

## **Code Implications for Repairs and Renovations to the Existing Buildings**

The International Existing Building (IEBC) applied to the town's buildings and architectural recommendations addresses the requirements for the repair, alteration, change of occupancy, and additions to the studied buildings. The following is intended as a very basic guide only and before any work is undertaken the specific codes should be examined.

The studied town buildings have been previously, or are occupied and are therefore required to comply with the IEBC.

There are three compliance methods for these buildings:

### **1. Prescriptive Compliance Method:**

Previously known as Chapter 34 of the International Building Code (IBC) these provisions prescribe specific minimum requirements for the construction work. Routine maintenance and repairs (that would not require permits) do not fit under these requirements.

### **2. Work Area Compliance Method:**

These provisions are based on a proportional approach to compliance where upgrades are triggered by the type and extent of the work. There are three levels of alterations defined as follows:

#### **Alteration-Level 1:**

Includes the removal, replacement or covering of existing materials, elements, equipment or fixtures using items to serve the same purpose.

#### **Alteration-Level 2:**

Includes the reconfiguration of space, the elimination or addition of any door or window, the reconfiguration or extension of any system, or the installation of any additional equipment.

#### **Alteration-Level 3:**

This applies when the work area exceeds 50 percent of the aggregate area of the building.

### **3. Performance Compliance Method:**

This method provides for evaluating the building based on fire safety, means of egress and general safety. Using values for various building components a summary sheet is completed to show whether or not the work complies with this

section. There are mandatory scores required for fire safety, means of egress and general safety in order for the work to be acceptable.

Although part of the compliance methods, there are factors that need to be considered. Pertinent sections are described below.

**Seismic Improvements:**

In any of the above cases it will need to be determined if seismic improvements are necessary to the structure of the facility. This evaluation would be performed by a licensed structural engineer.

**Unsafe Buildings:**

Buildings that are unsafe are required to be taken down, removed or made safe. The Building Official needs to make this determination.

**Historic Buildings:**

Buildings may be exempted from items of compliance due to accreditation as a historic structure, but only when the lack of compliance will not constitute a distinct life safety hazard.

**Fire Sprinkler Requirements (Alteration Level-2):**

The addition of a sprinkler system to a building is often desired, particularly for historic structures. We include this paragraph as a guide to the requirements.

For the town occupancies with exits or corridors serving an occupant load greater than 30, fire sprinklers are required where the following occur:

- The work area exceeds 50 percent of the floor area.
- The building has sufficient municipal water supply for the fire sprinkler system without the installation of a new fire pump.

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