



December 21, 2020

Construction Industry, Designers, Contractors and Suppliers providing services in Sooke

Advisory #15 – Barrier-Free – Building Accessibility

The British Columbia Building Code 2018, (BCBC) which is adopted in Sooke, by the District of Sooke Building Bylaw, contains provisions that apply to Barrier-Free – Building Accessibility. We are alerting you to the need for building owners, as well as their designers, builders, and material suppliers on their behalf, to comply with the requirements of the 2018 BCBC.

This enclosed Advisory #15 includes a summary of the significant 2018 BCBC provisions that apply regarding Barrier-Free – Building Accessibility.

We hope that this advisory will help eliminate confusion regarding the Intent of what is required when applying the requirements for Barrier-Free – Building Accessibility and will encourage conformance with the 2018 BCBC requirements. Please feel free to make copies of this advisory available to your customers as you see fit. Your assistance in achieving these goals will be greatly appreciated.

The BC Building, Plumbing and Fire Codes are available to read online at:

<https://www.bcpublications.ca/BCPublications/>

Stan Dueck CRBO
Chief Building Official
Building Safety
District of Sooke
Phone: (250) 642-1634



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Barrier-Free – Building Accessibility

Compliance with the Building Bylaw are addressed in this advisory.
The British Columbia Building Code 2018, (BCBC) which is adopted in Sooke, by the District of Sooke Building Bylaw.

Words in *italics* are defined in the 2018 BCBC.

Barrier-Free – Building Accessibility 2018 BC Building Code Requirements

9.5.2. Access for Persons with Disabilities

9.5.2.1. General

- 1) Except as provided in Article 3.8.2.1., every building shall be designed in conformance with Section 3.8.

9.5.2.2. Protection on Accessible Floor Areas

- 1) Where access is required on any floor area, the requirements in Article 3.3.1.7. shall apply.

3.8.1.1. Scope

- 1) This Section is concerned with the design and construction of buildings and occupancies to make them accessible.
- 2) Buildings and facilities required to be accessible in accordance with Subsection 3.8.2. shall be designed in accordance with Subsection 3.8.3.
- 3) Alterations and additions to existing buildings shall conform to Subsection 3.8.4.
- 4) Adaptable dwelling units shall be designed and constructed in accordance with Subsection 3.8.5.

3.8.2. Application

3.8.2.1. General

(See Note A-3.8.2.1.)

- 1) Except as provided in Clause 3.8.2.3.(2)(j), the requirements of this Section apply to all buildings and all areas of buildings where work functions can reasonably be expected to be performed by persons with disabilities except
 - a) dwelling units, row houses, boarding houses, lodging houses and construction camps, except as required by
 - i) Article 3.8.2.12., or
 - ii) Subsection 3.8.5.,
 - b) apartment and condominiums buildings except that an accessible path of travel conforming to Subsection 3.8.3. from accessible entrances as described in Article 3.8.2.2. throughout common areas and, if provided, to parking areas and passenger loading zones as described in Article 3.8.2.5. is required unless the building is not equipped with a passenger-elevating device, in which case an accessible path of travel as described in Article 3.8.2.3.
 - i) need only be provided on the levels with accessible entrances, and
 - ii) need not be provided where the difference in floor elevation between the entrance level or levels and every dwelling unit exceeds 600 mm,
 - c) high-hazard industrial occupancies,
 - d) buildings that are not intended to be occupied on a daily or full-time basis, including but not limited to automatic telephone exchanges, pump houses and substations,
 - e) public toilet buildings in locations such as highway rest areas, campgrounds, picnic grounds, parks and recreational vehicle parks where an accessible path of travel conforming to Subsection 3.8.3. is provided from a roadway or street to at least one other accessible public toilet building,



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- f) the storey next above or below the accessible storey in a suite of not more than two storeys where the accessible storey is the first storey or basement, provided the storey next above or below the accessible storey
- i) is less than 600 m² in floor area,
 - ii) contains only facilities that are also contained on the accessible storey,
 - iii) does not contain an assembly major occupancy with an area more than 100 m², **and**
 - iv) is not served by a passenger-elevating device connecting the storey next above or below the accessible storey (see Note A-3.8.2.1.(1)(f) and (g)), **and**
- g) the storey next above or below the accessible storey in a building with not more than one storey above the first storey, provided the storey next above or below the accessible storey
- i) is less than 600 m² in floor area,
 - ii) contains only facilities that are also contained on the accessible storey,
 - iii) does not contain an assembly major occupancy with an area more than 100 m², **and**
 - iv) is not served by a passenger-elevating device connecting the storey next above or below the accessible storeys (see Note A-3.8.2.1.(1)(f) and (g)).

A-3.8.2.1.(1)(f) and (g) Access to Small Storeys. Elevators and elevating devices can be expensive and in small buildings may form a significant percentage of a building's cost. This Clause is intended to exempt such small second storeys or basements from access requirements when they are self-contained or contain the same facilities as on the accessible storey. An example where access is not required is the second storey of a restaurant which contains only additional seating. If, on the other hand, the restaurant's washrooms are in the less than 600 m² basement there must be access to them as they are an integral part of the principle function and occupancy on the accessible storey. Likewise, staff lunchrooms and washrooms are integral with the principle function and when they are on a small second storey or mezzanine they must be accessible when a person with disabilities could reasonably be expected to be employed there.

This exemption applies to buildings with not more than one storey above the first storey. A building with two or more storeys above the first storey must be fully accessible. **Mezzanines that are not considered as storeys for the purposes of determining building height are considered storeys for the purposes of applying Clauses 3.8.2.1.(1)(f) and (g).**

- 2) Buildings and parts of buildings required by Sentence (1) and this Subsection to be accessible shall comply with Subsection 3.8.3. including, without limitation, exterior paths and stairs within property lines from roadways, streets, parking areas, exterior passenger-loading zones, and ancillary areas to all accessible entrances of these buildings.
- 3) The requirements of this Section take precedence over other requirements contained in this Part and in Part 9.
- 4) Where an accessible path of travel connects to a path of travel on the adjacent side of a firewall through a doorway, the requirements of this Section shall apply to the floor areas on both sides of the firewall as if they were in the same building.
- 5) Access shall be provided to alterations, additions and changes in occupancy to the extent required in Subsection 3.8.4.

The new Building Accessibility Handbook reflects the British Columbia Building Code 2018 accessibility requirements. The 2018 British Columbia Building Code is based substantially on the 2015 National Building Code. The handbook is a separate resource that provides explanatory text and illustrations to support Code users to better understand and apply the complex Code requirements to make buildings more accessible

The digital Building Accessibility Handbook 2020 is available at the following link:

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/construction-industry/building-codes-and-standards/guides/2020_building_accessibility_handbook.pdf