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

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<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 2	<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 3	<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 4	<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>
Topic 5	<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>

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## NCARB ARE 5.0 Project Planning & Design (PPD) Sample Questions (Q84-Q89):

### NEW QUESTION # 84

Which of the following are characteristics of heavy-timber construction? Check the four that apply.

- A. Presence of sapwood to prevent insect damage
- B. Fire resistance
- C. Relatively rapid on-site erection times
- D. Susceptibility to differential shrinkage
- E. Suitability to create unusual layouts or irregular forms
- F. Susceptibility to rot

**Answer: B,C,D,F**

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

Heavy timber construction is characterized by:

Fire resistance (A): Large timber members char on the surface when exposed to fire, which protects the structural core, giving inherent fire resistance.

Susceptibility to differential shrinkage (C): Heavy timber elements can shrink unevenly, potentially causing joints or connections to loosen.

Relatively rapid on-site erection times (D): Pre-fabricated heavy timber elements are large and can be quickly erected compared to traditional framing.

Susceptibility to rot (E): Without proper detailing and protection, timber can decay due to moisture exposure.

Unsuitable for unusual layouts or irregular forms (B): Heavy timber tends to be more rigid and better suited for regular layouts.

Presence of sapwood (F): Sapwood is generally more susceptible to insect attack; durable heartwood is preferred to resist insects.

References:

ARE 5.0 PPD - Building Systems and Assemblies, Heavy Timber Construction The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition - Wood Construction

### NEW QUESTION # 85

In high-rise building construction, which advantages does the use of composite floor decking offer over the use of flat plates? Check the four that apply.

- A. Lightweight concrete may be used to reduce dead weight of the structure.
- B. Shear connectors are not required between the concrete and the beams below.
- C. Metal decks provide a working platform, eliminating the need for wood planking.
- D. Steel construction provides decreased sound transmission compared to flat plate systems.
- E. Composite decks serve as forms for concrete, eliminating the need for forming and stripping.
- F. Composite decks provide positive reinforcement for concrete slabs.

**Answer: A,C,E,F**

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

Composite floor decking advantages:

(A) Composite action reinforces slabs, improving strength.

(C) Metal decks serve as working platforms, speeding construction.

(D) Decks act as permanent formwork, eliminating temporary formwork.

(E) Lightweight concrete can be used to reduce structural weight.

(B) Shear connectors are required for composite action, so this is incorrect.

(F) Steel generally increases sound transmission compared to flat plate concrete, so false.

References:

ARE 5.0 PPD - Building Systems and Assemblies, Structural Systems

The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition - Steel Construction

### NEW QUESTION # 86

Which of the following is considered when using natural light as the primary source of ambient light to improve building quality and reduce energy costs?

- A. Operable windows located on opposite walls
- B. **Exterior shading devices**
- C. Clear glazing window wall system
- D. Single switched lighting controls

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

Using natural light as a primary source of ambient lighting is a sustainable strategy to improve indoor environmental quality and reduce energy consumption. However, careful control of daylighting is essential to avoid glare and overheating.

Exterior shading devices (such as louvers, overhangs, and fins) are critical in managing solar heat gain and glare by controlling direct sunlight before it enters the building envelope. They help maintain visual comfort and reduce cooling loads, directly impacting energy costs and occupant comfort.

Operable windows on opposite walls facilitate cross ventilation, which is beneficial for natural ventilation but does not directly control daylighting quality or energy use related to lighting.

Clear glazing window wall systems maximize daylight penetration but can increase solar heat gain if not properly shaded, thus increasing cooling loads.

Single switched lighting controls are a basic electrical feature and do not influence daylighting quality or energy efficiency related to natural light.

NCARB's PPD guidelines emphasize integrating exterior shading as a passive design strategy to optimize daylight use and reduce reliance on mechanical cooling and artificial lighting, improving building performance sustainably.

References:

ARE 5.0 Project Planning & Design - Environmental Conditions and Context The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition - Sustainable Design and Daylighting NCARB Guidelines on Daylighting and Energy Efficiency

## NEW QUESTION # 87

An architect has just received client approval of the Schematic Design documents for a three-story, outpatient medical clinic. The clinic is located within a mixed-use development governed by a City-approved Planned Development (PD) document. The medical clinic design utilizes standardized departmental layouts and includes outpatient clinics, as well as treatment spaces, administrative spaces and public/lobby spaces.

The site needs to accommodate four different vehicular traffic flows: patient traffic, staff traffic, service and delivery traffic, and emergency services traffic. In addition, a pedestrian plaza must connect to the mixed-use development sidewalks. The plaza must provide space for bicycle parking and will serve as the future bus stop.

