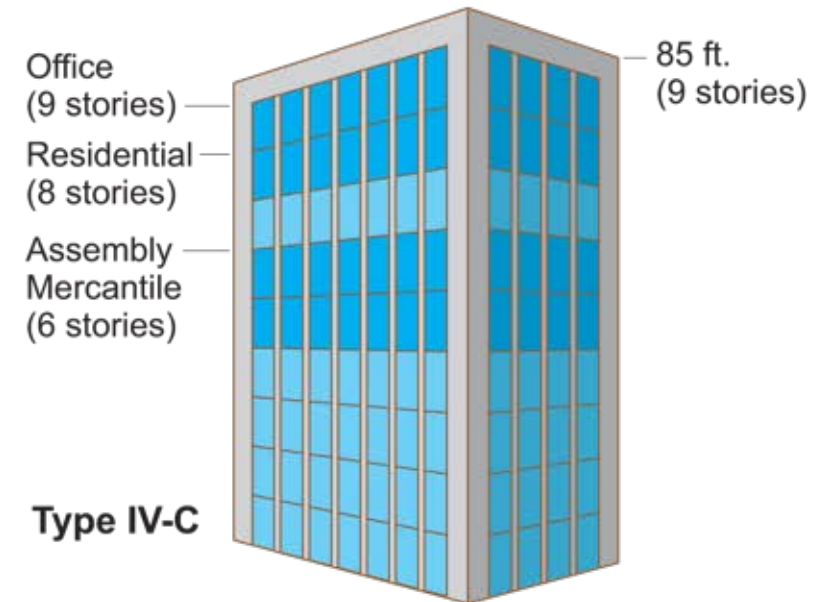
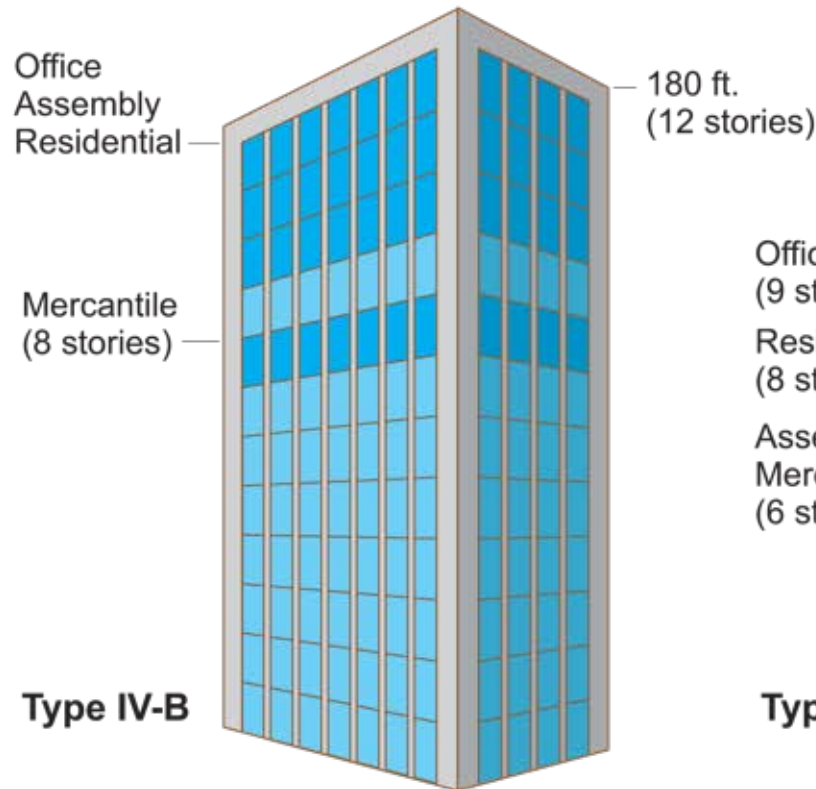
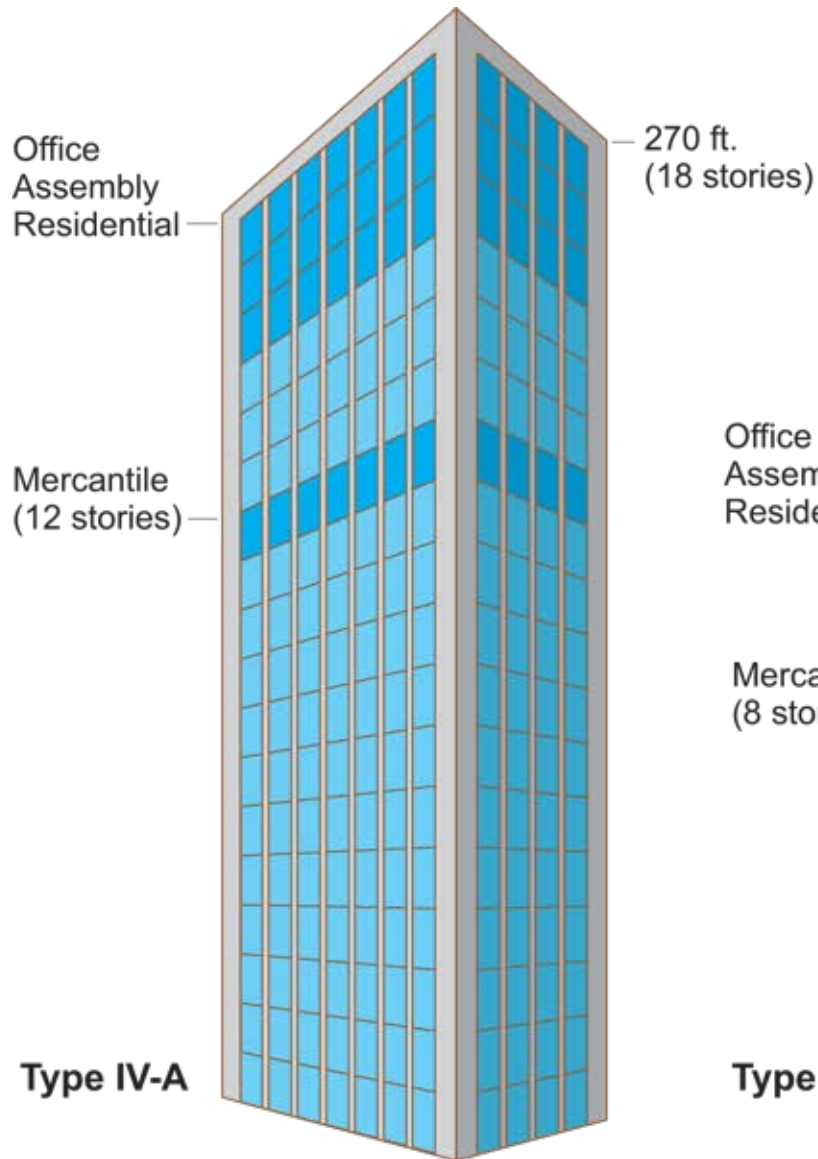


[https://www.woodworks.org/wp-content/uploads/wood\\_solution\\_paper-Concealed\\_Spaces\\_Timber\\_Structures.pdf](https://www.woodworks.org/wp-content/uploads/wood_solution_paper-Concealed_Spaces_Timber_Structures.pdf)



# Construction Types

New Options in the 2021 IBC  
Allowable mass timber building size for  
group B occupancy with NFPA 13  
sprinklers



# Fire Design

Construction Type influences FRR requirements

- Type IV-HT Construction (minimum prescriptive sizes)
- **Other than type IV-HT**: Demonstrated fire resistance

Method of demonstrating FRR can impact member sizing



Fire Testing Laboratory

NGC  
Testing Services

IAS  
ACCREDITED  
Testing Laboratory  
TL016

TEST REPORT  
for  
American Wood Council  
222 Catoclin Circle SE, Suite 201  
Leesburg, VA 20175

Standard Methods of  
Fire Tests of Building Construction and Materials  
ASTM E 119 – 11a

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Test Report No: WP-1850  
Assignment No: K-1089  
Subject Material: Cross Laminated Timber and Gypsum Board Wall Assembly (Load-Bearing)  
Test Date: October 4, 2012  
Report Date: October 15, 2012

Prepared by:   
Michael J. Riley  
Test Engineer

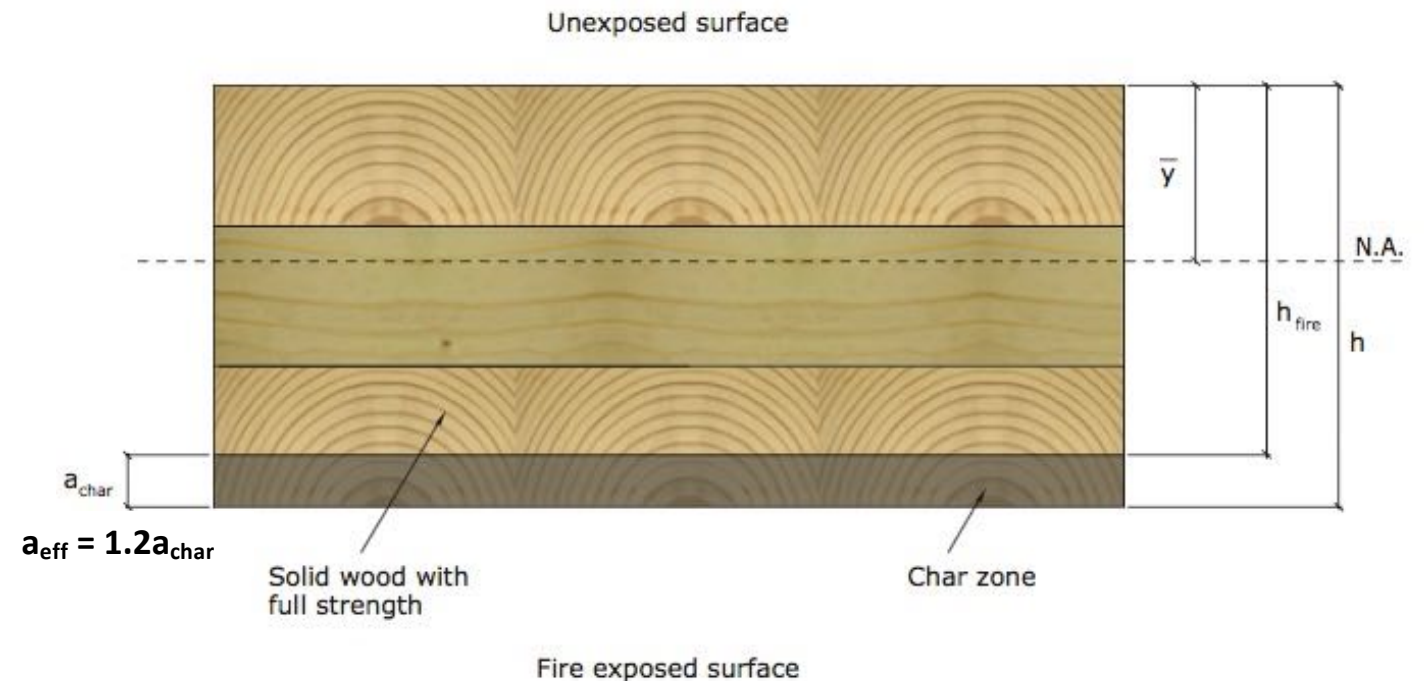
Reviewed by:   
Robert J. Marchetti  
Director, Laboratory Facilities and Testing Services

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# Fire Design

## What are the methods for demonstrating FRR of MT?

1. Calculations in accordance with IBC Sec. 703.2.2 & 722  
→ NDS Chapter 16
2. Tests in accordance with ASTM E119

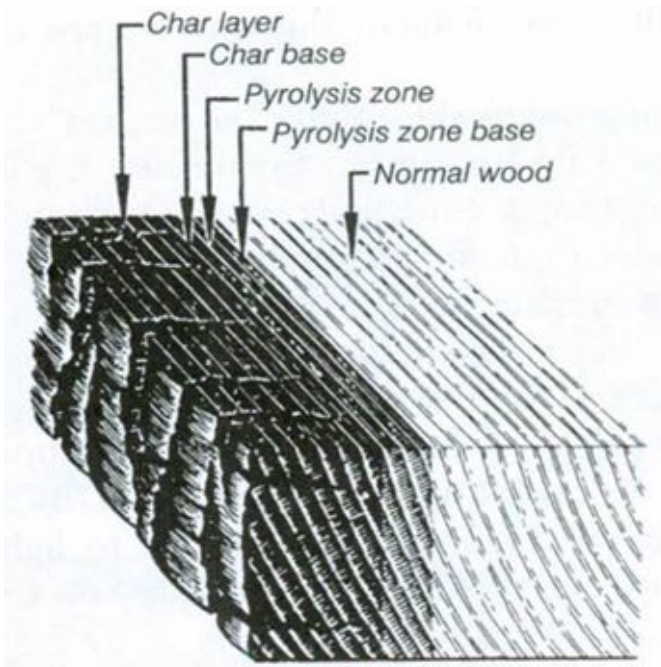




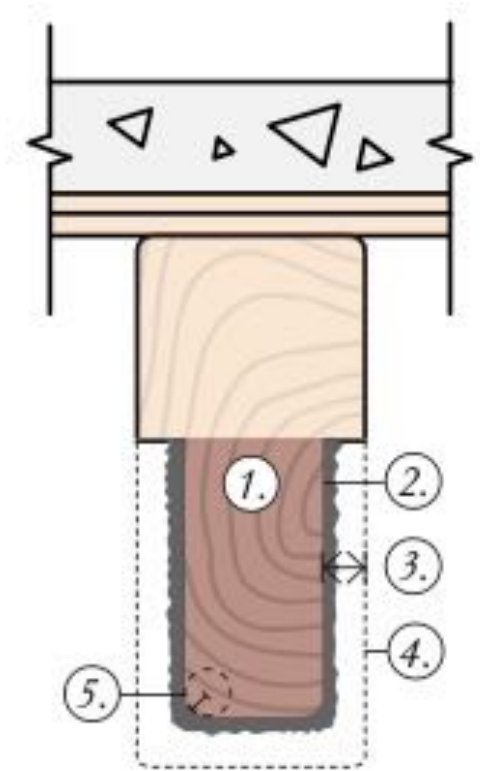
# Fire Design (NDS Chapter 16)

Two structural capacity checks performed:

1. On entire cross section neglecting fire effects
2. On post-fire remaining section, with stress increases



Credit: Forest Products Laboratory



$$a_{\text{char}} = \beta_t t^{0.813}$$

Solid Sawn, Glulam, SCL

$$a_{\text{char}} = n_{\text{lam}} h_{\text{lam}} + \beta_t \left( t - (n_{\text{lam}} t_{\text{gl}}) \right)^{0.813}$$

CLT

$$a_{\text{eff}} = 1.2 a_{\text{char}}$$

Effective Char Depth

# Fire Design (NDS Chapter 16)

AWC's TR 10 is a technical design guide, aids in the use of NDS Chapter 16 char calculations



Calculating the  
Fire Resistance of  
Wood Members  
and Assemblies

Technical Report No. 10



## Example 5: Exposed CLT Floor - Allowable Stress Design

Simply-supported cross-laminated timber (CLT) floor spanning  $L=18$  ft in the strong-axis direction. The design loads are  $q_{\text{live}}=80$  psf and  $q_{\text{dead}}=30$  psf including estimated self-weight of the CLT panel. Floor decking, nailed to the unexposed face of CLT panel, is spaced to restrict hot gases from venting through half-lap joints at edges of CLT panel sections. Calculate the required section dimensions for a 1-hour structural fire resistance time when subjected to an ASTM E119 fire exposure.

