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NCARB PDD Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	• Integration of Building Materials & Systems: This section of the exam measures the skills of Architectural Designers and focuses on the ability to resolve and integrate various building systems into cohesive project goals. It covers analyzing architectural systems and technologies, determining the size of structural, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems, and incorporating specialty systems such as acoustics, lighting, security, and communications. It also evaluates the ability to detail how multiple building systems work together and to coordinate across disciplines to achieve a unified design.
Topic 2	• Codes & Regulations: This section of the exam measures skills of Building Code Specialists and examines how codes and regulations apply at a detailed level during documentation. Candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge of compliance with the International Building Code (IBC) as well as other specialty regulations, as well as how to interpret and apply these standards to ensure design and documentation meet legal and safety requirements.
Topic 3	• Construction Cost: This section of the exam measures the skills of Construction Managers and focuses on the financial side of project execution. It evaluates the ability to analyze construction cost estimates to confirm that they align with project design intent and budgetary constraints. Although this is the smallest section, it is critical for ensuring projects remain feasible and economically viable.
Topic 4	• Project Manual & Specifications: This section of the exam measures the skills of Specifications Writers and emphasizes the importance of developing documentation that goes beyond drawings. Candidates must understand how to identify and prioritize elements needed to prepare, maintain, and refine both the project manual and project specifications. It also assesses the ability to align and coordinate these specifications with the construction documents to ensure consistency and accuracy.

Topic 5	• Construction Documentation: This section of the exam measures skills of Project Architects and addresses the creation and management of project documentation. Candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge of documenting building design and site features, preparing detailed architectural drawings, and applying industry standards to produce a coordinated set of construction documents. The section also includes understanding how project changes impact documentation and how to communicate these updates effectively to both the design team and the client.:

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NCARB ARE 5.0 Project Development and Documentation Exam Sample Questions (Q29-Q34):

NEW QUESTION # 29
Proposed trees along a residential street next to a new development site should first be selected based on which of the following?

- A. Seasonal foliage, color, and scale
- B. Dense root systems and wind resistance
- C. Adaptability to local climate and soil conditions
- D. Provision of natural habitation for local wildlife

Answer: C

Explanation:
Selecting trees for residential streets near a new development should prioritize:
Adaptability to local climate and soil conditions to ensure healthy growth and longevity.
While seasonal foliage, color, scale, and wildlife habitat are important, they are secondary to ensuring the tree can survive and thrive in the environment.
Dense root systems and wind resistance are considerations but often come after adaptability is confirmed.
Reference:
NCARB ARE 5.0 Review Manual, Site Design and Environmental Systems chapter Landscape architecture best practices and local planting guides

NEW QUESTION # 30
A family-owned apple farm in the Upper Midwest is taking advantage of a change in the local zoning code that added a new Agri-Tourism class in the existing farm zone. This allows the Owner to build a new facility on their existing site. The building will be open to the public and include a brewery, distillery, tap room, and market. The architect is ready to submit the drawings to the Owner for the 50% construction documents review.
To accommodate a compressed construction schedule, the Owner will be utilizing a design-build process. The Contractor has submitted the Pre-Engineered Metal Building (PEMB) shop drawings to the Architect for review, due to the lead time on this critical path item. Once construction begins, farming operations must be able to continue uninterrupted.
Key project information includes:
Brewing and distilling will operate year-round.
Brewery will initially include four fermenting tanks. Owner has requested space for at least two additional tanks. Potential expansion will be based on future sales.
Distillery will produce 16% alcohol, which is classified as a flammable liquid. Fire separations are required.
Tap Room is designed with seating for 300 people, not including exterior patio seating. It will have views to the working orchards and the historic buildings on site.
Tap Room is scheduled to be open from August through November. Owner would like options to extend operating dates based on

popularity.
The Market area will feature local farm products and is not conditioned.
Entire building will be fully sprinklered.
Selected building materials are low-maintenance, as requested by the Owner, for durability and to reflect the nature of a working farm.
Mechanical and electrical systems will be hung from the building structure. These loads are included in PEMB shop drawings.
Public water and sewer is not available at the Project Site.
Occupancy sensors are included to reduce utility costs and achieve energy conservation requirements.
The following resources are available for your reference:
Architectural Drawings, including plans, elevations, sections, and schedules Consultant Drawings, including structural, HVAC, power distribution, and plumbing PEMB Shop Drawings Design and Construction Schedule Specification Excerpts, showing relevant spec sections IBC and ADA Excerpts, showing relevant code and accessibility sections After reviewing the documents, the architect discovers a coordination issue in the corridor.
The architect is preparing the project manual.
What section should be included?

