



**DATE:** January 1, 2022

**TO:** All Contractors

**FROM:** John Hoar  
Inspections Services Director/Building Official

**RE:** Updated 2017 ICC A117.1 Accessibility Code Effective Date January 1, 2022

On January 1, 2022, the City of Auburn will place into effect the latest edition of the International Code Council updated code changes. The new code standards which will be followed are the 2021 Residential, Building, Plumbing Mechanical, Gas, and Fire Codes. We have also adopted the 2020 NEC (National Electrical Code) and 2017 ICC A117.1 Accessibility Code. Any residential permits submitted on or after January 1, 2022 will fall under the 2021 Residential Code.

The following are some of the significant changes associated with the adaptation of the 2017 ICC A117.1 Accessibility Code. We hope to make this an easy transition for everyone by giving you information on some of these significant changes.

#### **2017 ICC A117.1 Accessibility Code**

- **Calculation of Percentages**-This addition provides guidance regarding size or dimensional requirements where a calculation results in a fractional number, ratio, or percentage.
- **Defined Terms – Existing Building**-Numerous exemptions have been added to the standard that will lessen the impact of various new requirements within the standard. These exemptions will rely on the definition of “existing building” to determine where the elements and facilities can continue to use the earlier editions of the standard as opposed to the new 2017 provisions.

- **Defined Terms – Wheelchair Charging Area** -This definition is the introduction to requirements that have been added in various places of the standard. The new edition of the standard has made more of an effort to address scooters and motorized wheelchairs. While most changes deal with maneuvering requirements, this change recognizes the need for people who use such devices to be able to recharge them in a convenient, accessible location
- **Circular Turning Space**-Within new buildings, the size of a circular turning space has been increased from the previous 60-inch requirement up to 67 inches. The amount of knee and toe space beneath an obstruction that can be included in the turning space clearance has become more limited.
- **T - Shaped Turning Spaces**-Three options are allowed for T-shaped turning spaces in new construction and vary depending on the width of the arms on the T-shaped space. All of the options result in an increased size for the turning space, while existing buildings can continue to use the previous criteria.
- **Size of Clear Floor Space**-This change increases the length of clear floor space from 48 inches to 52 inches to accommodate more wheeled mobility devices and ensure access is provided at various elements. The increased length is required for new buildings while existing buildings may continue to use the previously allowed 48-inch length.
- **Unobstructed Side Reach**-This exception has been added that permits an increase in the maximum height for the high side reach. The exception applies to fuel dispensers installed on existing curbs.
- **Operable Parts**-To clarify the application of the requirements, exceptions have been added into Section 309 to coordinate with exemptions previously found in other locations of the standard. Two of the exceptions are new. They address outlets located in the corner of a countertop and provide an exemption for emergency features that are not intended for use by the occupants.
- **Clear Width of Accessible Routes**-The width of exterior accessible routes has been increased to a 48-inch minimum for most elements. Exceptions have been added to modify the width requirements depending on whether the accessible route is within a new building or an existing building.
- **Clear Width at 180-Degree Turn**-For new buildings and facilities, the size of the object the turn goes around has been increased to 52 inches, and three options are provided depending on the width of the accessible route into, during, and leaving the turn. The previous requirements have been kept and made applicable to existing buildings and facilities.
- **Clear Width at 90-Degree Turn**-Designing for and accommodating larger wheelchairs and scooters results in modifications being needed where a narrow accessible route is making a 90-degree turn. The standard provides four options such as increasing the width of the accessible route or chamfering the corner to allow for maneuvering around the corner.
- **Passing Space**-The passing space requirements have been split to address both new buildings and existing buildings. The new building provisions will require the arms and

legs of T-shaped passing spaces to extend a minimum of 52 inches beyond the intersection.