For the structural design of the CLT panel, calculate the maximum induced moment.

Calculate panel load (per foot of width):

$$W_{\text{load}} = (q_{\text{dead}} + q_{\text{live}}) = (30 \text{ psf} + 80 \text{ psf})(1 \text{ ft width}) = 110 \text{ plf/ft of width}$$

Calculate maximum induced moment (per foot of width):

$$M_{\text{max}} = W_{\text{load}} L^2 / 8 = (110)(18^2)/8 = 4,455 \text{ ft-lb/ft of width}$$

From PRG 320, select a 5-ply CLT floor panel made from 1-3/8 in x 3-1/2 in. lumber boards (CLT thickness of 6-7/8 inches). For CLT grade V2, tabulated properties are:

$$\text{Bending moment, } F_b S_{\text{eff},0} = 4,675 \text{ ft-lb/ft of width} \quad (\text{PRG 320 Annex A, Table A2})$$

Calculate the allowable design moment (assuming  $C_D=1.0$ ;  $C_M=1.0$ ;  $C_t=1.0$ ;  $C_L=1.0$ )

$$M_s' = F_b(S_{\text{eff}})(C_D)(C_M)(C_t)(C_L) = 4,675 (1.0)(1.0)(1.0) = 4,675 \text{ ft-lb/ft of width} \quad (\text{NDS 10.3.1})$$

**Structural Check:**

$$M_s' \geq M_{\text{max}}$$




$$4,675 \text{ ft-lb/ft} > 4,455 \text{ ft-lb/ft}$$

✓

(note: serviceability check is not performed to simplify the design example, but should be done in typical structural design).

# Fire Design (Tested Assemblies)

- Many successful Mass Timber ASTM E119 fire tests have been completed by industry & manufacturers





**TEST REPORT**  
for  
**American Wood Council**  
222 Catoctin Circle SE, Suite 201  
Leesburg, VA 20175

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Standard Methods of  
Fire Tests of Building Construction and Materials  
ASTM E 119 – 11a

Test Report No: WP-1950  
Assignment No: K-1089  
Subject Material: Cross-Laminated Timber and Gypsum Board Wall Assembly (Load-Bearing)  
Test Date: October 4, 2012  
Report Date: October 15, 2012

Prepared by:   
Michael J. Rizko  
Test Engineer

Reviewed by:   
Robert J. Marchetti  
Director, Laboratory Facilities and Testing Services

The results reported in this document apply to specific samples submitted for measurement. No responsibility is assumed for performance of any other specimens. This report may not be reproduced, except in full, without the written approval of the laboratory. The laboratory's test report in no way constitutes or implies product certification, approval or endorsement by this laboratory.



**TEST REPORT**


REPORT NUMBER: 102891256SAT-001  
ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE: February 27, 2017  
REVISED DATE: N/A

EVALUATION CENTER  
16015 Shady Falls Road  
Elmendorf, TX 78112  
Phone: (210) 635-8100  
Fax: (210) 635-8101  
www.intertek.com

RENDERED TO  
**Structurlam Products LP**  
2176 Government Street  
Penticton, BC V2A 8B5  
Canada

PRODUCT EVALUATED: CrossLam® CLT Un-restrained Load-Bearing  
Floor/Ceiling Assembly  
EVALUATION PROPERTY: Fire Resistance

Report of Testing a CrossLam® CLT Un-restrained Load-Bearing  
Floor/Ceiling Assembly for compliance with the applicable  
requirements of the following criteria: *ASTM E119-16a, Standard  
Test Methods for Fire Tests of Building Construction and  
Materials*, and *CANULC S404, Standard Methods of Fire*



Project No. 301006155  
Final Report 2012/13

Preliminary CLT Fire Resistance Testing Report

by  
Lindsay Osborne, M.A.Sc.  
Christian Dagenais, Eng., M.Sc.  
Scientists  
Advanced Building Systems – Serviceability and Fire Group

and  
Noureddine Bénichou, Ph.D.  
Senior Research Officer  
National Research Council of Canada – Fire Research Resource Centre

July 2012



# Fire Design (Tested Assemblies)

## Inventory of Fire Tested MT Assemblies



**Table 1: North American Fire Resistance Tests of Mass Timber Floor / Roof Assemblies**

Mass Timber Panel	Manufacturer	CLT Grade or Timber Grade	Ceiling Protection	Panel Connection	Floor Topping	Load Rating	Fire Resistance Achieved (Hours)	Source	Testing Lab
3-ply CLT (114mm 4.488 in)	Nordic	SPF 1650 Fb 1.5E MSR x SPF #3	2 layers 1/2" Type X gypsum	Half-Lap	None	Reduced 36% Moment Capacity	1	1 (Test 1)	NRC Fire Laboratory
3-ply CLT (105mm 4.133 in)	Structurlam	SPF #1/02 x SPF #1/02	1 layer 5/8" Type X gypsum	Half-Lap	None	Reduced 75% Moment Capacity	1	1 (Test 5)	NRC Fire Laboratory
5-ply CLT (175mm 6.875")	Nordic	E1	None	Topside Spline	2 staggered layers of 1/2" cement boards	Loaded, See Manufacturer	2	2	NRC Fire Laboratory March 2016
5-ply CLT (175mm 6.875")	Nordic	E1	1 layer of 5/8" Type X gypsum under Z-channels and furring strips with 3 5/8" fiberglass bats	Topside Spline	2 staggered layers of 1/2" cement boards	Loaded, See Manufacturer	2	5	NRC Fire Laboratory Nov 2014
5-ply CLT (175mm 6.875")	Nordic	E1	None	Topside Spline	3/4 in. proprietary gypcrete over Maxxon acoustical mat	Reduced 50% Moment Capacity	1.5	3	UL
5-ply CLT (175mm 6.875")	Nordic	E1	1 layer 5/8" normal gypsum	Topside Spline	3/4 in. proprietary gypcrete over Maxxon acoustical mat or proprietary sound board	Reduced 50% Moment Capacity	2	4	UL
5-ply CLT (175mm 6.875")	Nordic	E1	1 layer 5/8" Type X gyp under Resilient Channel under 7 7/8" I-joists with 3 1/2" Mineral Wool between Joists	Half-Lap	None	Loaded, See Manufacturer	2	21	Intertek 8/24/2012
5-ply CLT (175mm 6.875")	Structurlam	E1M5 MSR 2100 x SPF #2	None	Topside Spline	1-1/2" Maxxon Cyp-Grete 2000 over Maxxon Reinforcing Mesh	Loaded, See Manufacturer	2.5	6	Intertek, 2/22/2016
5-ply CLT (175mm 6.875")	DR Johnson	V1	None	Half-Lap & Topside Spline	2" gypsum topping	Loaded, See Manufacturer	2	7	SwRI (May 2016)
5-ply CLT (175mm 6.875")	Nordic	SPF 1950 Fb MSR x SPF #3	None	Half-Lap	None	Reduced 59% Moment Capacity	1.5	1 (Test 3)	NRC Fire Laboratory
5-ply CLT (175mm 6.875")	Structurlam	SPF #1/02 x SPF #1/02	1 layer 5/8" Type X gypsum	Half-Lap	None	Unreduced 101% Moment Capacity	2	1 (Test 6)	NRC Fire Laboratory
7-ply CLT (245mm 9.65")	Structurlam	SPF #1/02 x SPF #1/02	None	Half-Lap	None	Unreduced 101% Moment Capacity	2.5	1 (Test 7)	NRC Fire Laboratory

# Fire Design

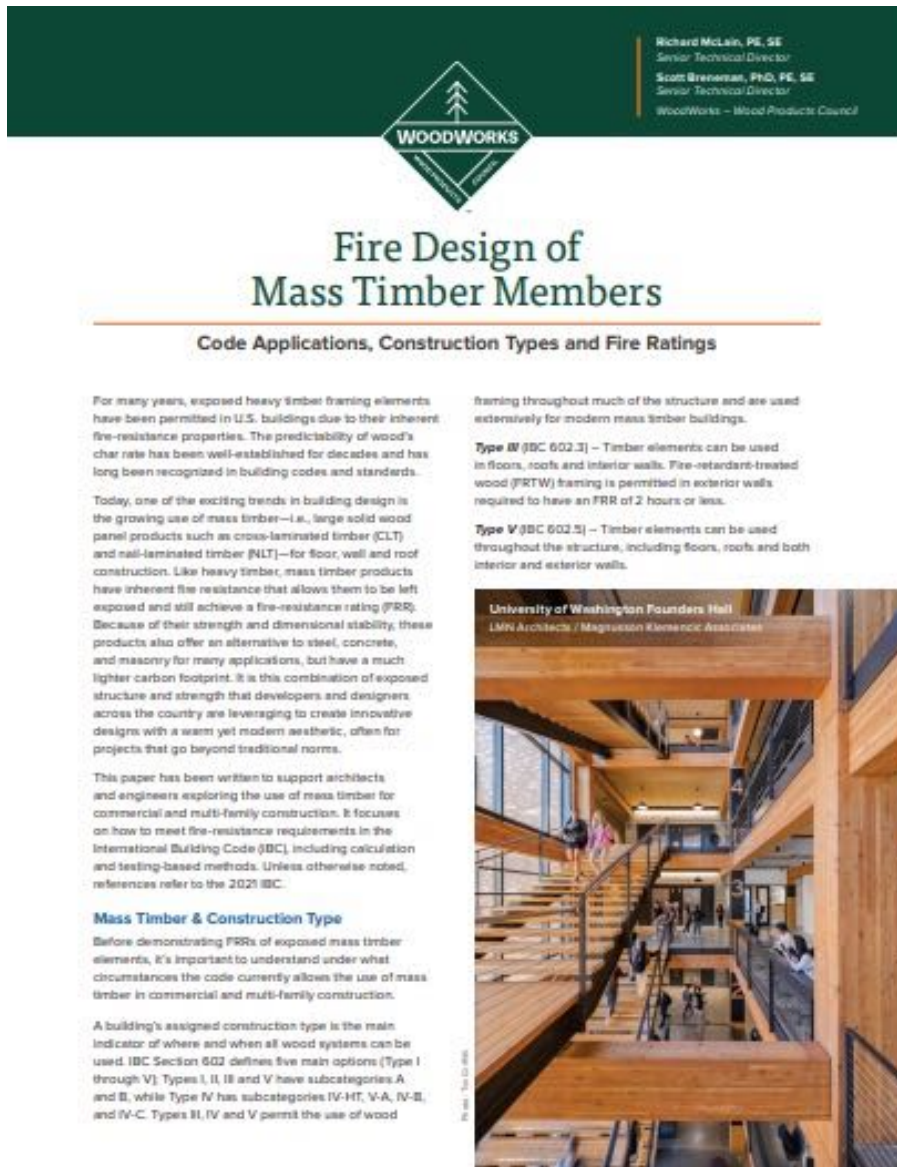
Method of demonstrating FRR (calculations or testing) can impact member sizing

Each has unique benefits:

- **Testing:**
  - Can result in higher FRR for some assemblies when compared to calculations (i.e. 2-hr FRR with 5-ply CLT panel).
  - Seen as more acceptable by some building officials
- **NDS Chapter 16 Calculations:**
  - Can provide more design flexibility
  - Allows for project span and loading specific analysis



# Fire Design



## Mass Timber Fire Design Resource

- Code compliance options for demonstrating FRR
- Free download at [woodworks.org](https://www.woodworks.org)

# MEP Layout & Integration

Set Realistic Owner Expectations About Aesthetics

- MEP fully exposed with MT structure, or limited exposure?





