

ADAPTABLE DWELLING UNITS

The purpose of this bulletin is to clarify some of the BC Building Code requirements for Adaptable Dwelling Units.

"This information is provided for convenience only and is not in substitution of applicable City Bylaws or Provincial or Federal Codes or laws. You must satisfy yourself that any existing or proposed construction or other works complies with such Bylaws, Codes or other laws."

An Adaptable Dwelling Unit is a dwelling unit designed and constructed to facilitate future modification at minimal cost to provide access for persons with disabilities. By building flexibility into these units from the start, it will

- help people stay in their own homes through illness, injury and aging;
- provide more accessibility for people with disabilities and
- reduce the cost of future renovations to accommodate people with disabilities.

The construction requirements for adaptable dwelling units are specified in Subsection 3.8.5., Division B of the BC Building Code and additional information can be found on the [webpage](#) of Building and Safety Standards Branch.

The Code does not regulate the number of adaptable dwelling units required in a project. For such information please contact our Planning Department at 604-294-7400.

Subsection 3.8.5 of the BC Building Code does not specifically require the entry door to the adaptable dwelling unit to comply with the required clearances for wheelchair access; however, it has been confirmed with the Building and Safety Standards Branch that it is the intent of the code to **apply those clearances to the unit entry door as well as the doors to at least one of the bathrooms and bedrooms**. In fact wheelchair access shall be provided from the entry door of the building to the entry door of the adaptable units.

There are different sets of clearances applying to different types of doors for wheelchair access. Clearances for power-operated doors are reduced from those required for manual-operated doors. **In order to take advantage of those reduced clearances the entire power-operated door must be installed. Pre-wired power-operated doors are not acceptable.** This is also confirmed by the BC Building Code [Appeal Board Decision #1728](#).

If you have any questions please contact the Building Department at 604-294-7130.