- **Doors, Doorways, and Gates**-The term “gates” have been added throughout Section 404 to clarify that gates are viewed in a manner similar to doors and must therefore comply with the same requirements as doors.
- **Maneuvering Clearances – Manual Doors and Gates** -The text of Section 404.2.3 was revised to help clarify how the maneuvering clearances are regulated. The clearance required for a front approach at a door has been modified to correlate with the new requirements for a larger size of the clear floor space.
- **Door and Gate Hardware**-This modification provide more complete information regarding the application and limitations of the door hardware and opening force requirements. The two sections provide different requirements for the door itself and the door hardware and then additional differences depending on the type of hardware and operation.
- **Automatic Doors and Power-assisted Doors and Gates**-This modification provides more comprehensive information to help regulate how various door requirements apply to automatic doors and gates. The revisions clarify requirements by distinguishing between doors that are only power-assisted and automatic doors that are classified as either being full-powered or low-energy.
- **Ramps**-Ramp provisions have been modified to coordinate with the ADA. The provisions now also provide better clarity to the size of ramps within employee work areas and the minimum landing size where the ramp changes direction.
- **Curb Ramps and Blended Transitions**-This modification provides a blending of the previous curb ramp requirements and the U.S. Access Board’s proposed requirements for public rights-of-way. Creating distinctions between the two types of curb ramps and for a blended transition allows requirements to address the differences between the various elements.
- **Perpendicular Curb Ramps**-These revisions provide better guidance on the standard construction of a curb ramp, including such features as a larger landing at the top and flared sides where a pedestrian circulation path crosses the ramp.
- **Parallel Curb Ramps**-This modification provides detailed requirements for constructing parallel curb ramps. The previous standard did not contain specific requirements to detail how this type of curb ramp should be properly constructed.
- **Blended Transitions**-Where the slope of an elevation change at a curb does not exceed 1:20, the standard views this as a “blended transition” instead of as a curb ramp. Blended transitions need to meet many of the same requirements as a curb ramp and therefore are included within Section 406.
- **Location of Detectable Warning Surfaces**=this modification provides a single section to regulate the location of required detectable warning surfaces. This change applies to some of the proposed federal public rights-of-way provisions to street crossings on private developments such as those on-campus facilities or large office, residential or retail complexes.

- **Minimum Dimensions of Elevator Cars**-This change detaches the elevator size requirements from the turning space provisions of Section 304 and instead accepts the previously permitted 60-inch diameter space.
- **Elevator Car Control Designations**- This change relocates the elevator car control designations to the appropriate location within the standard and clarifies that letters can accompany the floor numbers to assist in the designation.
- **Size of Elevator Car Position Indicators**-The size of the visible characters that indicate the elevator car position has been increased from 1/2 inch to 5/8 inch.
- **Inside Dimensions for LULA Elevator Cars**-This modification adds a direct reference to mandate that the elevator provides a complying clear floor space within the car. It also provides a new exception to coordinate with the ADA for existing buildings.
- **Inside Dimensions for Private Residence Elevator Car**-The minimum depth of a private residence elevator being installed in a new building has been increased to 52 inches. Existing buildings may continue to use the previously allowed 48-inch minimum depth.
- **Platform Lifts with Single Doors or Doors on Opposite Ends**-The depth of a platform lift being installed in a new building has been increased to 52 inches. Existing buildings may continue to use the previous 48-inch minimum depth.
- **Parking Spaces**-The parking requirements have been supplemented by the inclusion of provisions related to on-street parking. The previous parking provisions are now viewed as being applicable to parking lots.
- **Parking Meters and Parking Pay Stations**-Provisions have been added to address the location and access to on-street parking meters and parking pay stations.
- **Electrical Vehicle Charging Stations**-This change provides a new section to regulate electrical vehicle charging stations and to make sure they are both accessible and usable. The provision applies to both parking lots and on-street parking.
- **Access Aisle for Passenger Loading Zones**-The width of the access aisle for a passenger loading zone has been increased for new buildings and facilities. The length of the access aisle for all loading zones has also been modified.
- **Stairway Nosing**-This revision reformats the existing nosing requirements in a clearer and more easily understood way. The arrangement of a beveled nosing has been modified to limit the reduction of the tread depth.
- **Visual Contrast and Illumination Levels for Stairways**-The modification provide better consistency on how the contrast and illumination provisions are applied. This consistency should improve stairway safety.
- **Tactile Signage within Stairway Enclosures and an Exits**-This change revise existing provisions to clarify their application within the stairway enclosure while adding a new section to ensure the tactile signage is provided on the outside of the exit doors and at exit doors to other locations.
- **Windows**-The provisions for operable windows have been split to provide separate force requirements for (a) the latch and other operable parts and (b) the window opening force. Changes have been made for Accessible and Type A dwelling units to coordinate with the revised general window provisions.

