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Application of the 2024 BC Building Code

This bulletin provides information about changes to the effective date for seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the British Columbia Building Code (BC Building Code) 2024¹. Information in Bulletins [B24-01-R](#) Adaptable Dwellings Transition and [B24-02-R](#) Seismic Design Delay have been updated to reflect the extended effective date.

The BC Building Code 2024 came into effect for projects with building permits applied for after March 8, 2024; however, seismic and adaptable dwelling unit provisions in the BC Building Code 2018 edition remained in effect for projects with building permits applied **for before March 10, 2025**. Previously, projects with building permits applied for **on or after March 10, 2025**, would need to comply with the entirety of the BC Building Code 2024 including the seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements.

Adaptable dwelling unit requirements apply to select residential buildings. More information on adaptable dwelling units is available in Bulletin B24-09-R42. All buildings must consider seismic loads; however, these loads differ from location to location and can impact buildings differently based on their design.

Seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements apply to projects as follows:

Status Quo:

If you apply for a building permit **before March 10, 2025**, the seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the BC Building Code 2018 apply to the building project. Projects for which building permits are applied for **on or after March 10, 2025**, are subject to the seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the BC Building Code 2024. (See [Bulletin B25-01](#) for more information on the application of the adaptable dwelling unit provisions.)

If no building permit is required and work substantially begins **before March 10, 2025**, then the seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the BC Building Code

¹ Seismic requirements are found in Subsection 4.1.8., Section 9.23., and Appendix C of Division B. Adaptable dwelling unit requirements are found in Subsection 3.8.5. of Division B.

2018 apply to the building project. Projects for which no building permit is required, and work substantially begins **on or after March 10, 2025**, are subject to the seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the BC Building Code 2024.

In-Stream Projects – Development Permit Applications:

Projects that are subject to development permit applications² have a new option to extend the application of the seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the BC Building Code 2018 provided the following criteria are met:

Drawings must:

- contain information on the number of dwelling units, **OR** information on the dimensions of dwelling units, **OR** information on the dimensions of structural components or assemblies,
- be prepared by, or prepared under the supervision of, a registered professional³ or a registrant of the Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of BC, **AND**
- have been submitted in a form satisfactory to a local authority as part of a development permit application **before March 8, 2024**.

If these three criteria are met, then seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the BC Building Code 2018 apply to the project; **HOWEVER, a building permit for the project must be applied for before March 8, 2027, AND work must continue to completion without interruption, other than work stoppages considered reasonable to industry.** If these three criteria are met but the building permit is applied for **on or after March 8, 2027**, then the seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the BC Building Code 2024 apply to the project.

² Development permit application means an application, in a form satisfactory to the local authority, for a permit issued in accordance with section 490 of the *Local Government Act*.

³ Registered professional means a person who is registered as an Architect with the Architectural Institute of British Columbia under the *Professional Governance Act*, or a person who is registered as a professional engineer or professional licensee engineering with the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of the Province of British Columbia under the *Professional Governance Act*.

In-Stream Projects – Rezoning Applications:

Projects that are subject to a rezoning application⁴ have a new option to extend the application of the seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the BC Building Code 2018 provided the following criteria is met:

Drawings must:

- contain information on the number of dwelling units, **OR** information on the dimensions of dwelling units, **OR** information on the dimensions of structural components or assemblies,
- be prepared by, or prepared under the supervision of, a registered professional or registrant of the Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of BC, **AND**
- have been submitted in a form satisfactory to a local authority as part of a rezoning application **before March 8, 2024**.

If these three criteria are met, then seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the BC Building Code 2018 apply to the project; **HOWEVER, a building permit for the project must be applied for before March 8, 2027, AND work must continue to completion without interruption, other than work stoppages considered reasonable to industry.** If these three criteria are met but the building permit is applied for **on or after March 8, 2027**, then the seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the BC Building Code 2024 apply to the project.

In-Stream Projects – Drawings Prepared:

Projects for which drawings were prepared **before March 8, 2024**, have a new option to extend the application of the seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the BC Building Code 2018 provided the following criteria is met:

Drawings must:

- contain information on the number of dwelling units, **OR** information on the dimensions of dwelling units, **OR** information on the dimensions of structural components or assemblies,
- be prepared by, or prepared under the supervision of, a registered professional or a registrant of the Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of BC, **AND**
- have been prepared **before March 8, 2024**.

⁴ Rezoning application means an application, in a form satisfactory to the local authority, in relation to a bylaw in accordance with section 479 of the *Local Government Act*.

These drawings may not have been submitted to a local authority if there was no application in advance of a building permit application, however the date of these drawings would be used to determine that they were complete **before March 8, 2024**.

If these three criteria are met, then seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the BC Building Code 2018 apply to the project; **HOWEVER, a building permit for the project must be applied for before March 8, 2027, AND work must continue to completion without interruption, other than work stoppages considered reasonable to industry.** If these three criteria are met but the building permit is applied for **on or after March 8, 2027**, then the seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the BC Building Code 2024 apply to the project.

These new and existing options may be considered for all projects 'in-stream'. Projects subject to development permit applications or rezoning applications may consider the new options related to those processes, though they are not obliged to follow those options. Projects with development permit applications or with rezoning applications can follow the new drawings prepared option, and they can still follow the status quo, meaning those projects may proceed unaffected according to the application described for the status quo.

Are the drawings discussed for these new options the same as drawings submitted with a building permit application?

