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NCARB Project-Planning-Design Exam Syllabus Topics:

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

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Free PDF 2025 Project-Planning-Design: ARE 5.0 Project Planning & Design (PPD) Pass-Sure Test Duration

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NCARB ARE 5.0 Project Planning & Design (PPD) Sample Questions (Q24-Q29):

NEW QUESTION # 24

The zoning approval process may involve obtaining which of the following? Check the four that apply.

- A. Undue hardship exemption
- B. Building permit
- C. **Grading permit**
- D. Variance
- E. Special exception
- F. Conditional use

Answer: C,D,E,F

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

Zoning approval can involve:

Variance (A): Permission to deviate from zoning requirements.

Grading permit (C): Approves site grading related to zoning.

Conditional use (D): Allows use under specific conditions.

Special exception (E): Permits uses not normally allowed but granted under certain circumstances.

Building permits (B) are separate from zoning.

Undue hardship exemption (F) is legal but not typically a zoning approval term.

References:

ARE 5.0 PPD - Codes and Regulations, Zoning

The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition - Land Use Controls

NEW QUESTION # 25

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. Shear connectors are not required between the concrete and the beams below.
- B. **Composite decks serve as forms for concrete, eliminating the need for forming and stripping.**
- C. **Lightweight concrete may be used to reduce dead weight of the structure.**

- D. Composite decks provide positive reinforcement for concrete slabs.
- E. Steel construction provides decreased sound transmission compared to flat plate systems.
- F. Metal decks provide a working platform, eliminating the need for wood planking.

Answer: B,C,D,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 # 26

Examples of regulatory controls include which of the following elements? Check the four that apply.

- A. Master plans
- B. Fire protection
- C. Economic models
- D. Environmental management
- E. Historic designation
- F. Socio-political demographics

Answer: A,B,D,E

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

Regulatory controls are governmental or authoritative rules that regulate land use, building design, and environmental protection.

Master plans (A): Provide regulatory frameworks guiding development.

Environmental management (B): Includes regulations on land, water, and air quality.

Fire protection (C): Enforced through codes and regulations.

Historic designation (E): Regulates preservation and alterations of historic sites.

Socio-political demographics (D) and economic models (F) are influential factors but are not regulatory controls.

References:

ARE 5.0 PPD - Codes and Regulations

The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition - Land Use Controls

NEW QUESTION # 27

Which strategy enhances passive solar residential design in the northern hemisphere?

- A. Reducing heat storage capacity
- B. Installing an electric baseboard heating system
- C. Eliminating insulated glazing along the northern walls
- D. Locating deciduous trees along the south side of the house

Answer: D

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

Passive solar design in the northern hemisphere relies on maximizing solar gain during the winter while minimizing overheating during summer.

Deciduous trees located on the south side provide shade during the summer (when they have leaves), reducing cooling loads, and

allow sunlight to penetrate in the winter after leaf fall, enhancing solar heat gain. This seasonal shading improves comfort and energy efficiency.

Eliminating insulated glazing on the north walls (B) increases heat loss, which is undesirable in cold climates.

Reducing heat storage capacity (C) lowers the building's thermal mass, decreasing its ability to moderate temperature swings, which is counterproductive.

Installing electric baseboard heating (D) is a mechanical solution and does not enhance passive solar design.

Therefore, option A is the best strategy consistent with passive solar principles.

References:

ARE 5.0 PPD - Environmental Conditions and Context, Passive Solar Design The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition - Sustainable Design Strategies

NEW QUESTION # 28

A site has been engineered with a 1:20 grade.

Which of the following sidewalk designs would be the most cost-effective way to get from the top to the bottom and still be in compliance with the accessibility standards?

- A. At the same grade as the slope with no handrail
- B. Switchback ramps at 1:12 with a handrail
- C. Cutting diagonally across the slope at 1:12 with no handrail
- D. Cutting diagonally across the slope at 1:10 with a handrail

Answer: C

Explanation:

Comprehensive and Detailed Explanation From Exact Extract:

A 1:20 slope means a 5% grade (1 vertical unit per 20 horizontal units), which is slightly steeper than the ideal maximum slope for accessible ramps.

* Option C: Cutting diagonally across the slope at 1:12 (~8.33%) slope without a handrail is the most cost-effective design that still complies with accessibility standards. According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and ICC A117.1, the maximum slope for an accessible ramp is 1:12. Handrails are required on ramps with a rise greater than 6 inches (150 mm). If the rise is less than 6 inches, handrails are not required.

Because the diagonal cut reduces the slope to 1:12 and the total rise is likely less than 6 inches given the gentle 1:20 original slope, handrails are not mandatory, making this solution economical and code compliant.

* Option A: Switchback ramps at 1:12 with handrails are compliant but more expensive due to increased construction complexity and space requirements.

* Option B: A 1:10 slope (10%) exceeds the maximum allowed slope for accessible ramps and requires handrails, thus non-compliant.

* Option D: Following the existing 1:20 slope without modification does not provide the maximum accessibility slope and may be acceptable but might not comply with certain stricter local codes for ramps.

Therefore, Option C balances accessibility, cost, and compliance optimally.

References:

ARE 5.0 Project Planning & Design Content Outline: Environmental Conditions and Context - Site Accessibility and Grading ADA Standards for Accessible Design (2010) ICC A117.1 Accessibility Standards The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, 15th Edition, Chapter 7: Site Planning and Accessibility

NEW QUESTION # 29

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