

# BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing  
**AIBC, EGBC, BOABC**

**File No: 18-0044**

**INTERPRETATION**

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<b>Interpretation Date:</b>	March 10, 2020
<b>Building Code Edition:</b>	BC Building Code 2018
<b>Subject:</b>	Width of Corridors providing access to Adaptable Dwelling Units
<b>Keywords:</b>	Width, corridor, adaptable, access, dwelling units
<b>Building Code Reference(s):</b>	3.8.3.1.(1), 3.8.3.2.(1)(a), 3.8.5.3.(1)(a), 3.8.5.3.(2), CSA B651 – Section 5.1

## Question:

1. If a designer elects to design the interior accessible routes to the requirements of Subsection 3.8.3 as permitted by Clause 3.8.3.1.(1)(a), is the minimum width of corridor that provides access to adaptable dwelling units 1220 mm as stated in Sentence 3.8.5.3.(2)?
2. If a designer elects to design interior accessible routes to the requirements of CSA B651 as permitted by Clause 3.8.3.1.(1)(b):
  - a. Are corridors within a residential building that provide access to adaptable dwelling units considered to be low traffic areas?
  - b. If so, is the minimum width of such corridor 920 mm as stated in Section 5.1 of CSA B651?

## Interpretation:

1. No

Clause 3.8.5.3.(1)(a) requires that an accessible path of travel be provided to each adaptable dwelling unit in accordance with Subsection 3.8.3.

Clause 3.8.3.2.(1)(a) requires an accessible path of travel to have an unobstructed width of not less than 1500 mm.

Although Sentence 3.8.5.3.(2) states that a corridor providing access to adaptable dwelling units can be 1220 mm wide, this Sentence is superseded by the 1500 mm minimum width per Clause 3.8.3.2.(1)(a). Refer to Answer 2(b) for the application of the 1220 mm wide corridor.



Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair

The views expressed are the consensus of the joint committee with members representing AIBC, EGBC and BOABC, which form the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee. The Building and Safety Standards Branch, Province of BC and the City of Vancouver participate in the committee's proceedings with respect to interpretations of the BC Building Code. 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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2.(a) Yes

The occupant load of residential floor areas is relatively small compared to other uses such as assembly and retail. Therefore, residential corridors are considered to be low traffic areas.

2.(b) No

Clause 5.1.1. of CSA B651 states that the minimum clear width of accessible routes is 920 mm.

In high traffic areas, the minimum width is increased to 1500 mm.

Most residential corridors are considered to be low traffic areas, based on the requirements of CSA B651, the minimum width of corridors that provide access for persons with disabilities would be 920 mm.

Since Subsection 3.8.5. for Adaptable Suites is a "unique to BC" provision, Subsection 3.8.5. is not mentioned in Table 3.8.3.1.

Therefore, CSA B651 cannot be used as an alternate design approach for the requirements of Subsection 3.8.5.

The minimum width for corridors and passageways providing access to adaptable dwelling units is 1220 mm as governed by Sentence 3.8.5.3.(2) with 1500 mm x 1500 mm clear floor spaces adjacent to the elevator entrance and at intervals not exceed 9m where the corridor or passageway exceeds 9m measured from the elevator entrance to the end of the corridor or passageway.

Since there is some confusion in the industry regarding the appropriate width of corridors and passageways providing access to adaptable dwelling units, the BC Building Code Interpretation Committee has submitted a request for a building code change to BSSB to clarify the issue.

Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair

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