- A. 015000 Temporary Utilities
- B. 006113 Performance and Payment Bond
- C. 012300 Alternates
- D. 019113 General Commissioning Requirements

Answer: A

Explanation:
Understanding the Context
When preparing the Project Manual in the Project Development & Documentation (PDD) section of the ARE 5.0 exam, you need to determine which specification sections are essential based on project requirements and conditions. The Project Manual organizes administrative and technical specifications into divisions, each serving a specific purpose.
In this case, because construction will occur while farming operations continue uninterrupted-and public water and sewer services are unavailable on site-temporary utilities (such as water, power, and possibly sanitation) are a critical component that must be clearly addressed in the Project Manual. These provisions ensure the contractor understands how to support construction without disrupting farm operations and without relying on permanent utilities.
Why "015000 Temporary Utilities" is Required
Section 01 50 00 - Temporary Utilities (often numbered 015000) is part of Division 01: General Requirements in the Project Manual. It specifies requirements for establishing and maintaining temporary utility services (like water, electric, lighting, heating, cooling, toilets) during construction. It helps ensure the design and construction team address logistical needs amid the distinctive site conditions-namely the absence of public utilities and the necessity of continuous farm operations.
As noted in a design and construction manual resource:
"Section 01 51 00 - Temporary Utilities. This section is generally included in all projects; however, it must be carefully written so as to be applicable to the specific project conditions." This directly supports inclusion of Temporary Utilities in the Project Manual for this project scenario.
Why Other Options Are Not Appropriate
* A. 006113 Performance and Payment BondThese forms pertain to contract security and bonding requirements, which would be located in Division 00 (Procurement and Contracting Requirements), not Division 01. The question focuses on which section should be included in the Project Manual being prepared at this phase; the key imperative here is the temporary utility needs, not bonds.
* B. 012300 AlternatesAlternates allow multiple pricing options for different project scopes, but there is no indication that alternate options (e.g., alternate spaces or functions) are being used in this design.
There's no mention of bidding alternates.
* D. 019113 General Commissioning RequirementsCommissioning provisions (often related to MEP system verification and performance) would only be required if commissioning is part of the project deliverables. The project brief doesn't indicate commissioning deliverables-only that mechanical and electrical systems are supported by the PEMB, and the focus here is continuity of operations and utilities during construction, not commissioning.

NEW QUESTION # 31
A family-owned apple farm in the Upper Midwest is taking advantage of a change in the local zoning code that added a new Agri-Tourism class in the existing farm zone. This allows the Owner to build a new facility on their existing site. The building will be open to the public and include a brewery, distillery, tap room, and market. The architect is ready to submit the drawings to the Owner for the 50% construction documents review.
To accommodate a compressed construction schedule, the Owner will be utilizing a design-build process. The Contractor has submitted the Pre-Engineered Metal Building (PEMB) shop drawings to the Architect for review, due to the lead time on this critical

path item. Once construction begins, farming operations must be able to continue uninterrupted.
Key project information includes:
* Brewing and distilling will operate year-round.
* Brewery will initially include four fermenting tanks. Owner has requested space for at least two additional tanks. Potential expansion will be based on future sales.
* Distillery will produce 16% alcohol, which is classified as a flammable liquid. Fire separations are required.
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* Public water and sewer is not available at the Project Site.
* Occupancy sensors are included to reduce utility costs and achieve energy conservation requirements.
The following resources are available for your reference:
* Architectural Drawings, including plans, elevations, sections, and schedules
* Consultant Drawings, including structural, HVAC, power distribution, and plumbing
* PEMB Shop Drawings
* Design and Construction Schedule
* Specification Excerpts, showing relevant spec sections
* IBC and ADA Excerpts, showing relevant code and accessibility sections
* After reviewing the documents, the architect discovers a coordination issue in the corridor.

Ceiling Material	Thickness	SF	SF cost	RT
Cementitious Wood Fiber Panels	1"	448	$12.64	2.0
Cementitious Wood Fiber Panels	2"	384	$18.95	1.8
2x2 Acoustical Ceiling Tile	15/16"	900	$8.81	2.0
Acoustical Sound Board	1"	256	$18.23	1.6

The owner is concerned about elevated noise levels in the Tap Room when fully occupied. The current design utilizes a 2 x 2 acoustic ceiling tile system installed above the fans. An acoustical engineer recommends noise mitigation through limiting reverberation time (RT) to 2.0 seconds or less in the space. This can be achieved by the provided ceiling material options and their corresponding area.
What should the architect recommend that will minimize additional project costs while providing the recommended acoustical solution?

- A. Retain current ceiling cloud layout and a 2 x 2 acoustic ceiling tile system but remove the fans.
- B. Revise design using only one ceiling cloud and cementitious wood fiber panel system (1" in thickness).
- C. Retain current ceiling cloud layout and a 2 x 2 acoustic ceiling tile system and add acoustical sound board above.
- D. Revise design using only one ceiling cloud and cementitious wood fiber panel system (2" in thickness).