Not necessarily. The drawings discussed for the new options are ones typically generated in the earlier stages of a project. They may not be as detailed as drawings submitted as part of a building permit application; however, there may be various commitments they represent regarding seismic design or dwelling units that are made ahead of a building permit application. It is anticipated that there will be some differences between the drawings discussed for these new options and the drawings submitted as part of a building permit application due to the different purposes for such drawings and the different stages of the project that they represent. As such, it is not required that the drawings submitted for the building permit be the same as the drawings that are described in the new options.

It is not required that they be prepared by the same person; however, it is required that the drawings discussed for these new options be prepared by, or prepared under the supervision of, a registered professional as defined in the BC Building Code or by a registrant with the Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of BC. If subject to a development permit application or rezoning application, the drawings must be in a form satisfactory to the local authority, meaning they have sufficient detail for the purpose and adhere to applicable rules and regulations. Likewise, drawings for the 'drawings prepared' option are also to have sufficient detail for the purpose and adhere to applicable rules and regulations.

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Who prepares the drawings discussed for these new options?

Although many people prepare drawings, the designer required to prepare, or supervise the preparation of, the drawings discussed in the new options is regulated under the *Professional Governance Act*. This includes any person that is:

- registered as an Architect with the Architectural Institute of British Columbia under the *Professional Governance Act*,
- registered as a professional engineer or professional licensee engineering with the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of the Province of British Columbia under the *Professional Governance Act*, or
- a registrant of the Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of BC under the *Professional Governance Act*.

The new options are not applicable to projects for which drawings described were prepared by, or not prepared under the supervision of, a person other than those listed above. Those projects follow the status quo.

Does there have to be a demonstration of floor space changes or impacts resulting from seismic or adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the BC Building Code 2024 to a project as a condition to extend the application of the 2018 requirements?

No. If the criteria for any of the options discussed are met, the BC Building Code requirements can be applied as described in those options.

Development permit process and rezoning processes vary from one local authority to another. How do I know what stage of the process determines my options for applying the appropriate editions of the BC Building Code?

Determination of which provisions of which editions of the BC Building Code apply is linked to when the drawings were prepared and, for those projects applying the development permit application option or rezoning application option, were submitted in a form satisfactory to the local authority. The date of the drawings must be **before March 8, 2024**, as a condition to apply the new options.

How are editions of the BC Building Code applied to multi-phase building projects?

Contact the local authority having jurisdiction for information on permitting processes for multi-phase projects. Remember, for multi-phase building projects, the drawings discussed for the new options must be prepared **before March 8, 2024**.

What dates do I need to remember?

November 24, 2023 Adoption of the BC Building Code 2024.

March 8, 2024 Most of the BC Building Code 2024 came into force for projects for which building permits were applied for on or after this date. Seismic and adaptable requirements in the BC Building Code 2018 edition continued to remain in effect.

This is the cut-off date that the drawings described in the new options must have been prepared by (prepared before March 8, 2024) as a condition to apply the new options.

Drawings prepared after this date with the intention of applying for a building permit **on or after March 10, 2025**, shall comply with the entirety of the BC Building Code 2024.

March 10, 2025 The entirety of the BC Building Code 2024 comes into effect for projects for which building permits are applied for on or after this date – ***unless one of the new options is applied.***

(For projects that are not applying one of the new options, the entirety of the BC Building Code 2024 applies.)

March 8, 2027 Any projects applying the new options must apply for a building permit before this date.

Any projects applying for a building permit on or after this date must comply with the entirety of the BC Building Code 2024.

Do I have to use one of the new options or can I proceed as the original adopting order prescribed?

You are not required to use one of the new options. Anyone following the original adopting order for application of the BC Building Code can continue. The application of editions of the BC Building Code established by the original adopting order is continued in the new order

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(see the description of **Status Quo** in this bulletin). The new order provides *additional* options but does not require any projects to *apply* the new options.

What if I have drawings prepared before March 8, 2024, that meet the criteria but the commitments on number of dwelling units, dimensions of dwelling units, or dimensions of structural elements change? Does the extension still apply?

Yes. Once drawings are prepared that meet the criteria, the project is considered in-stream and may use the new options. The new options do not limit the scale or scope of changes to the drawings. For example, the number of dimensions of dwelling units may change and/or the dimensions of structural elements may change in subsequent drawings along the process. The new options do require a building permit application **before March 8, 2027**, so any changes and commitments must be made in advance of that application.

I prepared drawings for a project that meet the criteria for the extension, but I did not do so with the knowledge that those drawings would now enable further extension of select provisions from the BC Building Code 2018. Am I the one responsible for which edition of the BC Building Code applies to those features of the project?

It is recommended that these new options be considered by those responsible for compliance as required by Divisions A and C of the BC Building Code and that any choice to follow one of the new options be an informed decision of those parties. It is expected that the designer, or the designer that oversaw the preparation of the drawings, consider the new options and the BC Building Code 2024 provisions and bring any recommendations to others responsible for compliance of the project.

Questions on professional responsibility are best directed to your professional association.

Is it a guarantee that the 2018 edition for projects in-stream will be more economical in terms of sellable floor space and construction costs than following the 2024 edition or should I consider the BC Building Code 2024 provisions for my project that is in-stream?

Consider the BC Building Code 2024 provisions. Any impacts to projects that are in-stream will vary from project to project. Designers are encouraged not only to become familiar with the BC Building Code 2024 provisions but to examine their options in order to find the most efficient and economical design. In many cases, the BC Building Code 2024 provisions enable greater design flexibility from previous practice. It is encouraged when reviewing the 2024 edition to consider a holistic approach to new designs versus considering only slight adjustments, feature by feature, to identify the greatest efficiencies.

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