- **Accessible Routes through Parking** -This section is added to provide protection for pedestrians and separate them from vehicular traffic when they use an accessible route in a parking facility.
- **Drinking Fountains and Bottle Filling Stations**-This change reorganizes the drinking fountain provisions into two sections to differentiate between the requirements that apply to wheelchair drinking fountains and standing drinking fountains. It clarifies the requirements for children’s drinking fountains by placing an exception with each technical subject in the appropriate section.
- **Grab Bars for Water Closets**-The requirements for both side-wall and rear-wall grab bars have been reformatted into clear, brief sections to address each type of grab bar. The rear grab-bar provisions are now measured from the sidewall as opposed to being taken from the centerline of the water closet.
- **Dispensers**-This change adds an exception that allows dispensers to be installed in the location allowed by the ADA instead of the locations specified by the A117.1 standard. Reformatting the sections helps to clarify that the exception affects only the location requirements and not the other provisions such as the delivery or control of the paper.
- **Alternate Wheelchair Accessible Toilet Compartments**-This addition provides an alternative design for wheelchair toilet compartments that can permit greater access for a forward approach and transfer by the mobility-device user. Changes have been made to the door requirements for the compartments to coordinate with other existing provisions and to allow the door to swing into the alternate compartment when adequate clearance is provided.
- **Toe Clearance at Wheelchair Accessible Toilet Compartments**-This change raises the minimum height of partitions in adult-sized wheelchair toilet compartments to 12 inches and increases the required toe depth beyond the partitions to 8 inches.
- **Clear Floor Space at Lavatories and Sinks**-The clear floor space for a parallel approach to a sink or lavatory is no longer required to be “centered on the sink.”
- **Clearance for Transfer Shower**-In new buildings, the clearance adjacent to a transfer shower has been increased to 52 inches in length to coordinate with the new clear floor space provisions. The alignment of the clear floor space has been modified to accept measurement from either of the two points.
- **Grab Bars in Standard Roll-in-type Showers**-In smaller standard roll-in showers, a vertical grab bar is required on the sidewall opposite the seat wall. In addition, the requirements for back-wall and end-wall grab bars have been separated to provide better clarity.
- **Controls and Hand Showers in Alternate Roll-in Showers**-The control and hand shower locations for alternate roll-in showers have been changed to ensure they are (1) not located over the seat when installed on the end wall and (2) located toward the open transfer side of the shower when installed on the back wall across from the seat.
- **Sauna and Steam Rooms, Bench**-In single-user sauna, and steam rooms, the door is allowed to swing into the clear floor space serving the bench, as long as compliant clear floor space is provided beyond the door.

- **Non-glare Finish for Visual Characters, Pictograms, and Symbols of Accessibility-**  
 This change imposes a specific limitation on the glare expected from a sign. Glare on signage can make it difficult to read in general and can have a greater effect on people with vision impairments or light sensitivity.
- **Visual Relay Service Booth-**This section was added to provide the basic design details needed to make a visual relay service booth usable and functional. These requirements replace an existing section for protruding objects that were considered redundant.
- **Wheelchair Accessible Telephones** -The revised exception clarifies that it is only the clear floor space that is exempted for drive-up phones. All other aspects of Section 704 will apply to the drive-up phones.
- **Visual Relay Service Booth-**This section was added to provide the basic design details needed to make a visual relay service booth usable and functional. These requirements replace an existing section for protruding objects that were considered redundant.
- **Depth and Width of Detectable Warning Surfaces-**This consolidated section provides details regarding the depth and width of detectable warning surfaces.
- **Placement of Detectable Warnings-**This consolidated section provides details regarding the placement of detectable warning surfaces that are dependent on the location they are intended to protect.
- **Depth of Wheelchair Space in Assembly Areas-**The size and access to the wheelchair spaces of assembly seating areas have been altered based on the changes to the building block requirements for clear floor space.
- **Companion Seat Alignment-**This change creates a range for shoulder alignment that works with the larger wheelchair space required for new buildings. An exception eliminates shoulder alignment for wheelchair spaces where the user is in tiered seating at a dining
- **Spaces Utilized Primarily for Viewing Motion Picture Projections-**These revisions provide clarity and options by the addition of text and requirements that are found within the ADA.
- **Sign Language Interpreter Stations** -This new section provides the design parameters for sign-language interpreter stations including the size, location, lighting levels, and appropriate backdrop.
- **Kitchen Clearance-**This change clarifies that kitchens without a cooktop or conventional range will need to meet the 40-inch minimum clearance and not either the pass-through or U-shaped kitchen provisions. Islands installed within U-shaped kitchens permit a 40-inch minimum clear width between obstructions similar to the requirements for pass-through kitchens.
- **Enhanced Acoustics for Classrooms-**This new section provides guidance to improve the acoustics in classrooms by controlling the reverberation time and background noise within the classroom.
- **Clear Floor Space at Benches-**The location of clear floor space in order for a mobility-device user to access a bench has been relocated to the end of the bench to coordinate with the requirements of the ADA.