Answer: C

Explanation:
1. Problem Summary
* Goal: Reduce reverberation time (RT) in the Tap Room to 2.0 seconds or less.
* Current design: 2' x 2' acoustic ceiling tile system (RT = 2.0 seconds) installed above fans.
* Constraint: Minimize additional project cost.
* Recommendation from acoustical engineer: Use materials to achieve target RT without redesigning the space.
2. Review of Table Data
Material
RT
SF
SF Cost
Cementitious Wood Fiber Panels (1")

2.0
448
$12.64
Cementitious Wood Fiber Panels (2")
1.8
384
$18.95
2x2 Acoustical Ceiling Tile (15/16")
2.0
900
$8.81
Acoustical Sound Board (1")
1.6
256
$18.23
3. Interpretation of RT Values
* Current 2x2 Acoustic Ceiling Tile: RT = 2.0 seconds # meets the target exactly.
* However, fans may reduce the acoustic performance by reflecting or scattering sound, so supplemental absorption may be needed.
* Adding Acoustical Sound Board (RT = 1.6) above the existing tile system will improve absorption and lower RT below 2.0 seconds.
4. Cost & Constructability
* Retaining the current ceiling layout and simply adding a layer above is:
* Least disruptive to current design.
* Avoids redesign of the ceiling cloud layout.
* Minimizes schedule impact (critical for design-build with compressed schedule).
* Replacing with wood fiber panels (1" or 2") would require removal of existing tile, redesign of suspension, and higher cost/SF.
5. Why Other Options Are Incorrect
* A. Remove fans: This addresses air movement, not RT. Removing them does not guarantee RT improvement and conflicts with HVAC design intent.
* B. One cloud + 1" wood fiber panels: Reduces coverage area and may not meet RT goal; also costly and disruptive.
* C. One cloud + 2" wood fiber panels: Even more costly, same redesign problem as B.
* D. Retain tiles and add sound board above: Achieves RT < 2.0, minimal disruption, cost-effective vs. full replacement # best option.
6. NCARB ARE 5.0 PDD Study Guide References
* Content Area: Building Systems Integration - Acoustics
* Reference Sources:
* Architectural Graphic Standards - Acoustic material properties
* Mechanical and Electrical Equipment for Buildings (MEEB) - Room acoustics and reverberation control
* ASTM C423 - Sound Absorption and Sound Absorption Coefficients by the Reverberation Room Method

NEW QUESTION # 32
During CD phase, the architect notices plumbing lines clash with roof trusses. What should the architect do first?

- A. Revise the truss design
- B. Consult with the plumbing engineer
- C. Add soffits to conceal pipes
- D. Notify the contractor

Answer: B

Explanation:
Coordination is essential in PDD. When a clash arises, the architect must consult with the responsible consultant (plumbing engineer). This supports Objective 3.1: Coordinate consultant drawings.

NEW QUESTION # 33
A family-owned apple farm in the Upper Midwest is taking advantage of a change in the local zoning code that added a new Agri-Tourism class in the existing farm zone. This allows the Owner to build a new facility on their existing site. The building will be open

to the public and include a brewery, distillery, tap room, and market. The architect is ready to submit the drawings to the Owner for the 50% construction documents review.
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* PEMB Shop Drawings
* Design and Construction Schedule
* Specification Excerpts, showing relevant spec sections
* IBC and ADA Excerpts, showing relevant code and accessibility sections
* After reviewing the documents, the architect discovers a coordination issue in the corridor.
The owner decides to triple the size of the distillery component of the project to make hand sanitizer and wants to use the Tap Room spaces adjacent to the brewery and distillery for this purpose.
Which of the following must the architect reevaluate and change to accommodate this request? Check the three that apply.

- A. A-06 EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS
- B. A-03 FLOOR PLAN
- C. A-01 LIFE SAFETY PLAN
- D. A-04 REFLECTED CEILING PLAN
- E. A-02 SITE PLAN
- F. A-05 ROOF PLAN

Answer: B,C,D

Explanation:
Tripling the distillery and converting adjacent Tap Room areas to production introduces additional hazard (flammable liquids), changes occupancies/occupant loads, and requires updated fire separations and egress.
A-01 Life Safety Plan must be revised for occupancy classification, fire#resistance ratings between uses, travel distances, exit widths/number, and signage.
A-03 Floor Plan must change to show new room uses, rated partitions/doors, openings, and equipment footprints.
A-04 Reflected Ceiling Plan must change for new/relocated rated assemblies at ceilings (e.g., continuity of fire /smoke barriers), sprinkler/exit sign/FA device locations, and any duct-damper/access changes.
Site (B), Roof (E), and Elevations (F) are not directly driven by the interior use change.
PDD refs: IBC Chs. 3, 5-10 (occupancy, separation, egress), coordination of architectural, fire protection, and MEP on drawings (Division 01).

NEW QUESTION # 34
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