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## NCARB Project-Planning-Design Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Building Systems, Materials, &amp; Assemblies: This section of the exam measures skills of architectural designers and covers the understanding of building systems such as mechanical, electrical, and plumbing, along with structural and specialty systems. It also involves selecting appropriate materials and assemblies to align with program needs, budgets, and regulations.</li></ul>
Topic 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Project Integration of Program &amp; Systems: This section of the exam measures skills of project architects and focuses on integrating decisions about environmental conditions, codes, and building systems into one cohesive project design. It highlights how to configure the building and incorporate both program requirements and contextual conditions in a unified design approach.</li></ul>
Topic 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Codes &amp; Regulations: This section of the exam measures the skills of project architects and focuses on applying zoning laws, environmental rules, and building codes during the planning stage. Candidates are tested on how to integrate multiple regulatory requirements into a project's design effectively.</li></ul>
Topic 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Project Costs &amp; Budgeting: This section of the exam measures skills of architectural designers and assesses the ability to evaluate design alternatives based on program goals, perform cost evaluations, and manage cost considerations throughout the design process.</li></ul>
Topic 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Environmental Conditions &amp; Context: This section of the exam measures skills of architectural designers and covers how to use site analysis information to determine building placement and environmental planning decisions. It emphasizes applying sustainable principles and considering the neighborhood context to guide project design.</li></ul>

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## NCARB ARE 5.0 Project Planning & Design (PPD) Sample Questions (Q10-Q15):

### NEW QUESTION # 10

Click in the structural bay of the elevation that is the most appropriate location to install steel rod cross bracing.

#### Answer:

Explanation:

Explanation:

the most appropriate location to install steel rod cross bracing is in the fourth structural bay, which corresponds to the bay on the far right side of the elevation.

\* Steel rod cross bracing is typically installed in bays that are fully open or contain large door openings and require lateral support to resist racking forces (lateral loads such as wind or seismic forces).

\* The fourth bay shows a large door opening without any visible solid wall or shear wall elements, making it structurally weaker against lateral loads and thus the most suitable for cross bracing.

\* The first bay, with a smaller door or solid wall, and the other bays with more enclosed or glazed openings may have other structural elements providing lateral resistance.

\* Installing the bracing in the fourth bay enhances structural stability and prevents lateral displacement or deformation.

### NEW QUESTION # 11

Which light fixture and finish configuration will increase the apparent length of an office corridor?

- A. Install direct lighting pendants and a light color, highly reflective floor finish.
- **B. Provide indirect cove lighting and paint the ceiling a light color.**
- C. Install lighting parallel to the sight line and paint the ceiling a dark color.
- D. Install direct lighting pendants and paint the ceiling a dark color.

#### Answer: B

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

The apparent length of a corridor can be influenced by lighting and finish strategies that affect perception of depth and spatial volume.

\* Option D: Providing indirect cove lighting and painting the ceiling a light color helps increase the apparent length of the corridor. Indirect lighting washes light softly onto the ceiling and walls, creating a continuous visual flow along the corridor. When combined with a light-colored ceiling, this reduces shadows and visual breaks, making the corridor feel longer and more expansive.

\* Option A and C: Dark-colored ceilings absorb light and visually compress spaces, making corridors feel shorter and more confined. Direct lighting pendants create localized illumination that can produce shadows and disrupt visual continuity, which diminishes perceived length.

\* Option B: While a light, highly reflective floor finish can brighten the corridor, direct lighting pendants and lack of emphasis on ceiling treatment limit the extension of perceived length. Reflective floors can increase brightness but don't significantly elongate space without complementary ceiling and wall treatments.

NCARB's ARE Project Planning & Design guidelines highlight that light color, fixture type, and ceiling finish greatly affect spatial perception. Light, evenly distributed illumination combined with light ceiling colors enhances the feeling of spaciousness and length in enclosed spaces like corridors.

References:

ARE 5.0 Project Planning & Design Content Outline: Environmental Conditions and Context - Lighting and Material Finishes The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition, Chapter 9: Interior Environments and Lighting NCARB PPD Study Materials: Perception of Space and Lighting Strategies

### NEW QUESTION # 12

On the site plan, the Phase I building is a 24-hour emergency veterinary clinic. The Phase II building is a boarding kennel for dogs and cats. The cat enclosures will face north for views of the wetlands. Eventually, a landscape architect will design a memorial garden on the northwest area of the site.