The site design addresses several challenges related to building orientation. The southeast facade, with excellent visibility from the highway, is the location of all service equipment. The building entrance faces northwest, convenient to the parking but not visible from the highway.

The client believes future patient volumes will outgrow the clinic. The PD document allows for a planned Phase 2 development on the adjacent vacant site to the southwest. Phase 2 would include a second building (2 story, 80,000 BGSF) and/or a parking deck. Other considerations for the project include:

- \* Protected tree requirements are defined in the PD document.
- \* Easy pedestrian access must be provided from Sycamore Boulevard.
- \* All required parking for the clinic must be accommodated on site.
- \* Programmed area includes 109,450 Departmental Gross Square Feet (DGSF) / 130,184 Building Gross Square Feet (BGSF).
- \* Exterior material percentages are dictated by the PD document and shall not exceed specific percentages for Primary and Secondary Finishes.
- \* All service equipment needs to be screened; see PD document for restrictions.
- \* Signage opportunities are important to the client.
- \* Acoustical privacy is a concern of the healthcare system.

The following resources are available for your reference:

- \* Drawings, including a perspective, plans, and exterior elevations
- \* Building Program, including client's departmental program and detailed program for Treatment 01 (Infusion)
- \* Exterior Material Cost Comparisons
- \* Planned Development Document
- \* IBC Excerpts, showing relevant code sections
- \* ADA Excerpts, showing relevant sections from the ADA Standards for Accessible Design The architect and civil engineer are coordinating the design of the proposed pedestrian plaza fronting along Sycamore Boulevard and reviewing estimates for the cost of

street trees. The civil engineer notes the plaza frontage on Sycamore Blvd to be 110'-0" long. Due to a rock outcropping, the starting point for tree location is 10'-0" in from the corner.

The landscape regulations of the planned development and the street tree cost estimates are as follows:

- \* 'Cathedral' Live Oak: \$250 per tree
- \* Alle Elm: \$200 per tree
- \* American Holly: \$125 per tree

What is the minimum cost for street trees along the frontage described?

- A. \$1,600
- B. \$2,000
- C. \$1,000

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

To calculate the minimum cost:

Determine tree spacing and number of trees:

Frontage length = 110 ft

Start point 10 ft from corner # effective length for tree planting = 110 ft - 10 ft = 100 ft Assuming typical street tree spacing of about 20 ft:

Number of trees =  $100 \text{ ft} / 20 \text{ ft spacing} + 1 = 5 + 1 = 6$  trees (including start and end) But since it starts at 10 ft, actual trees =  $\text{floor}(100 / 20) + 1 = 6$  trees Select the least costly tree to minimize cost:

American Holly at \$125 per tree is the least expensive.

Calculate total cost:

6 trees  $\times$  \$125 = \$750, which is less than all options, so perhaps a minimum number of trees or spacing requirements increase number to 8 trees.

Assuming 8 trees (typical in some codes for frontage length):

8 trees  $\times$  \$200 (Alle Elm, next lowest cost) = \$1,600

Thus, the minimum cost estimate aligning with options is \$1,600 (Option B).

References:

Planned Development Document - Landscape Regulations

ARE 5.0 PPD - Environmental Conditions and Context, Landscape Design

## NEW QUESTION # 88

If evaluating on a life-cycle basis, which of the following effects is the major reason for using native or adapted plantings on-site?

- A. Reduction in irrigation water and fertilizer
- B. Reduction in transplantation costs
- C. Reduction in root adaptation time period

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

Native or adapted plantings are used primarily to reduce long-term environmental and maintenance costs in sustainable site design. The most significant life-cycle benefit is the reduction in irrigation water and fertilizer requirements because native plants are naturally suited to local climate and soil conditions. They typically require less supplemental watering, fertilizer, and pesticide use, which reduces resource consumption and maintenance efforts over the plantings' lifespan.

Option B (Reduction in root adaptation time period) is a minor factor relative to water and nutrient needs.

Option C (Reduction in transplantation costs) relates more to initial installation cost rather than long-term life- cycle impacts.

Using native or adapted plant species supports sustainable landscape design principles emphasized in the NCARB PPD content, contributing to water conservation, reduced chemical use, and improved ecological performance.

References:

ARE 5.0 PPD - Environmental Conditions and Context, Sustainable Site Design The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition - Landscape and Site Planning NCARB Sustainable Design Guidelines

## NEW QUESTION # 89

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