# MEP Layout & Integration

## Key considerations:

- Level of exposure desired
- Floor to floor, structure depth & desired head height
- Building occupancy and configuration (i.e. central core vs. double loaded corridor)
- Grid layout and beam orientation
- Need for future tenant reconfiguration
- Impact on fire & structural design: concealed spaces, penetrations



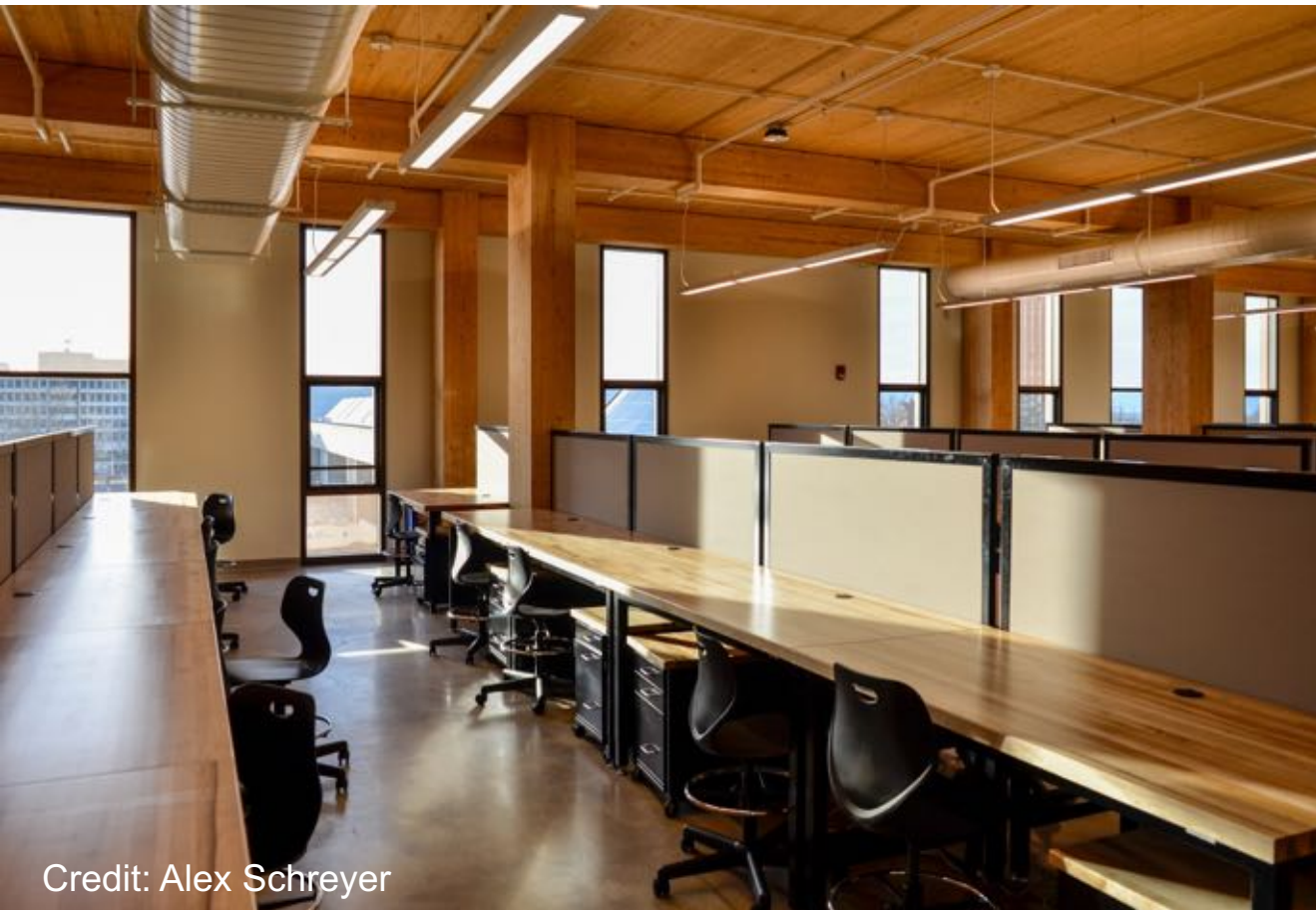
Credit: WoodWorks



# MEP Layout & Integration

Dropped below MT framing

- Can simplify coordination (fewer penetrations)
- Bigger impact on head height





# MEP Layout & Integration

## Penetrations through beams

- Requires more coordination (penetrations)
- Bigger impact on structural capacity of penetrated members
- Minimal impact on head height



Credit: WoodWorks



Credit: WoodWorks

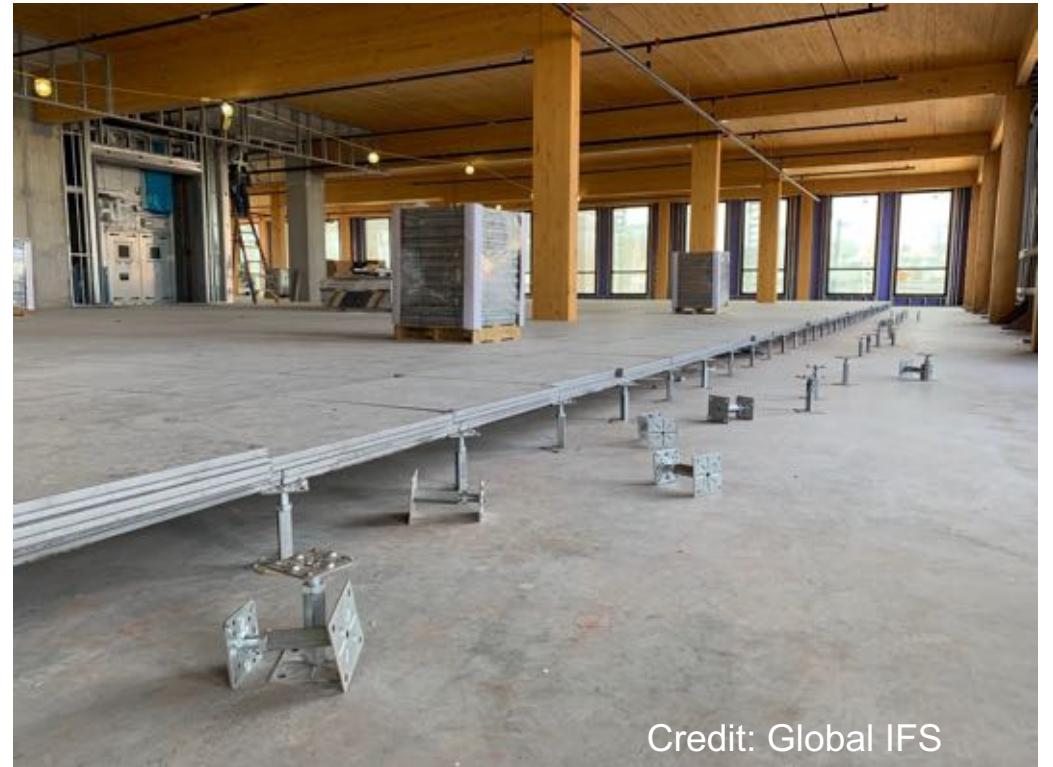
# MEP Layout & Integration

Raised access floor (RAF) above MT

- Aesthetics (minimal exposed MEP)
- More efficient MEP system
- Impact on head height
- Concealed space code provisions apply



Credit: BOKA Powell



Credit: Global IFS



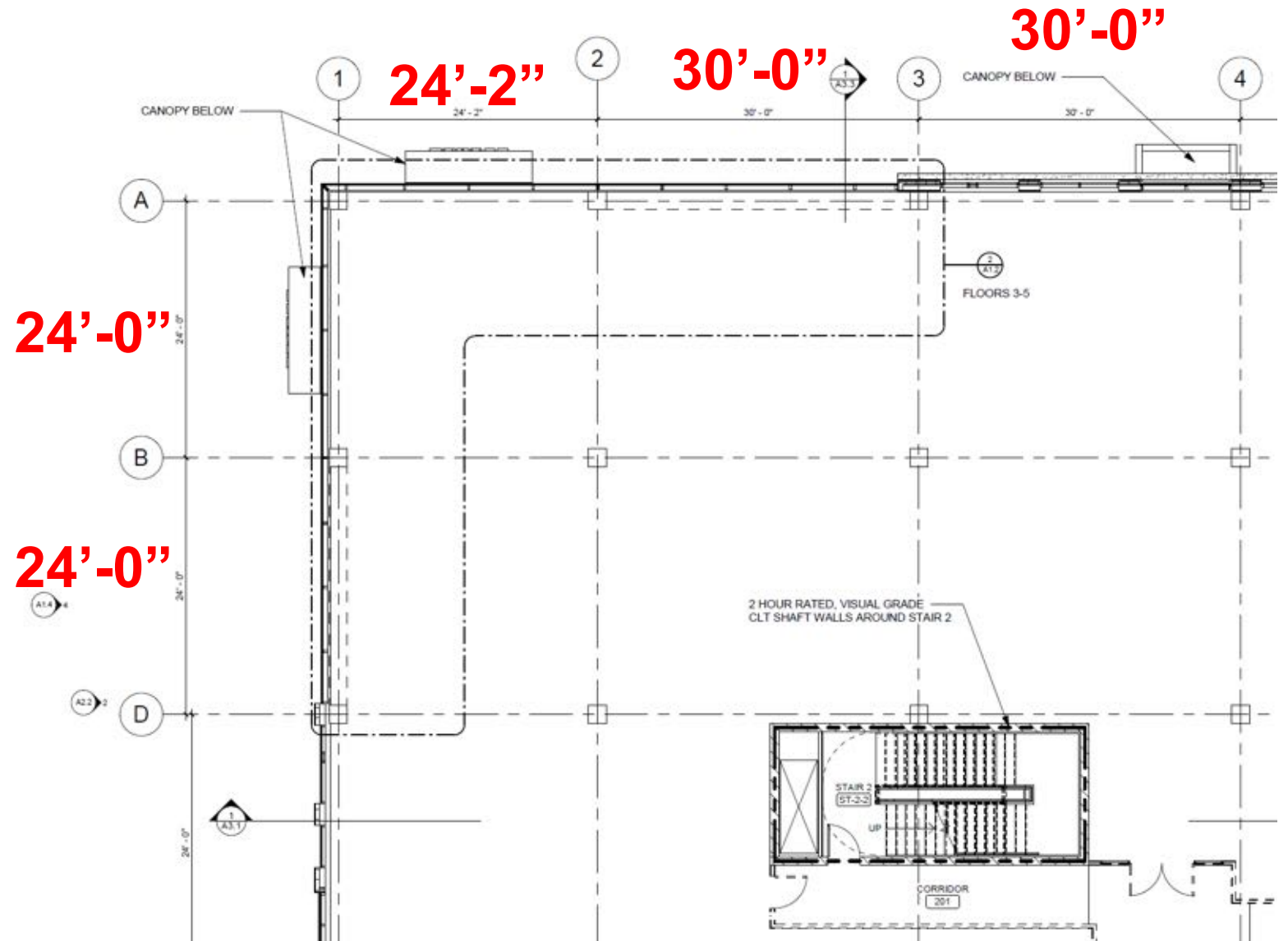
# Structural Grid



# Structural Grid

## Column & Beam Layout

- Consider Efficient Layouts
- Repetition & Scale
- Manufacturer Panel Width, Length & Thickness

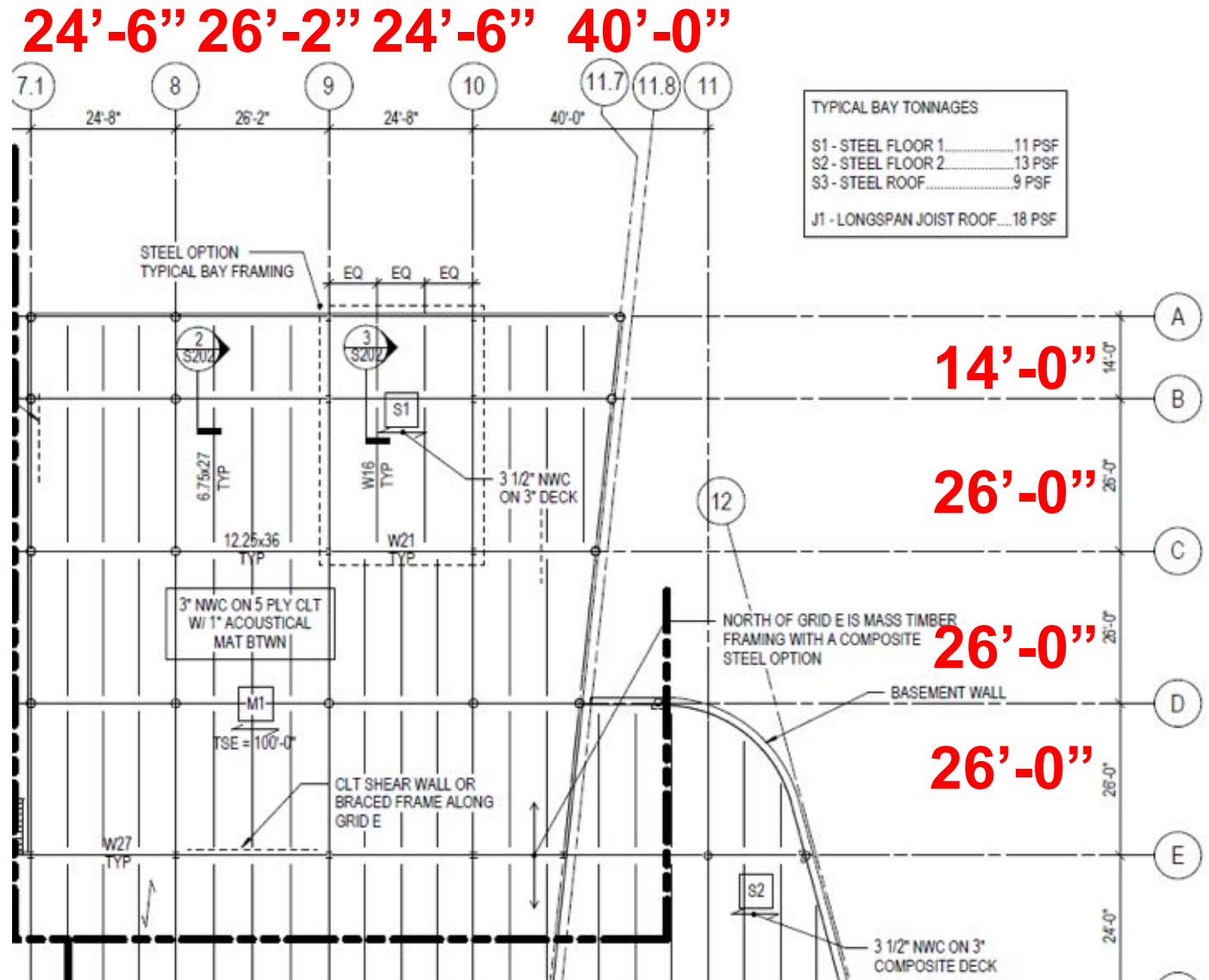




# Structural Grid

## Column & Beam Layout

- Consider Efficient Layouts
- Repetition & Scale
- Manufacturer Panel Width, Length & Thickness





# Structural Grid

## 0 HR FRR: Consider 3-ply Panel

- Efficient Spans of 10-12 ft
- Grids of 20x20 (1 purlin) to 30x30 (2 purlins) may be efficient

Albina Yard, Portland, OR  
20x20 Grid, 1 purlin per bay  
3-ply CLT  
Image: Lever Architecture



# Structural Grid

## 0 HR FRR: Consider 3-ply Panel

- Efficient Spans of 10-12 ft
- Grids of 20x20 (1 purlin) to 30x30 (2 purlins) may be efficient

Platte Fifteen, Denver, CO  
30x30 Grid, 2 purlins per bay  
3-ply CLT  
Image: JC Buck



# Structural Grid

## 1 or 2 HR FRR: Likely 5-ply Panel

- Efficient spans of 14-17 ft
- Grids of 15x30 (no purlins) to 30x30 (1 purlin) may be efficient

First Tech Credit Union, Hillsboro, OR  
12x32 Grid, One-Way Beams  
5-ply (5.5") CLT  
Image: Swinerton





# Structural Grid

## 1 or 2 HR FRR: Likely 5-ply Panel

- Efficient spans of 14-17 ft
- Grids of 15x30 (no purlins) to 30x30 (1 purlin) may be efficient