The architect needs to locate a service drive for the property and wants to minimize the impact of construction on site vegetation and wildlife.

Click on the property line location on the site plan to indicate the appropriate location for the service drive.

#### Answer:

Explanation:

Explanation:

east side (Pine Street)

\* Locating the service drive along the east side (Pine Street) minimizes disturbance to the wetlands area (northwest part of the site) and existing trees concentrated mostly in the southwest and northwest areas.

\* This placement keeps the service drive away from the sensitive wetlands and the planned memorial garden on the northwest, preserving wildlife habitats and mature vegetation.

\* It also provides convenient access for service vehicles without crossing or fragmenting critical site features.

\* The east side is adjacent to an existing road (Pine Street), making it logical for service access and reducing new disturbance.

This approach aligns with NCARB ARE 5.0 Project Planning & Design guidance for site design prioritizing environmental preservation and minimizing construction impact on sensitive natural areas.

### NEW QUESTION # 13

During design development of a new college laboratory facility, the owner asks the architect to include way- finding signage mounted adjacent to doors. The type of signage requested will project into the corridors of the building.

Which of the following should the architect consider when selecting the signage? Check the three that apply.

- A. Manufacturer installation information
- B. IBC exit width requirements
- C. ADA accessibility requirements
- D. Local zoning ordinance on signage
- E. Signage material and finish type
- F. International Energy Code

#### Answer: A,B,C

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

When signage projects into corridors:

ADA requirements (A) ensure signage is accessible to all, including those with disabilities.

IBC exit width requirements (B) ensure projected signage does not reduce required egress widths.

Manufacturer installation information (F) guides proper, safe mounting and compliance with structural requirements.

Zoning (D) is generally for exterior signage.

Energy code (E) is not related.

Material and finish (C) affect aesthetics but not code compliance.

References:

ARE 5.0 PPD - Codes and Regulations, Accessibility

The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition - Signage Design

### NEW QUESTION # 14

For a three-story building, which of the following is considered a vertical irregularity with respect to seismic design?

- A. Interior symmetrically placed shear walls are four times as stiff as perimeter columns.
- B. The building has a significant reentrant corner on the front side.
- C. The effective mass of the roof is one-half the mass of the floor immediately below.
- D. The effective mass of story 2 is two times the mass of story 1.

## Answer: D

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

In seismic design, vertical irregularities are discontinuities or abrupt changes in the building's mass, stiffness, or geometry that can affect seismic response and increase vulnerability during an earthquake. The NCARB ARE 5.0 Project Planning & Design guidelines describe vertical irregularities as changes occurring along the height of the building.

\* Option C describes a mass irregularity where story 2 has twice the effective mass of story 1. According to seismic code provisions (such as those referenced in ASCE 7 and adopted by IBC), a vertical mass irregularity is present if the effective seismic mass in any story is more than 150% (1.5 times) or less than 70% (0.7 times) of the mass of an adjacent story. Here, doubling the mass is a significant vertical irregularity that affects the dynamic behavior and design.

\* Option A, the roof mass being half that of the floor below, is a decrease in mass but less than the typical threshold of 30% difference (the ratio is 0.5, which is a 50% difference). This might also be considered, but the mass irregularity is more typically flagged at the 1.5x or 0.7x threshold and tends to be more critical in lower floors, making C the clearer choice.

\* Option B describes a reentrant corner, which is a horizontal plan irregularity, not vertical. Reentrant corners affect torsional behavior but are not classified as vertical irregularities.

\* Option D refers to stiffness differences between interior shear walls and perimeter columns but, when symmetrically placed, this is not necessarily considered an irregularity. Vertical stiffness irregularities are defined by abrupt stiffness changes in vertical elements, but symmetry mitigates torsional effects.

The presence of vertical mass irregularities significantly influences seismic forces distribution, dynamic response, and the potential for torsional motions. Designers must recognize these irregularities per NCARB guidelines and apply appropriate structural detailing and design modifications to meet life-safety requirements.

References:

ARE 5.0 Project Planning & Design Outline: Environmental Conditions and Context - Seismic Design Considerations NCARB ARE 5.0 Guidelines, Seismic Design and Irregularities ASCE 7-16, Chapter 12 - Seismic Design Criteria The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition, Chapter 13: Building Codes, Standards, and Regulations

## NEW QUESTION # 15

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