

BC BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION COMMITTEE

A joint committee with members representing
AIBC, EGBC, BOABC

File No: 24-0165

INTERPRETATION

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Interpretation Date: April 21, 2026

Building Code Edition: BC Building Code 2024

Subject: Basement Storage (Parking) Garage of a Residential Building with a Single Exit

Keywords: Storage Garage, Parking, Basement, Exit

Building Code Reference(s): 3.2.10., 3.2.10.1.(1), 3.4

Question:

A multi-storey building is permitted to have a single exit where the building is of only residential occupancy, in accordance with Subsection 3.2.10. Is the building permitted to also have a basement parking garage that serves the residential occupancy?

Interpretation:

Yes.

The BCBC was revised in August 2024 to permit small-floorplate residential buildings of up to 6 storeys to have only 1 exit stair, subject to other mitigating features as stated in the new Subsection 3.2.10. Sentence 3.2.10.1.(1) states that Subsection 3.2.10 applies to buildings of only residential occupancy (with minor exceptions that are not relevant).

It is not clear in Subsection 3.2.10 whether this requirement for “only residential occupancy” would prohibit such a building from having a basement parking garage. However, a previous BC Building Code Appeal Board ruling (BCAB #1675) stated that, where a parking garage serves only the residential units in the building, it can be considered as subsidiary to the residential occupancy. On this basis, it is considered to be acceptable for a residential building regulated by Subsection 3.2.10 to have a basement parking garage, where the garage serves only the residential units in the same building.

Subsection 3.2.10 allows 1 exit from a floor area based on specific features applicable to residential suites, exits and floor areas. The parking garage requires a minimum of 2 exits unless it can comply with other requirements in Section 3.4 to permit a single exit.



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

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