Clay Creative, Portland, OR  
30x30 Grid, 1 purlin per bay  
2x6 NLT  
Image: Mackenzie

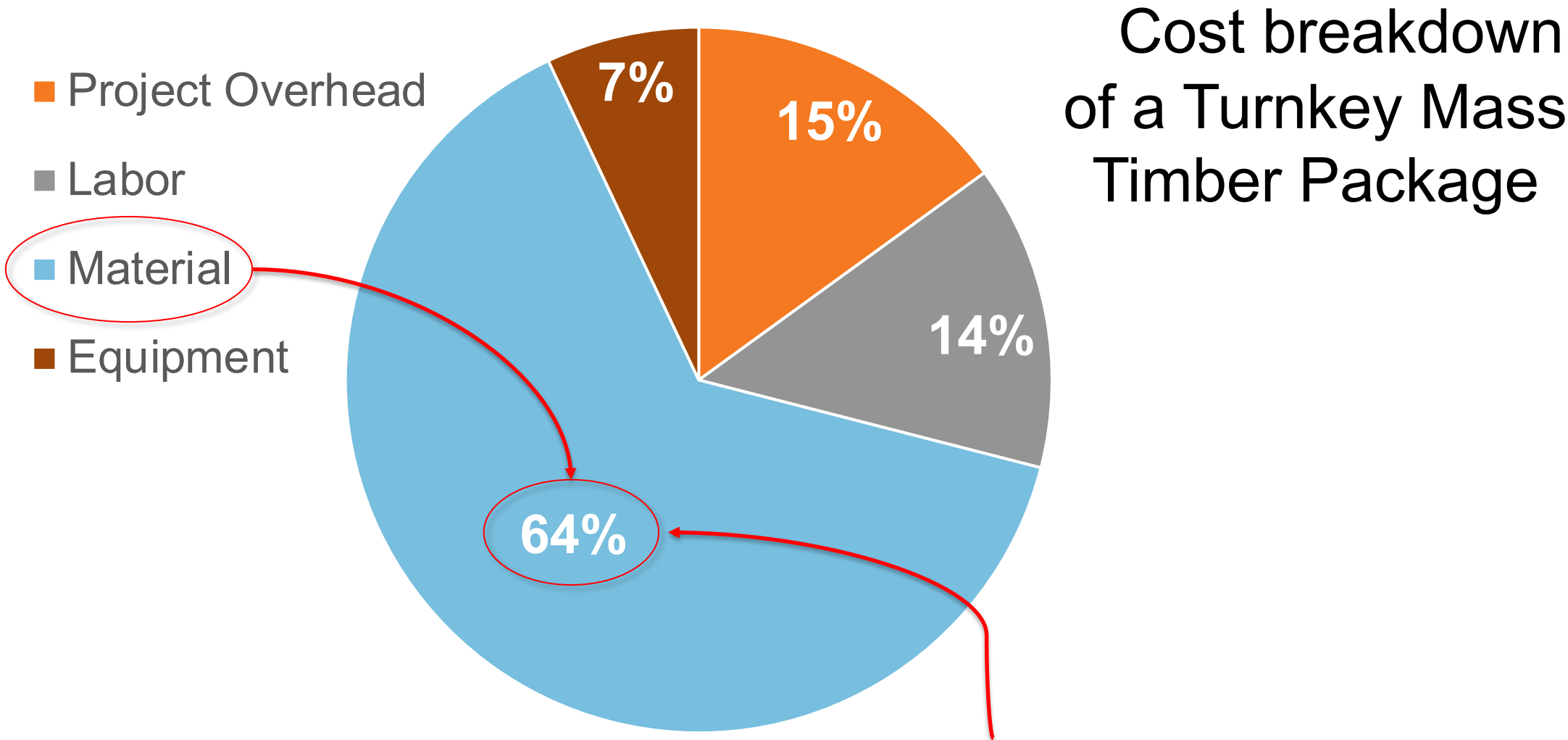


# Structural Grid

**Why so much focus on panel thickness?**



# Structural Grid



Panels are the biggest part of the biggest piece of the cost pie



# Structural Grid

## Construction Type Early Decision Example



### 3-story building on college campus

- Mostly Group B occupancy, some assembly (events) space
- NFPA 13 sprinklers throughout
- Floor plate = 7,700 SF
- Total Building Area = 23,100 SF

### Impact of Assembly Occupancy Placement:

Owner originally desires events space on top (3<sup>rd</sup>) floor

- Requires Construction **Type IIIA**

If owner permits moving events space to 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

- Could use **Type IIIB**

# Structural Grid

## Construction Type Early Decision Example

3-story building on college campus

### Cost Impact of Assembly Occupancy Placement:



Location of Event Space	3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor	1 <sup>st</sup> Floor
Construction Type	III-A	III-B
Assembly Group	A-3	A-3
Fire Resistive Rating	1-Hr	0-Hr
Connections	Concealed	Exposed
CLT Panel Thickness	5-Ply	3-Ply
<u>Superstructure Cost/SF</u>	<u>\$65/SF</u>	<u>\$53/SF</u>



Source: PCL Construction

# Connections

## Connection design considerations:

- Structural capacity
- Shrinkage
- Constructability
- Aesthetics
- Cost



Credit: Alex Schreyer



# Connections

Many ways to demonstrate connection fire protection: calculations, prescriptive NC, test results, others as approved by AHJ



Photo: Alex Schreyer



Photo: Structurlam



Photo: Christian Columbres

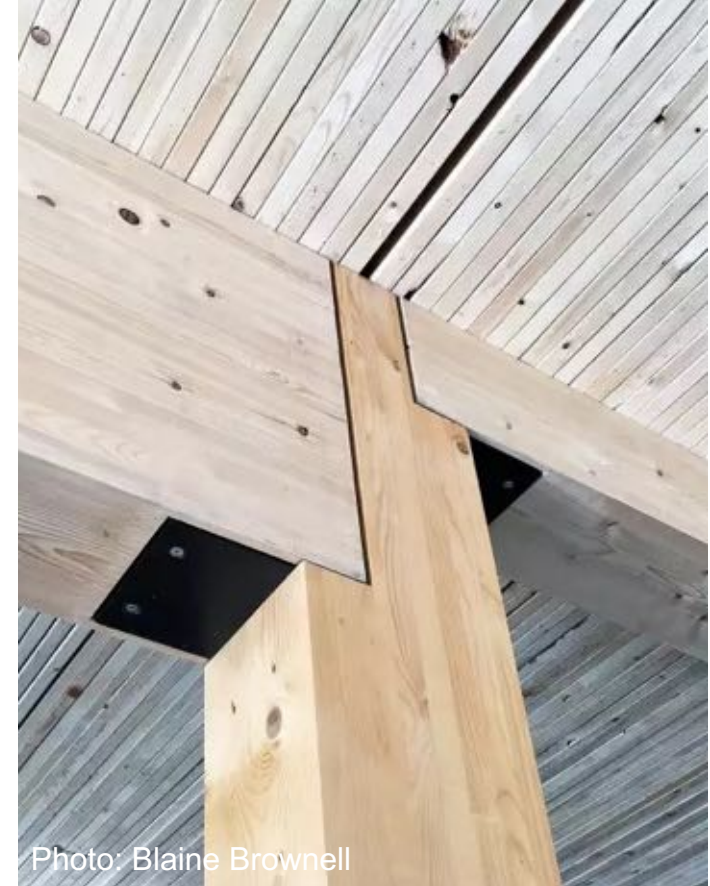
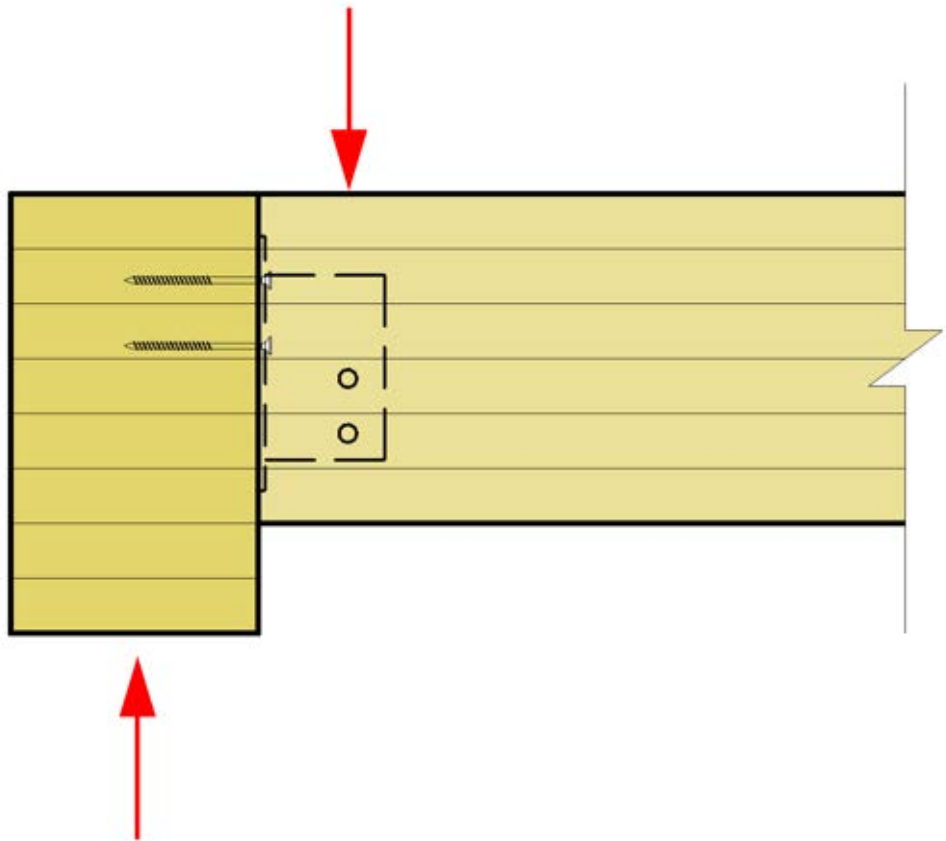


Photo: Blaine Brownell

# Connections

Steel hangers/hardware fully concealed within a timber-to-timber connection is a common method of fire protection





# Connections

2017 Glulam Beam to Column Connection Fire Tests under standard ASTM E119 time-temperature exposure





# Connections



**KL&A**  
Engineers & Builders



ARCHITECTURE  
URBAN DESIGN  
INTERIOR DESIGN

**SWINERTON**  
MASS TIMBER

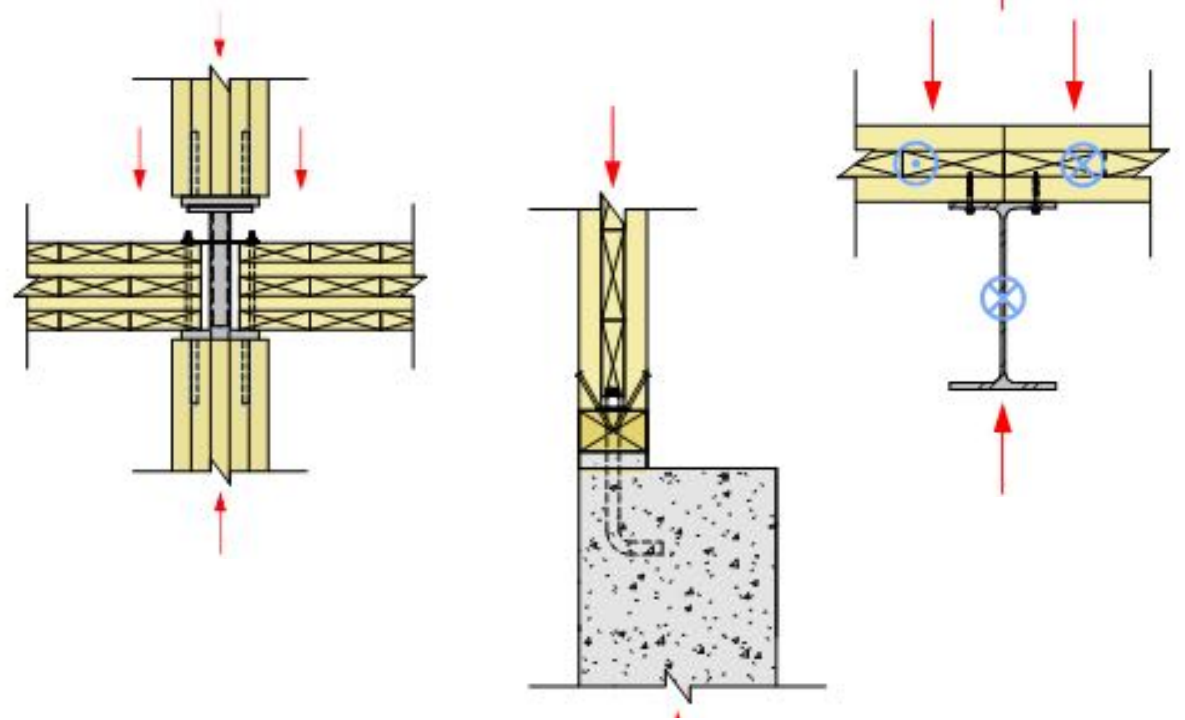


## WoodWorks Index of Mass Timber Connections



## MASS TIMBER CONNECTIONS INDEX

A library of commonly used mass timber connections with designer notes and information on fire resistance, relative cost and load-carrying capacity.



