



City of Seattle  
**Department of Planning & Development**

## **2006 SBC Code Solution**

**3407.6**  
**Path of Travel Improvements in Alterations to**  
**Existing Buildings**  
Release Date: **May 8, 2009**

*The following interpretation, policy or code alternate is intended to provide guidance to staff for consistency of review and is subject to change without notice. Application of this interpretation, policy or code alternate to specific projects may vary.*

### **Code Issue:**

What improvements to the accessible path of travel are required for alterations to an existing building?

### **Interpretation & Policy:**

Any alterations, by themselves, must comply with the new construction provisions of the code, subject to the exceptions in Section 3407.6 and 3407.7.

If the alteration affects an area of primary function, then the route to the area of primary function must be made accessible. The cost of making the route accessible need not exceed 20% of the cost of the alterations that affect the area of primary function. For these improvements to the accessible route, DPD's policy is to require the applicant to address accessibility in the following three areas, **in no order of priority**:

- 1) Interior accessibility through the existing space (ramps, elevators, lifts, etc.)
- 2) Main entry accessibility (ramps, lifts, etc.)
- 3) Accessible restrooms

If any or several of these improvements can be done for less than 20% of the cost of the project, those improvements will be required. If there are no improvements that can be done for less than 20% of the cost of the project, no improvements will be required.

Note that in the IBC, whether a project is a substantial alteration does not affect accessibility requirements.

For questions about whether this code solution applies to your project:

- *If you have submitted a permit application, contact the Building Code plan reviewer assigned to your application*
- *If you have not submitted an application, contact DPD Building Code Technical Support at 206-684-4630 or in person at the Applicant Services Center. Visit the Applicant Services Center website for more information about hours and location [http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Permits/Process\\_Overview/Location\\_Hours/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Permits/Process_Overview/Location_Hours/default.asp)*



## **Construction Review & Inspection Quality**

**Jonathan Siu, Principal Engineer**