



Seismic and ADU Requirements

No.: BUILDING-59

Date: 2024-11-15

Purpose

To inform developers, architects, engineers, builders, designers, and staff about changes to the effective date for seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the *British Columbia Building Code 2024 (BC Building Code 2024)*. In addition, the purpose is to communicate in which circumstances the *British Columbia Building Code 2018 (BC Building Code 2018)* will still apply regarding seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements only.

Background and Timelines

Ministerial Order No. BA 2024 04 was made on August 29, 2024.

The amended Order exempts "in-stream" projects that had substantial design work completed according to the *BC Building Code 2018* from the application of the *BC Building Code 2024* adaptable dwelling unit and seismic requirements until March 8, 2027.

The Building and Safety Standards Branch also issued *Information Bulletin B24-10-R*, dated September 20, 2024, to provide information about changes to the effective date for the seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the *BC Building Code 2024*, which supersedes some of the information in earlier Bulletins.

Current Status

If a building permit is applied for at the City of Richmond on or before Sunday March 9, 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 Monday March 10, 2025, are subject to the seismic and adaptable dwelling unit requirements in the *BC Building Code 2024*.

Exemptions Granted for "In-stream" Projects

As previously mentioned, the Province of British Columbia amended the Ministerial Order adopting the *BC Building Code 2024*, introducing a significant exemption for "in-stream" construction projects. This amendment allows projects with substantial design work completed under the *BC Building Code 2018* to defer compliance with the 2024 Code's adaptable dwelling unit and seismic requirements until March 8, 2027.

"In-stream projects" are projects for which:

- a development permit application and drawings have been submitted in a form satisfactory to the City of Richmond in relation to the building on or before Thursday March 7, 2024; or
- a rezoning application and drawings have been submitted in a form satisfactory to the City of Richmond in relation to the building on or before Thursday March 7, 2024; or
- drawings that have been substantially prepared by or under the supervision of, a registered professional or registrant of the Applied Science Technologists & Technicians of BC on or before Thursday, March 7, 2024. These drawings may not have been submitted to the City of Richmond if there was no application in advance of a building permit application. The date of these drawings would be used to determine when they were substantially complete on or before Thursday March 7, 2024, to qualify for the exemption to the March 2025 onset of the seismic and adaptable dwelling unit provisions.

See over →

In order to determine the relevant date of these drawings, an electronic file submission by the applicant to verify that work was substantially prepared on or before Thursday March 7, 2024 would be preferred. Failing this preferred option, it will be incumbent on the applicant to provide another form of verification to be evaluated by the City of Richmond.

The minimum requirement for drawings to be deemed acceptable to the City of Richmond is that the drawings in relation to the building must include information on any of the following:

- the number of dwelling units in a residential occupancy; or
- the dimensions of dwelling units in a residential occupancy; or
- the dimensions of structural components or assemblies that are designed to resist seismic or lateral forces.

Also, building permits for “in-stream” projects must be applied for in person at the City of Richmond or electronically on or before Sunday, March 7, 2027, in order for the review to be conducted under the 2018 Code provisions for adaptable dwelling unit and seismic requirements. Incomplete applications will not be accepted or be deemed to have met the Sunday, March 7, 2027, deadline.