# Penetrations & Firestopping





# Penetrations & Firestopping

Option 1: Mass timber penetration firestopping via tested products



Photos: AWC/FPIInnovations



# Penetrations & Firestopping

## Inventory of Fire Tested Penetrations in MT Assemblies

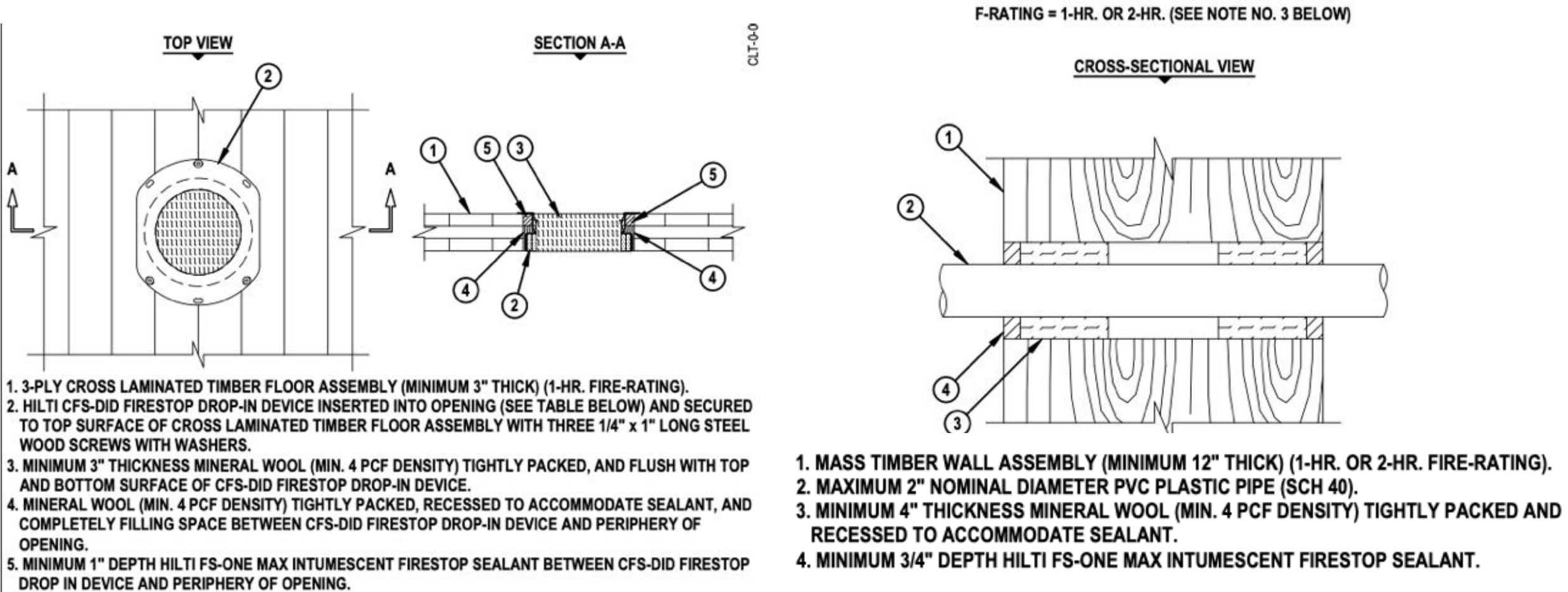
Table 3: North American Fire Tests of Penetrations and Fire Stops in CLT Assemblies



CLT Panel	Exposed Side Protection	Penetrating Item	Penetrant Centered or Offset in Hole	Firestopping System Description	F Rating	T Rating	Test Protocol	Source	Testing Lab
3-ply (78mm 3.07")	None	1.5" diameter data cable bunch	Centered	3.5 in diameter hole. Mineral wool was installed in the 1in. annular space around the data cables to a total depth of approximately 2 – 5.64in. The remaining 1in. annular space from the top of the mineral wool to the top of the floor assembly was filled with Hibi PS-One Max caulking.	1 hour	0.5 hour	CAN/ULC S115	26	Inertek March 30, 2016
3-ply (78mm 3.07")	None	2" copper pipe	Centered	4.375 in diameter hole. Pipe wrap was installed around the copper pipe to a total depth of approximately 2 – 5.64in. The remaining 1in. annular space starting at the top of the mineral wool to the top of the floor assembly was filled with Hibi PS-One Max caulking.	1 hour	N.A.	CAN/ULC S115	26	Inertek March 30, 2016
3-ply (78mm 3.07")	None	2.5" sched. 40 pipe	Centered	4.92 in diameter hole. Pipe wrap was installed around the schedule 40 pipe to a total depth of approximately 2 – 5.64in. The remaining 1in. annular space starting at the top of the pipe wrap to the top of the floor assembly was filled with Hibi PS-One Max caulking.	1 hour	N.A.	CAN/ULC S115	26	Inertek March 30, 2016
3-ply (78mm 3.07")	None	6" cast iron pipe	Centered	8.35 in diameter hole. Mineral wool was installed in the 1in. annular space around the cast iron pipe to a total depth of approximately 2 – 5.64in. The remaining 1in. annular space starting at the top of the pipe wrap to the top of the floor assembly was filled with Hibi PS-One Max caulking.	1 hour	N.A.	CAN/ULC S115	26	Inertek March 30, 2016
3-ply (78mm 3.07")	None	Hibi 6 in drop in device. System No.: F-IB-2049	Centered	9.01" diameter hole. Mineral wool was installed in the 1 – 14in. annular space around the drop-in device to a total depth of approximately 1 – 7.64in and the remaining 1in. annular space from the top of the mineral wool to the top edge of the 9 – 1.64in. hole in the CLT was filled with Hibi PS-One Max caulking.	1 hour	0.75 hour	CAN/ULC S115	26	Inertek March 30, 2016
3-ply (108mm 3.94")	1 layer 5/8" Type X gypsum	4" sched. 40 pipe	Centered or offset up to 9/16 in.	Maximum 5 inch diameter opening. One stack of three layers STI BLU2 Wrapstrip with SSWRC Collar secured to underside of floor or both sides of wall. 1/2 inch depth of SpecSeal® LCI Intumescent sealant on top of floor or both sides of wall with a 1/4 inch bead at point contact.	2 hours	0.75 hour	ASTM E814 and CAN/ULC S115	45	Inertek March 28, 2022
3-ply (108mm 3.94")	1 layer 5/8" Type X gypsum	AC Linnet with max 1 inch copper condensate, 1 inch insulated copper ith 3/4 in AIR/PVC insulation, rwa No. 18 conductor control wires	Centered or offset. Offset may range from 1/2 in. to 1-3/4 in.	Maximum 5 inch diameter opening. 4pcf mineral wool packed to fill opening and recessed 3/4 inch from the top of the floor. 3/4 inch depth of SpecSeal® LCI Intumescent sealant on top of floor.	2 hours	0.25 hour	ASTM E814 and CAN/ULC S115	45	Inertek March 28, 2022
3-ply (108mm 3.94")	1 layer 5/8" Type X gypsum	Cable bundle	Centered or offset. Offset may range from 1/2 in. to 1-1/2 in.	Maximum 6 inch diameter opening. 4pcf mineral wool packed to fill opening and recessed 3/4 inch from the top of the floor or both sides of the wall. 3/4 inch depth of SpecSeal® LCI Intumescent sealant on top of floor.	2 hours	0.5 hour	ASTM E814 and CAN/ULC S115	45	Inertek March 28, 2022
3-ply	1 layer 5/8" Type		N/A	Maximum 5 inch diameter opening. 4pcf mineral wool packed to fill opening and recessed 3/4 inch from the top of the floor. 3/4 inch depth of			ASTM E814		Inertek

# Penetrations & Firestopping

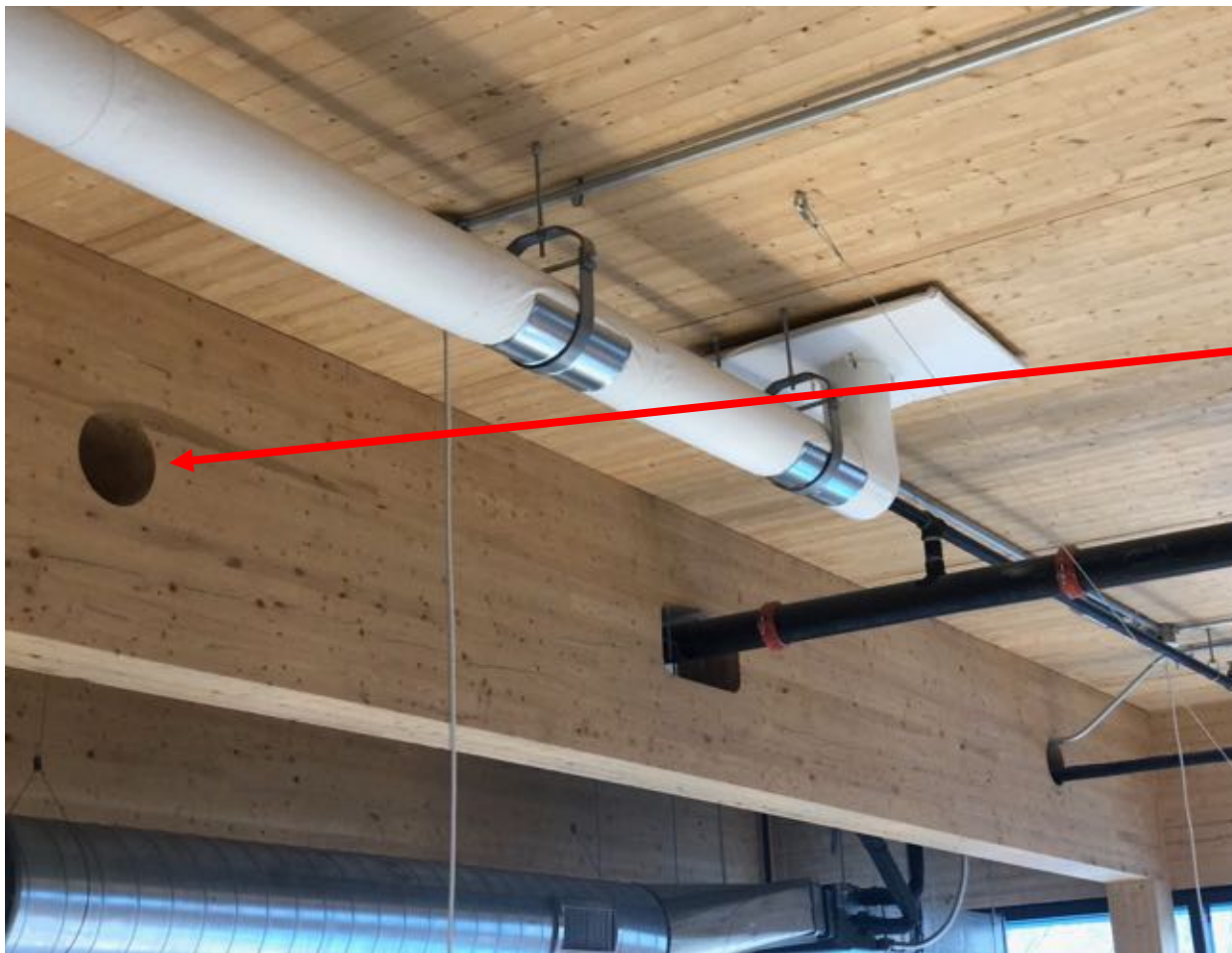
Option 2: MT penetration firestopping of penetrations via engineering judgement details (contact firestop manufacturer)



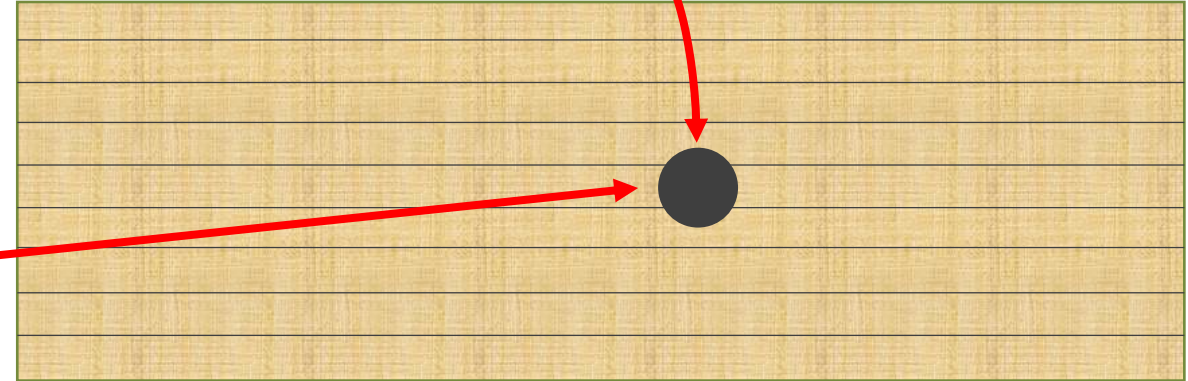
# Penetrations & Firestopping

Beam penetrations:

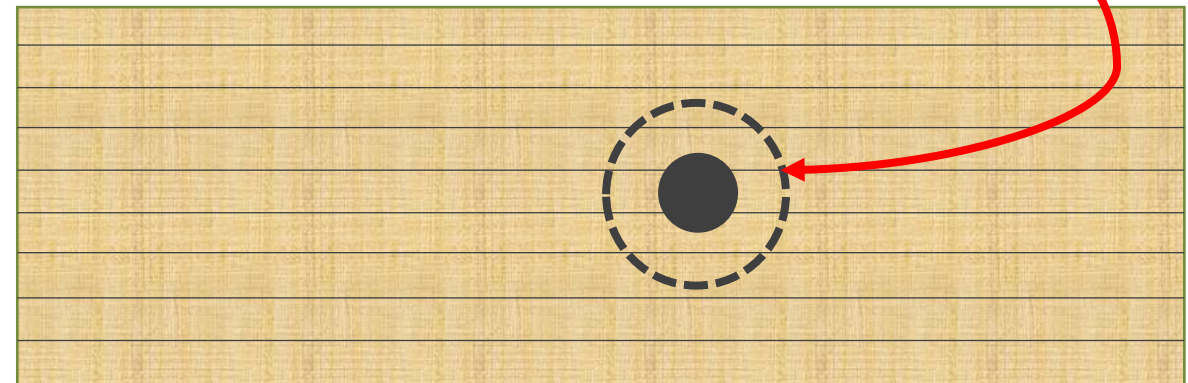
- If FRR = 0-hr, analyze structural impact of hole diameter only
- If FRR > 0-hr, account for charred hole diameter or firestop penetration



