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NCARB Project-Planning-Design Exam Syllabus Topics:

Topic	Details
Topic 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Building Systems, Materials, & 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.
Topic 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Project Integration of Program & 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.
Topic 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Environmental Conditions & 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.
Topic 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Project Costs & 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.
Topic 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Codes & 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.

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NCARB ARE 5.0 Project Planning & Design (PPD) Sample Questions (Q67-Q72):

NEW QUESTION # 67

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

□ Which of the following design strategies would best address the vehicular circulation, visibility, and future expansion challenges for this project? Select the best answer.

- A. Locate all vehicular traffic flows on the same access road to minimize site complexity and locate the main entrance on the southeast facade for maximum highway visibility.
- B. Use a centralized parking deck adjacent to the northeast facade, locate all service equipment on the northwest facade to enhance visibility, and connect the pedestrian plaza internally through the building rather than adjacent sidewalks.
- C. Position the pedestrian plaza on the southeast side adjacent to the highway to maximize visibility, cluster all vehicular access points on the southwest for future expansion ease, and place the main entrance on the northeast facade.
- D. Separate vehicular traffic flows with distinct entry and exit points, locate service equipment on the southeast facade screened per PD requirements, and position the building entrance on the northwest side facing parking for convenient access.

Answer: D

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

Based on the project description and site context:

- * Separating vehicular traffic flows into distinct entry and exit points improves safety and efficiency.
- Patient, staff, service/delivery, and emergency vehicles each have different operational needs and access priorities. This separation reduces conflicts and congestion.
- * Locating service equipment on the southeast facade, which has excellent highway visibility, is appropriate because service areas

are typically screened but can take advantage of visibility for logistical purposes. The PD document restricts screening and material use here, so adherence to those guidelines is necessary.

* Positioning the main building entrance on the northwest side facing the parking lot optimizes patient and visitor convenience, even though it has less visibility from the highway. This respects pedestrian access from Sycamore Boulevard and aligns with parking access, enhancing user experience.

* Future expansion (Phase 2) on the adjacent southwest vacant site is planned, so site circulation and building orientation must allow for growth without major redesign.

* Placing the pedestrian plaza connecting to existing sidewalks with bicycle parking and future bus stop meets ADA and site planning requirements, ensuring multimodal accessibility.

* The strategy in Option B addresses client priorities, PD document constraints, visibility, safety, and operational efficiency, consistent with NCARB ARE 5.0 Project Integration of Program and Systems content focusing on complex site planning and programmatic coordination.

* Options A, C, and D introduce compromises in circulation, visibility, or expansion potential that conflict with the project constraints and client needs.

References:

ARE 5.0 Project Planning & Design Content Outline: Project Integration of Program and Systems - Site Planning and Vehicular Circulation City-approved Planned Development (PD) Document Excerpts ADA Standards for Accessible Design - Pedestrian Access and Circulation The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition, Chapter 7: Site Design and Program Integration

NEW QUESTION # 68

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 # 69

A one-story residence in a dry climate with cold winter nights is designed with an unconditioned dirt floor crawlspace utilizing underfloor plumbing and HVAC ductwork. The owner is interested in using a concrete slab-on-grade floor instead of the pier-and-beam concrete floor over an open crawlspace as originally designed.

What are the impacts of changing the design to a slab-on-grade floor system? Check the two that apply.

- A. It will allow for HVAC ductwork installation.
- B. It will have warmer floors in the evenings.
- C. It will limit future plumbing flexibility.
- D. It will have more steel reinforcing.
- E. It will allow for better moisture control.
- F. It will limit the types of flooring finishes available.

Answer: B,C

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

Changing from a pier-and-beam system with an open crawlspace to a slab-on-grade floor has several impacts:

Warmer floors in the evenings (A): Concrete slab-on-grade floors have high thermal mass, which can absorb heat during the day and release it slowly, resulting in warmer floors at night, particularly beneficial in cold climates.

Limited future plumbing flexibility (C): Plumbing embedded in or beneath slabs is difficult to access or modify after construction, unlike crawlspaces that provide easier access to underfloor plumbing for repairs or modifications.

More steel reinforcing (B): While slabs do require reinforcement, this is often comparable or less than the framing required for pier-and-beam floors, so this is not necessarily an impact.

Flooring finishes (D): Slab floors can accommodate many finishes; thus, limitations are generally minimal.

Better moisture control (E): Slabs require moisture barriers and careful detailing to control moisture; crawlspaces can sometimes be easier to ventilate but may allow moisture intrusion if not properly designed.

HVAC ductwork installation (F): Crawlspaces allow ducts to be located under the floor; slabs typically require ducts to be placed above or within conditioned spaces.

Thus, the most significant impacts are warmer floors and reduced plumbing flexibility.

References:

ARE 5.0 PPD - Building Systems and Assemblies, Foundations and Floors

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

NEW QUESTION # 70

During design development of a new motel, the owner receives a cost estimate which was higher than what they had budgeted for.

The project descriptions are as follows:

* Number of units: Twenty

* Construction type: V-B

* Number of stories: Two

* Structural system: Light wood frame

* Mechanical system: Central air system

The client wants the architect to reduce the initial construction cost without sacrificing the potential return on investment.

- A. Change the structural system to a precast concrete system
- B. Change the number of stories to three.
- C. **Change the central air system to individual through-the-wall units at each room**
- D. Change the scope to an eighteen-unit development.

Answer: C

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

Switching from a centralized HVAC system to individual through-the-wall units (PTACs) significantly reduces initial construction and mechanical costs by eliminating the need for extensive ductwork and mechanical rooms.

Increasing stories (A) increases structural and construction costs.

Reducing units (C) reduces revenue potential.

Precast concrete system (D) is typically more expensive than light wood framing.

Thus, individual room units save cost without reducing revenue potential.

References:

ARE 5.0 PPD - Project Costs and Budgeting

The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition - Mechanical Systems and Cost Control

NEW QUESTION # 71

The rehabilitation of a warehouse for a commercial occupancy has a heavy anticipated electrical distribution load and it is expected that the current of the electrical system will be expanded in the near future.

The least expensive and most flexible electrical distribution system would be comprised of which one of the following?

- A. **Aluminum or copper bus duct with tap boxes**
- B. Paralleled sets of copper wire in conduits
- C. Single large aluminum or copper conductor
- D. Paralleled sets of aluminum wire in conduits

Answer: A

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

Bus duct systems with tap boxes offer modular, flexible electrical distribution capable of handling high loads and allowing easy future expansions with minimal disruption and cost.

Paralleled wires (A, B) increase complexity and are less flexible.

Single large conductors (C) are limited in expansion.

Bus ducts optimize installation speed, scalability, and cost in commercial building retrofits.

References:

ARE 5.0 PPD - Building Systems and Assemblies, Electrical Systems

The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition - Electrical Distribution

NEW QUESTION # 72

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