


BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0023

INTERPRETATION

Page 1 of 2

Interpretation Date:	May 21, 2024
Building Code Edition:	BC Building Code 2024
Subject:	Future Conversion of Adaptable Suites
Keywords:	Adaptable, future, conversion
Building Code Reference(s):	3.8.3.1.(1), 3.8.5.7.(1)(c) & (d), A-3.8.5.7.(1)(c) &(d)
Question:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. When a homeowner decides to convert an adaptable suite to include some accessible features to suit their needs, does the future installation have to comply with the requirements for public washrooms as described in Subsection 3.8.3.? This would include future grab bars, future push buttons for power door operators, toilet paper dispensers, etc.?2. If the answer to (1) is NO, are there any design requirements of Subsection 3.8.3. for future installations?
Interpretation:	<p>1. No (with some exceptions).</p> <p>Sentence 3.8.3.1.(1) states that Subsection 3.8.3. apply to buildings or parts thereof and facilities that are required to be accessible.</p> <p>Clause 3.8.2.3.(2)(l) states that access is not required within a suite of residential occupancy provided that is <i>“has not been designated by this Code or an authority having jurisdiction to be accessible or designed and constructed as an adaptable dwelling unit”</i>.</p> <p>This means that an adaptable dwelling unit is not required to comply with the accessible requirements of Section 3.8. except those provided in Subsection 3.8.5.</p> <p></p> <hr/> <p>Patrick Shek, P.Eng., CP, FEC, Committee Chair</p>
<p>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 <i>Authority Having Jurisdiction</i>. The views of the joint committee should not be construed as legal advice.</p>	

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0023

INTERPRETATION

Page 2 of 2

It is not the intent of the code that interior spaces within an adaptable dwelling unit for future accessible conversions be designed in a similar manner to public spaces as required by Subsection 3.8.3.

The homeowner can design accessible features within their dwelling unit to suit their individual needs.

For example, they may utilize a remote-control device to activate power door operators rather than using upper and lower push paddles that are setback from the latch side of the door by 600 mm as required by 3.8.3.6.(6).

The exception to this is backing for future grab bars:

3.8.3.7.(1)(e) mandates that backing for grab bars for water closets, showers and bathtubs be installed in accordance with 3.8.3.12.(f) & (g) for water closets, 3.8.3.17.(1)(f) for showers and 3.8.3.18.(1)(f) for bathtubs.

2. No.

As stated in the answer to question 1, Clause 3.8.2.3.(2)(l) states that access is not required within a suite of residential occupancy, and adaptable dwelling units need only to comply with Subsection 3.8.5.

Note that adaptable requirements are temporary unrestricted matters with time limitations in the Building Act.

Local governments can adopt bylaws to require additional adaptable design features that are more than the building code requirements. Their bylaws cannot include less restrictive requirements than are required by the building code.

Check with the AHJ to determine if they have additional adaptable requirements within their community.



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.