Hole diameter



Hole diameter after 1-hr char



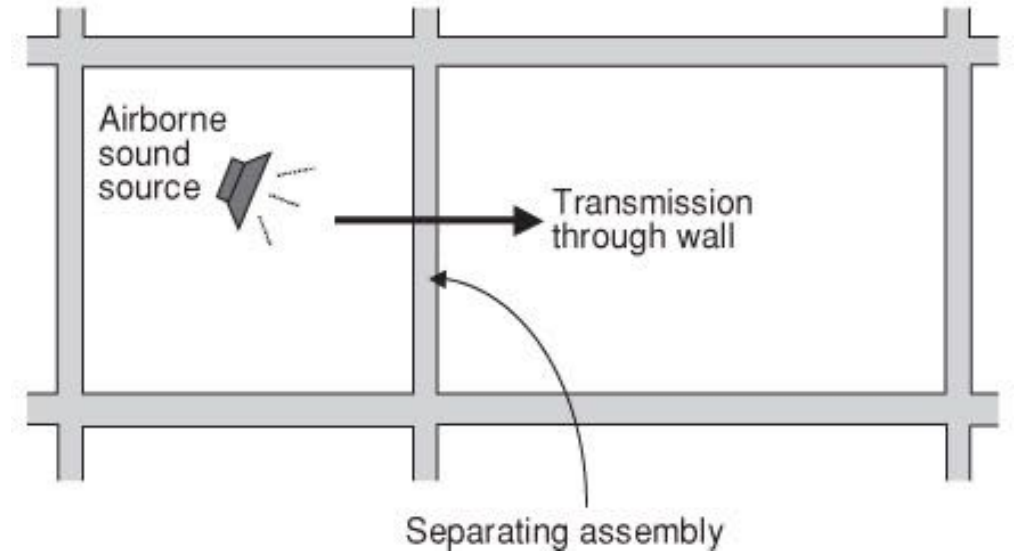


# Acoustics & Sound Control

## Air-Borne Sound:

### Sound Transmission Class (STC)

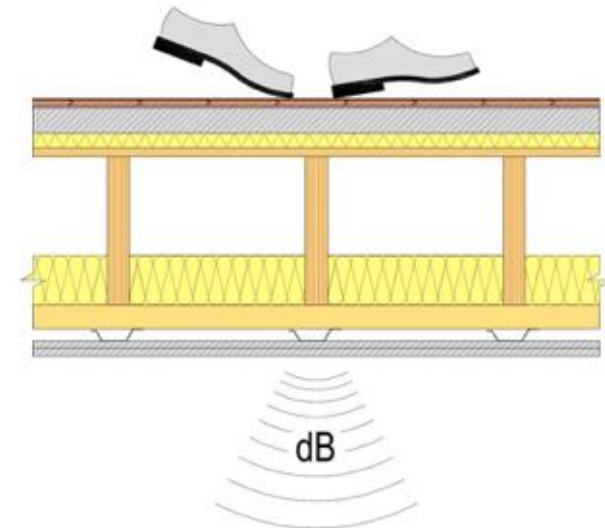
- Measures how effectively an assembly isolates air-borne sound and reduces the level that passes from one side to the other
- Applies to walls and floor/ceiling assemblies



## Structure-borne sound:

### Impact Insulation Class (IIC)

- Evaluates how effectively an assembly blocks impact sound from passing through it
- Only applies to floor/ceiling assemblies



# Acoustics & Sound Control

Code requirements only address residential occupancies:

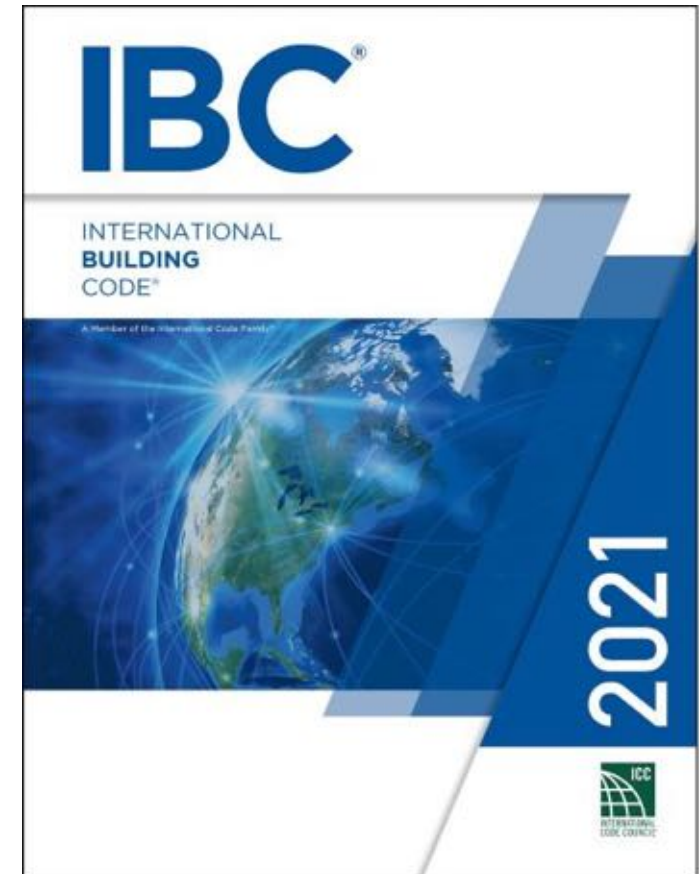
For unit to unit or unit to public or service areas:

**Min. STC of 50 (45 if field tested):**

- Walls, Partitions, and Floor/Ceiling Assemblies

**Min. IIC of 50 (45 if field tested) for:**

- Floor/Ceiling Assemblies



# Acoustics & Sound Control

**TABLE 1:**  
**Examples of Acoustically-Tested Mass Timber Panels**

Mass Timber Panel	Thickness	STC Rating	IIC Rating
3-ply CLT wall <sup>4</sup>	3.07"	33	N/A
5-ply CLT wall <sup>4</sup>	6.875"	38	N/A
5-ply CLT floor <sup>5</sup>	5.1875"	39	22
5-ply CLT floor <sup>4</sup>	6.875"	41	25
7-ply CLT floor <sup>4</sup>	9.65"	44	30
2x4 NLT wall <sup>6</sup>	3-1/2" bare NLT 4-1/4" with 3/4" plywood	24 bare NLT 29 with 3/4" plywood	N/A
2x6 NLT wall <sup>6</sup>	5-1/2" bare NLT 6-1/4" with 3/4" plywood	22 bare NLT 31 with 3/4" plywood	N/A
2x6 NLT floor + 1/2" plywood <sup>2</sup>	6" with 1/2" plywood	34	33

*Source: Inventory of Acoustically-Tested Mass Timber Assemblies, WoodWorks<sup>7</sup>*



# Acoustics & Sound Control



Concrete Slab:

6" Thick

80 PSF

STC 53



CLT Slab:

6-7/8" Thick

18 PSF

STC 41



# Acoustics & Sound Control

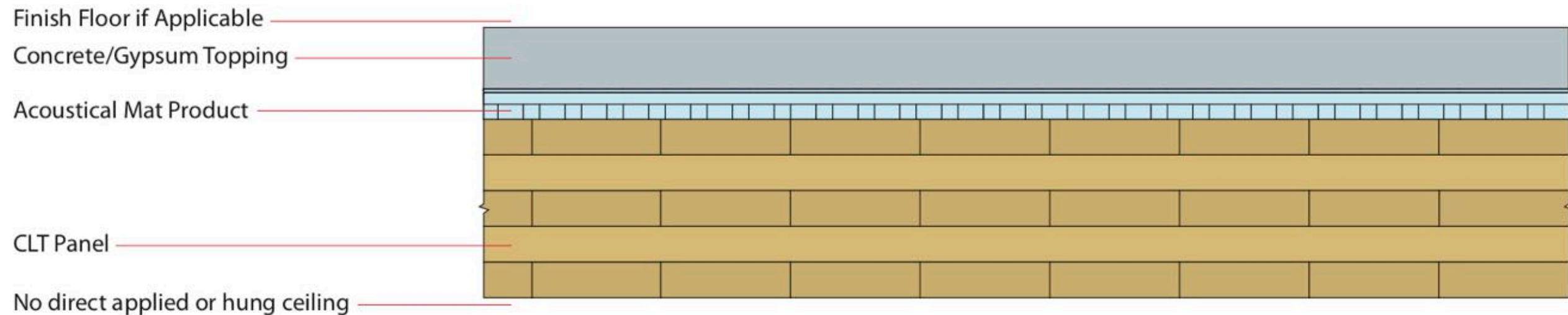
There are three main ways to improve an assembly's acoustical performance:



1. Add mass



3. Add decouplers



# Acoustics & Sound Control

## Common mass timber floor assembly:

- Finish floor (if applicable)
- Underlayment (if finish floor)
- 1.5" to 4" thick concrete/gypcrete topping
- Acoustical mat
- WSP (if applicable)
- Mass timber floor panels





# Acoustics & Sound Control

## Inventory of Acoustically Tested MT Assemblies



Table 1: CLT Floor Assemblies with Concrete/Gypsum Topping, Ceiling Side Exposed

<div> <div> <div>Finish Floor if Applicable</div> <div>Concrete/Gypsum Topping</div> <div>Acoustical Mat Product</div> <div>CLT Panel</div> <div>No direct applied or hung ceiling</div> </div> </div>						
CLT Panel	Concrete/Gypsum Topping	Acoustical Mat Product Between CLT and Topping	Finish Floor	STC <sup>1</sup>	IIC <sup>1</sup>	Source
CLT 3-ply (3.5")	3" concrete	Maxxon Acousti-Mat® 3/4	None	53 <sup>2</sup> ASTC	45 <sup>2</sup> FIIC	72
	2" concrete	Pliteq GenieMat™ FF25	None	54	44	89
			LVT on GenieMat RST05	53	48	90
			Eng Wood on GenieMat RST05	53	46	91
			Carpet Tile	52	50	92
			None	57	45	103
			LVT	-	58	104
			2 layers of ¼" USG Fiberglas® or Kieft®	55	55	105

# Key Early Design Decisions

## Early Design Decision Example

### 7-story, 84 ft tall multi-family building

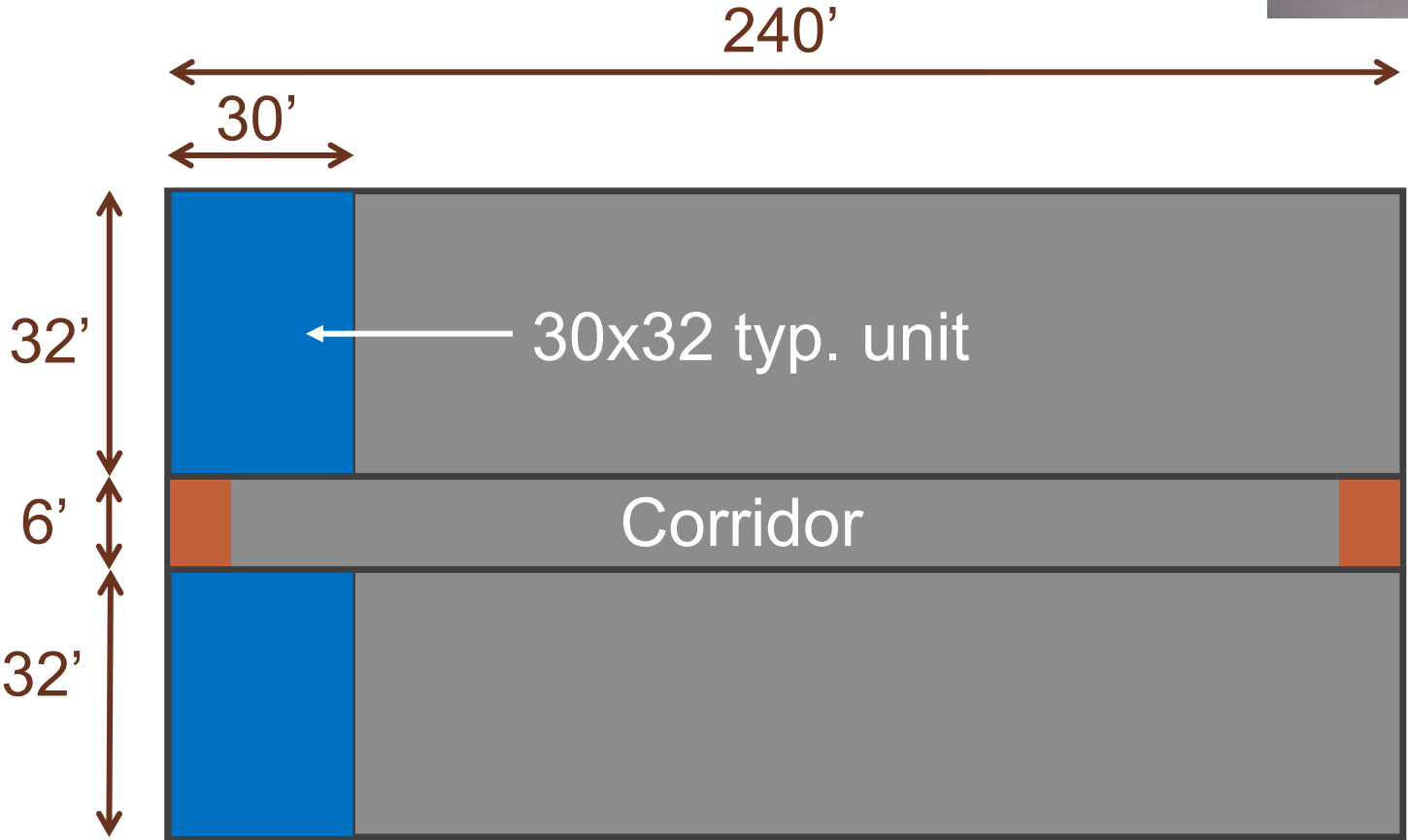
- Parking & Retail on 1<sup>st</sup> floor, residential units on floors 2-7
- NFPA 13 sprinklers throughout
- Floor plate = 16,800 SF
- Total Building Area = 117,600 SF



# Key Early Design Decisions

## Early Design Decision Example

7-story, multi-family building, typ. floor plan:



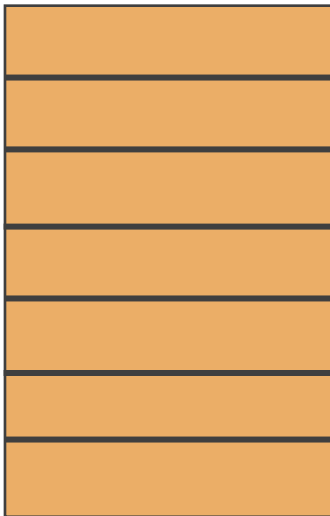


# Key Early Design Decisions

## Early Design Decision Example

### MT Construction Type Options:

- 7 stories of IV-C
- 5 stories of IIIA over 2 stories of IA podium
- 5 stories of IV-HT over 2 stories of IA podium



# Key Early Design Decisions

## Early Design Decision Example

### MT Construction Type Options:

- 7 stories of IV-C
- 5 stories of IIIA over 2 stories of IA podium
- 5 stories of IV-HT over 2 stories of IA podium

### Implications of Type IV-C:

- 2-hr FRR, all exposed floor panels, beams, columns
- Likely will need at least 5-ply CLT / 2x6 NLT/DLT
- Efficient spans in the 14-17 ft range
- Efficient grids of that or multiples of that (i.e. 30x25, etc)
- No podium required
- Materials are mass timber or non-combustible (no light-frame wood permitted!)