- **Sales and Service Counters and Windows**-These revisions help clarify the requirements for sales and service counters and windows, with an effort to make a distinction between the employee side of the counter and the public portion. The changes should provide better equity for accessible counters.
- **Charging Stations**-This new section addresses “charging stations.” Providing these stations will allow a user of an electric wheelchair or scooter to recharge her or his device when seated at certain clear floor spaces.
- **Gaming Machines and Tables**-This new section provides guidance on making gaming machines and tables accessible for a wheelchair user by either allowing a transfer space to a fixed seat or making it possible for wheelchair users to approach the game/machine in their wheelchairs.
- **Recreational Facilities and Dwelling Units and Sleeping Units** -The order of these two chapters has been reversed, with Chapter 10 now dealing with recreational facilities and dwelling and sleeping unit provisions moving to Chapter 11.
- **Accessible Routes for Golf Facilities**-This addition separates the details for accessible routes that are regulated by Chapter 4 from the exterior accessible route that allows a golf cart to be used for access to the regulated elements.
- **Shooting Facilities with Firing Positions**-This change adds a new general exception for elevated shooting platforms or positions that are of limited size and at or above a specific height. Counters at accessible firing positions are also limited in height.
- **Recreational Facilities and Dwelling Units and Sleeping Units** -The order of these two chapters has been reversed, with Chapter 10 now dealing with recreational facilities and dwelling and sleeping unit provisions moving to Chapter 11.
- **Beds**-Two requirements related to the accessible bed within an Accessible dwelling or sleeping unit have been added. A range is established for the bed height to ease transfer, and the clear floor space adjacent to the bed must serve as a charging station.
- **Work Surface and Kitchen Sink** – Type A Units-Exceptions have been added to eliminate the work surface and to allow a parallel approach to the kitchen sink where a kitchen within a Type A unit does not contain a cooktop or a conventional range.
- **Type B Units**-Numerous changes have been made throughout the Type B unit provisions, but the intent of most of the revisions is to keep the requirements as they were without making technical changes.
- **Clear Floor Space**--This new section establishes that for Type B dwelling units, the minimum length of clear floor space is 48 inches. The change within the building block provisions of Section 305.3 to a 52- inch length will not apply in Section 1104.
- **Mailboxes**-The reach range height for mailboxes for Type B units is increased to 54 inches. Previously they were limited by the 48- inch height for the reach range.
- **User Passage Doorways**-A new exception clarifies that shower doors are not required to comply with the user passage doorway provisions. This allows doors with a reduced clear width and allows tracks or “thresholds” for the door that exceed the half-inch height limitation.
- **Operable Parts**-The operable parts requirements for Type B units are retained within Section 1104 instead of being consolidated in Section 309 with the general operable

parts provisions. A new exception exempts accessible outlets from being required in the corner of kitchen cabinets.

- **Clear Floor Space at Laundry Equipment**-The revision clarifies that clear floor space is required for each appliance and that it is not permissible to provide a single clear floor space where both a washer and a separate dryer are being provided.
- **Shower Compartment**-Where a shower is the only bathing facility, this exception helps clarify that the shower is not required to meet the 36-inch minimum dimensions, provided it meets the approximate area limitation
- **Refrigerator/ Freezer Clear Floor Space**-The change permits a forward approach and reformats the section to address the forward and parallel approaches as separate options. The clear floor space for a forward approach is limited to a maximum offset.
- **Notification**-This change requires that a means of disconnecting visible doorbell signals be provided for sleeping areas