

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE
AIBC, APEGBC, BOABC, POABC

INTERPRETATION		
Interpretation Date:	November 21, 2001	File No.: 98-0032
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 1998	
Subject:	<i>Public Corridors; Fire-Resistance Rating, Fire Separation</i>	
Keywords:	<i>Public Corridors</i>	
Building Code Reference(s):	3.3.1.4.(1)(2)(3)(4)(5)	Page 1 of 2 <i>129k</i>

Question:

Under what circumstances is the *fire-resistance rating* and/or the *fire separation* not required for *public corridors*, in a *building* constructed under Part 3?

Interpretation:

There are four requirements in the Code for a *fire separation* with a *fire-resistance rating* for *public corridors*, with relaxation based on sprinklers, *occupancy* and clear width of the *public corridor*.

3.3.1.4.(1)(2) - a *public corridor* requires a *fire separation* with a *fire-resistance rating*,

3.3.1.4.(3) – a *public corridor* requires a *fire separation* but no *fire-resistance rating* if the **floor area** is sprinklered throughout and does not contain a Group B or C *occupancies*

3.3.1.4.(4) – a *public corridor* does not require a *fire separation* provided there is more than 5 m in **unobstructed** width and the **floor area** is sprinklered throughout and does not contain Group B or C *occupancies*. If there are obstructions (tables, benches planters etc.) this would require a corridor of sufficient width to provide more than 5 m in **unobstructed** width.

3.3.1.4.(5) – a *public corridor* does not require a *fire separation* provided the **floor area** is sprinklered throughout and the *public corridor* complies with 3.3.1.9.(6) and 3.4.2.5.(1)(d).

3.3.1.9.(6) states that if the *public corridor* contains an *occupancy*, 3 m of unobstructed width is required at all times adjacent to and parallel to all rooms or *suites* with no more than 15% of the area of the *public corridor* occupied.

3.4.2.5.(1)(d) states that:

- the *public corridor*, is not less than 9m in width
- the *public corridor* has a ceiling height not less than 4m
- the **building** is sprinklered throughout and
- no more than ½ the required egress is into the *public corridors*,

This will permit a travel distance of 105 m in any *floor area* served by the *public corridor*.

The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee of AIBC, APEGBC, BOABC, and POABC, which form the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee. The purpose of the committee is to encourage uniform province wide interpretation of the BC Building Code. These views should not be considered as the official interpretation of legislated requirements based on the BC Building Code, as final responsibility for an interpretation rests with the local *Authority Having Jurisdiction*. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.

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3.3.1.4.(5) requires the *floor area* to be sprinklered throughout but 3.4.2.5.(1)(d) requires the *building* to be sprinklered throughout.

3.3.1.4.(5) cannot be used without applying 3.3.1.9.(6) and 3.4.2.5.(1)(d)

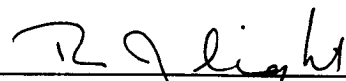
Therefore to have open store fronts onto a "mall" (*public corridor*) it would be required to have either 3.3.1.4.(4) a *public corridor* more than 5m in unobstructed width, with the *floor area* sprinklered throughout or

3.3.1.4.(5) a *public corridor* not less than 9m wide,

- a ceiling not less than 4m in height
- at least 3m clear in front of the rooms or *suites*,
- maximum 15% *occupancies* in the "mall" (*public corridor*) and
- the *building* is sprinklered throughout

Note:

The BC Fire Code addresses the operational requirements of existing buildings for life safety and fire protection, including obstructions within *public corridors*.



R.J. Light, Committee Chair

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