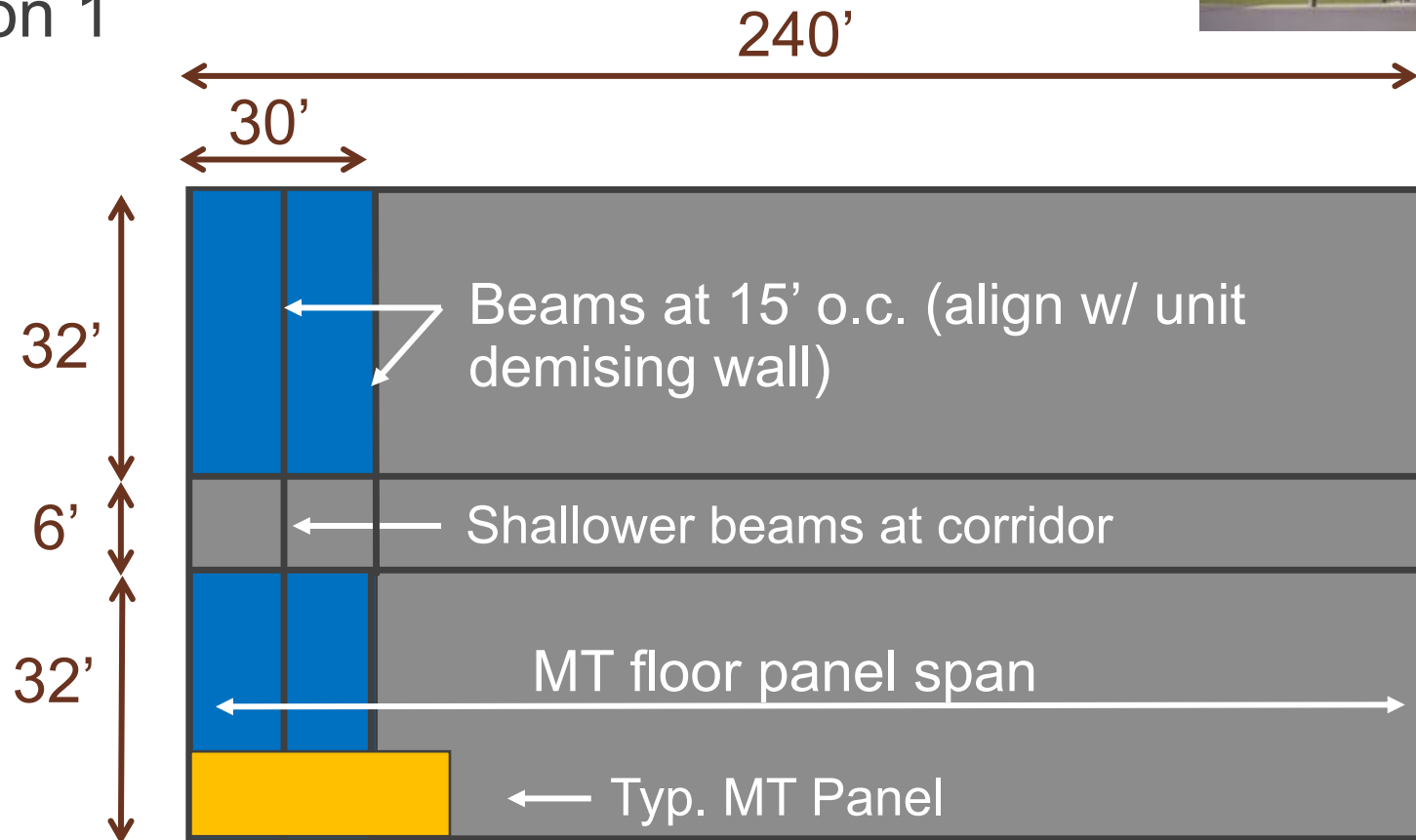


# Key Early Design Decisions

## Early Design Decision Example

### Type IV-C Grid Options

- Option 1



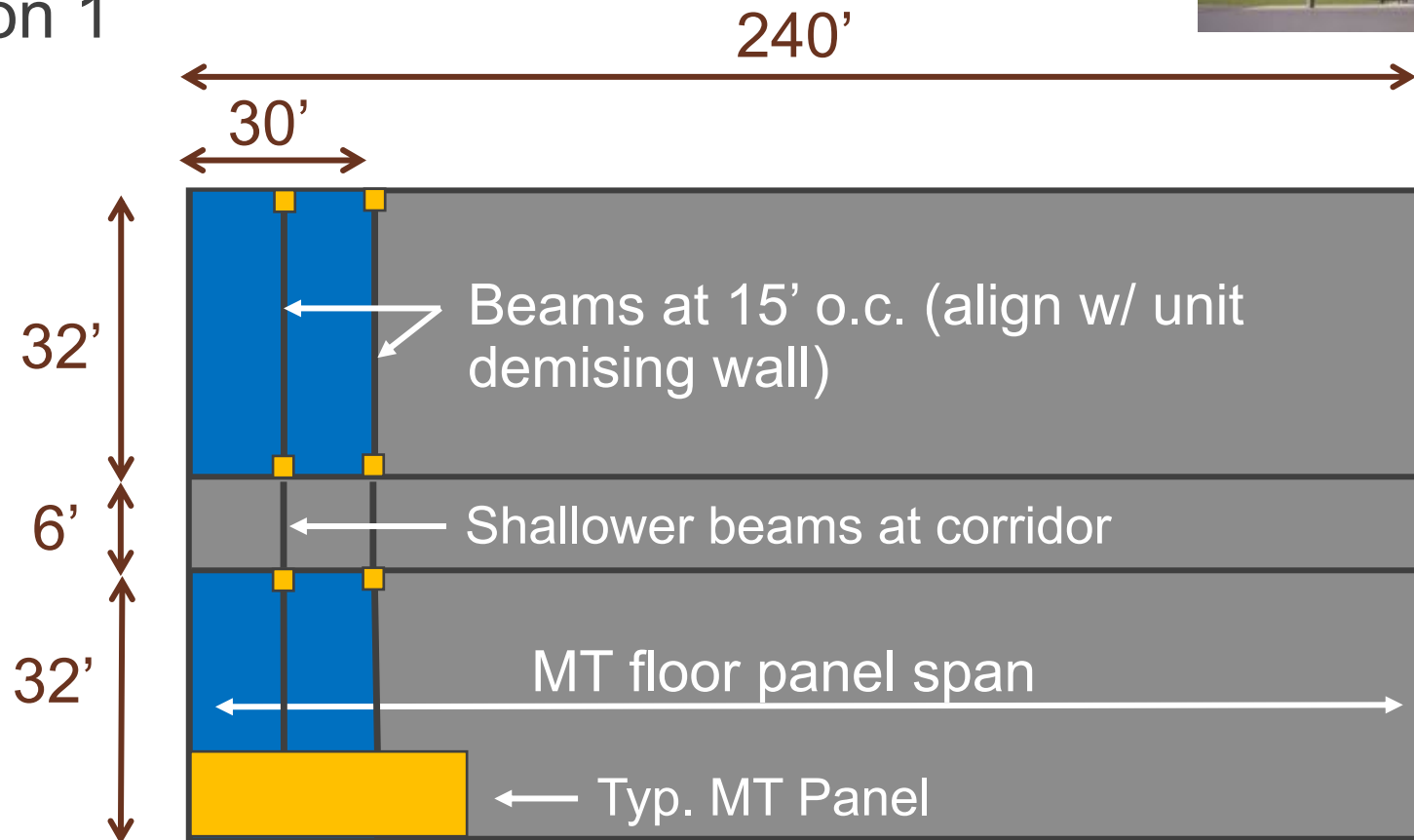


# Key Early Design Decisions

## Early Design Decision Example

### Type IV-C Grid Options

- Option 1

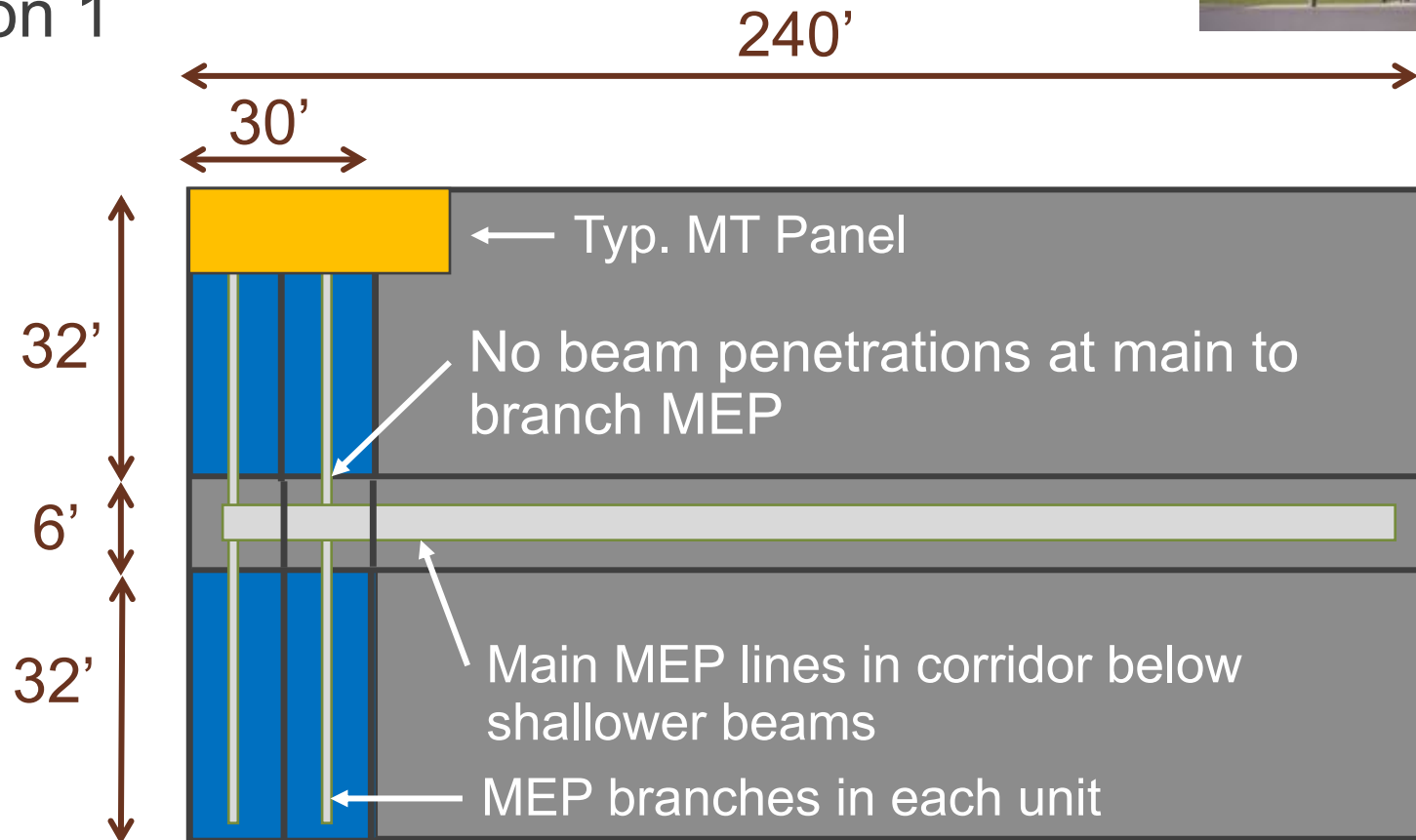


# Key Early Design Decisions

## Early Design Decision Example

### Type IV-C Grid Options

- Option 1

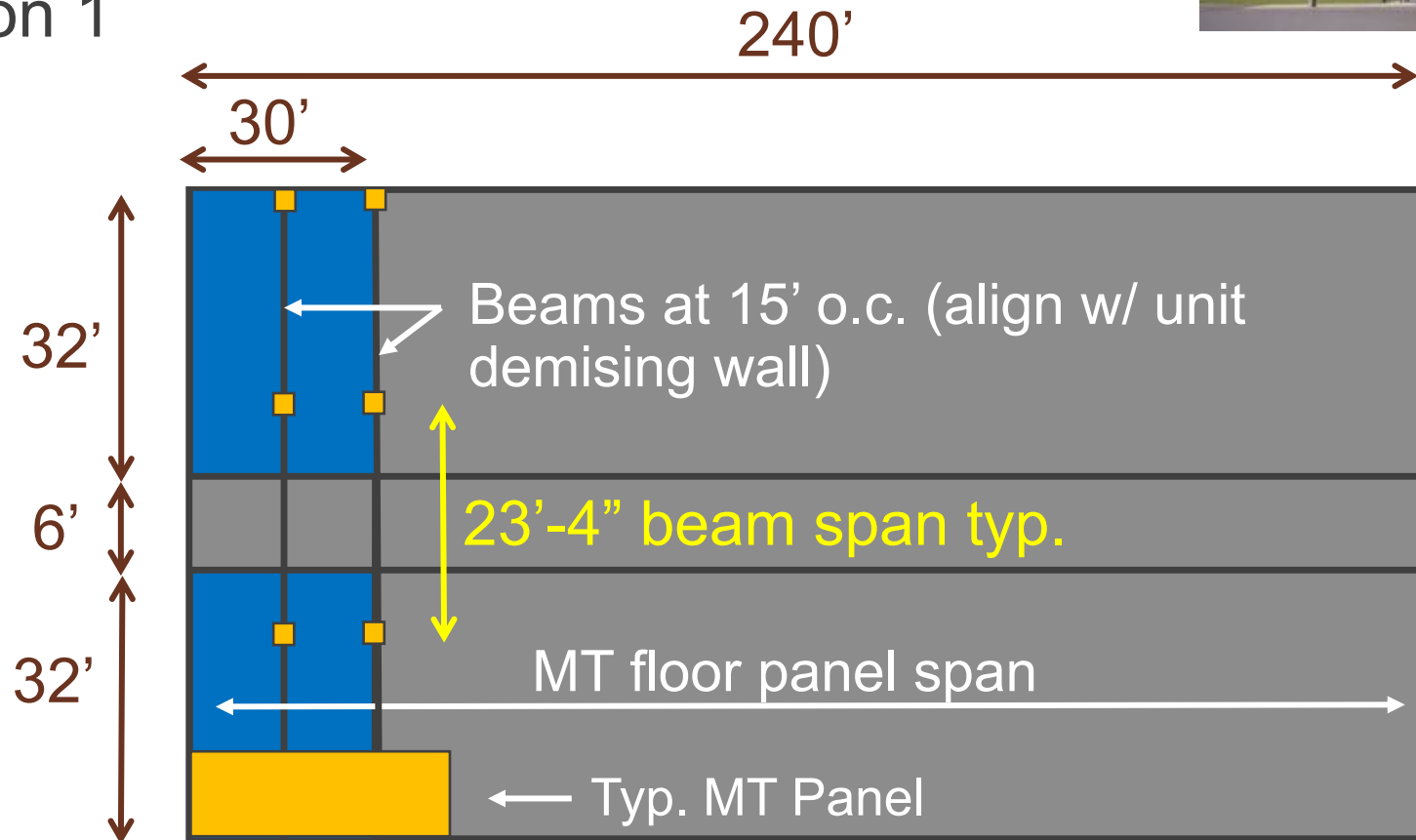


# Key Early Design Decisions

## Early Design Decision Example

### Type IV-C Grid Options

- Option 1



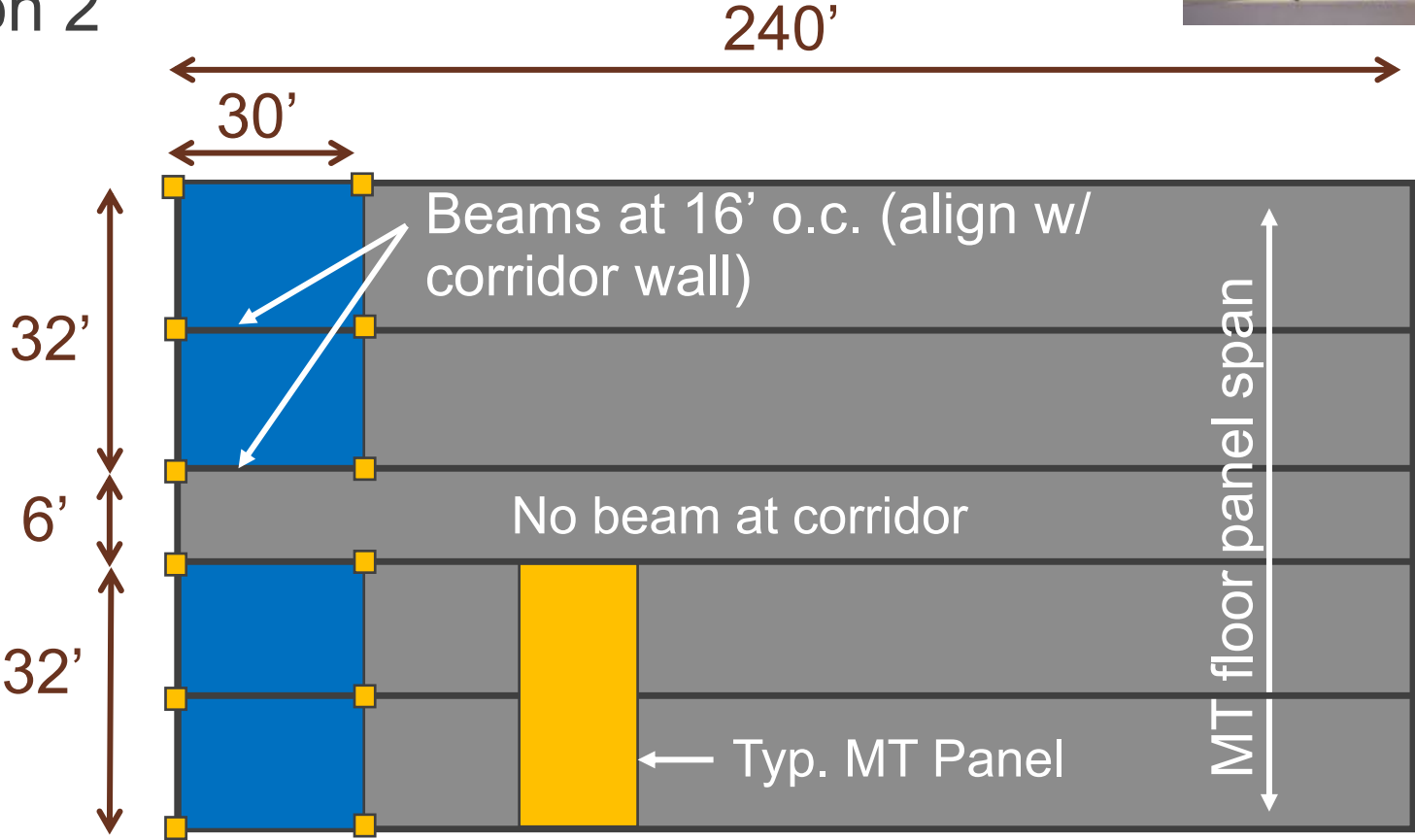


# Key Early Design Decisions

## Early Design Decision Example

### Type IV-C Grid Options

- Option 2

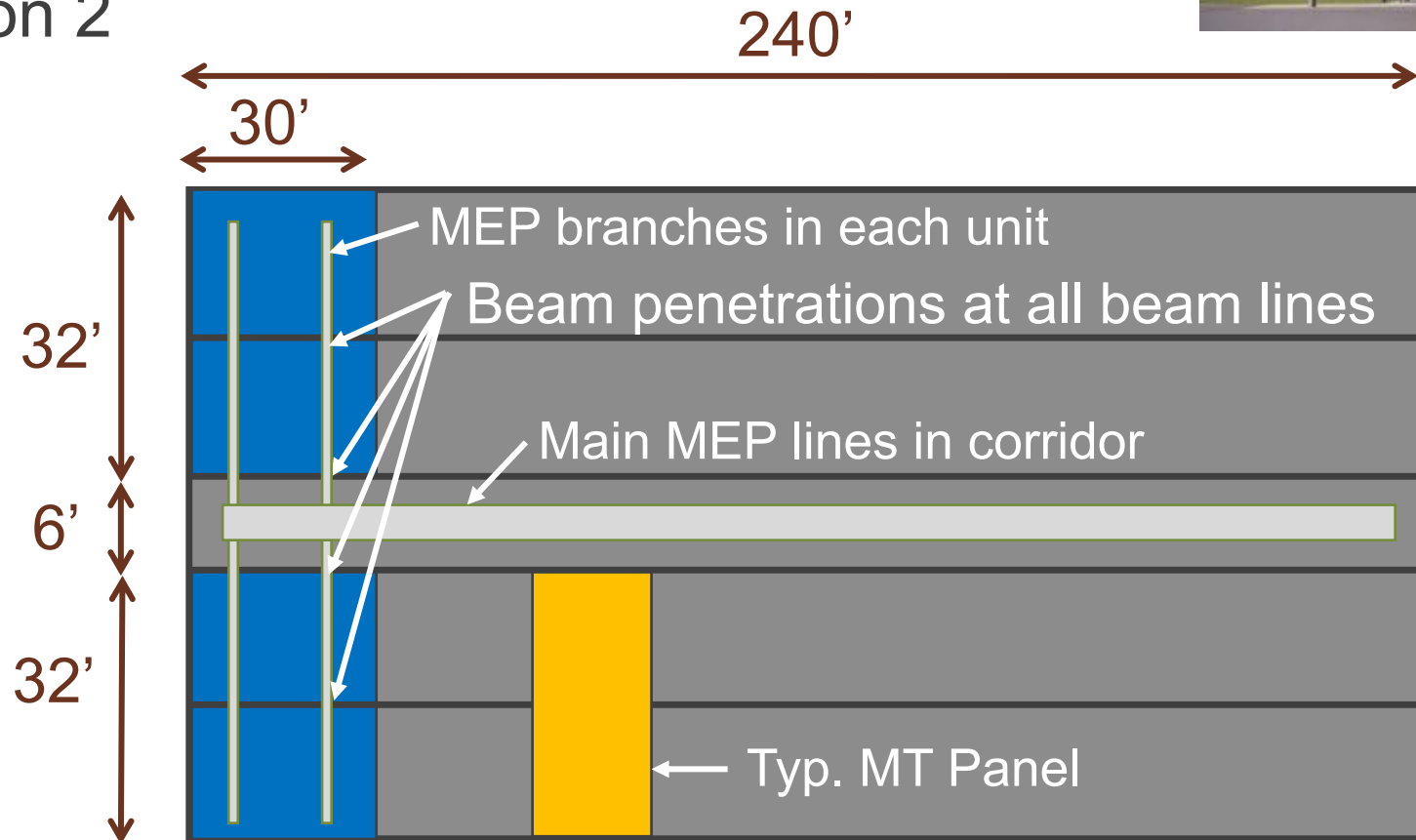


# Key Early Design Decisions

## Early Design Decision Example

### Type IV-C Grid Options

- Option 2



# Key Early Design Decisions

## Early Design Decision Example

### MT Construction Type Options:

- 7 stories of IV-C
- 5 stories of IIIA over 2 stories of IA podium
- 5 stories of IV-HT over 2 stories of IA podium

### Implications of Type IIIA:

- 1-hr FRR
- 5-ply CLT, maybe thinner
- 2-story Type IA podium required
- Can use light-frame wood for interior walls (FRT light-frame wood for exterior walls)
- If wood portion is  $\leq 65$  feet, light frame wood shear walls are an option



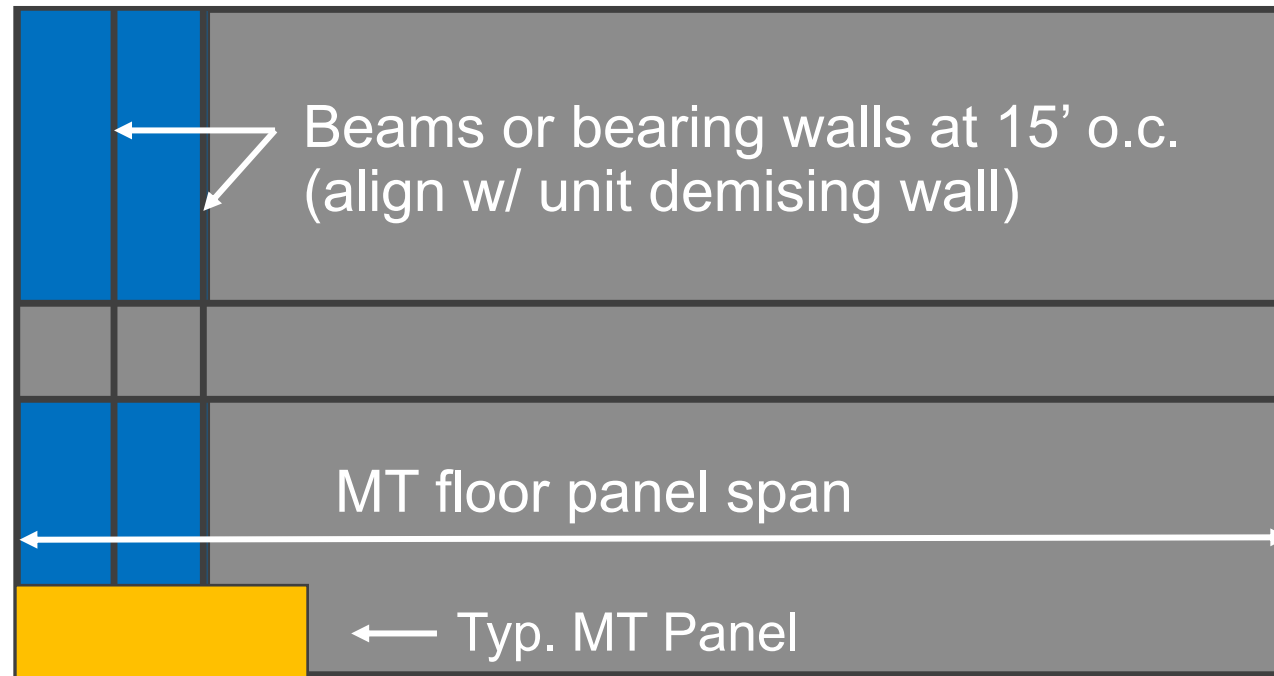


# Key Early Design Decisions

## Early Design Decision Example

### Type IIIA Grid Options

- Can use beams or bearing walls for gravity support



# Key Early Design Decisions

## Early Design Decision Example

### MT Construction Type Options:

- 7 stories of IV-C
- 5 stories of IIIA over 2 stories of IA podium
- 5 stories of IV-HT over 2 stories of IA podium

### Type IV-HT in Group R Occupancy:

- Separation walls (fire partitions) and horizontal separation (horizontal assemblies) between dwelling units require a 1-hour rating.
- Floor panels require a 1-hour rating in addition to minimum sizes
