



STATE OF WASHINGTON

STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL

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STATE BUILDING CODE INTERPRETATION NO. 00-16

- CODE:** 1997 Uniform Building Code (UBC),
State Regulations for Barrier-Free Facilities
- SECTIONS:** Section 1106.7.1 General (Surface Treatments)
Section 1107.2.5 Surface (Parking spaces)
- QUESTIONS:** The code sections above require “firm and stable” surfaces for accessible routes of travel. For a public park project gravel and grass are proposed as the surface materials for accessible parking stalls and exterior routes of travel connecting structures/facilities.
1. What materials or methods of construction satisfy the code’s requirement for “firm and stable” surfaces when applied to public park accessible routes of travel connecting accessible site facilities, which are situated in urban, suburban, or rural settings?
 2. What materials or methods of construction satisfy code requirements when applied to accessible parking spaces in these circumstances?
- ANSWERS:** **1. and 2.** “Firm and stable” is not defined in UBC Chapter 11 and the materials or methods of construction required to satisfy this condition are not specified. “Accessible route of travel” by definition can be negotiated by a person using a wheelchair and is usable by persons with other disabilities. Chapter 11 is intended to comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG), in which Appendix A4.5.1 provides these comments for guidance: “Wheelchairs can be propelled most easily on surfaces that are hard, stable, and regular. Soft loose surfaces such as shag carpet, loose sand or gravel, wet clay, and irregular surfaces such as cobblestones can significantly impede wheelchair movement.” This guideline could allow for the use of a compacted gravel or grass surface. The enforcing jurisdiction must determine if the proposed surface treatment will produce a regular surface which will not be displaced by the wheels of a wheelchair or by a crutch or cane tip.
- SUPERSEDES:** None
- REQUESTED BY:** Spokane County

November 2000