- Essentially the same panel and grid options as IIIA

Ref. IBC 420.2, 420.3, 708.3, 711.2.4.3



# Reduce Risk

## Optimize Costs

- For the entire project team, not just builders
- Lots of reference documents

**Download Checklists at**  
**[www.woodworks.org](http://www.woodworks.org)**

[www.woodworks.org/wp-content/uploads/wood\\_solution\\_paper-Mass-Timber-Design-Cost-Optimization-Checklists.pdf](http://www.woodworks.org/wp-content/uploads/wood_solution_paper-Mass-Timber-Design-Cost-Optimization-Checklists.pdf)

## Mass Timber Cost and Design Optimization Checklists

WoodWorks has developed the following checklists to assist in the design and cost optimization of mass timber projects.

The *design optimization* checklists are intended for building designers (architects and engineers), but many of the topics should also be discussed with the fabricators and builders. The *cost optimization* checklists will help guide coordination between designers and builders (general contractors, construction managers, estimators, fabricators, installers, etc.) as they are estimating and making cost-related decisions on a mass timber project.

Most resources listed in this paper can be found on the WoodWorks website. Please see the end notes for URLs.

**First Tech Federal Credit Union – Hillsboro, OR**  
ARCHITECT:  
Hacker  
ENGINEERS:  
Kramer Gehlen & Associates,  
Equilibrium Consulting  
CONTRACTOR:  
Swinerton





# Keys to Mass Timber Success:

Know Your WHY

Design it as Mass Timber From the Start

Leverage Manufacturer Capabilities

Understand Supply Chain

Optimize Grid

Take Advantage of Prefabrication & Coordination

Expose the Timber

Discuss Early with AHJ

Work with Experienced People

Let WoodWorks Help for Free

# Questions?

## Mike Romanowski, SE

Regional Director | CA-South, AZ, NM

619.206.6632

[mike.romanowski@woodworks.org](mailto:mike.romanowski@woodworks.org)



901 East Sixth, Thoughtbarn-Delineate Studio,  
Leap!Structures, photo Casey Dunn





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