



Public Review

Vancouver Building By-law (VBBL)

Proposed change to Gender Neutral Washrooms

Topic: Gender Neutral Washrooms

Code change number: 24-0009

Code reference: Book I, Division B, 3.7.2.9. (was 3.7.2.11.)

Description of the proposed change

Update to the Gender Neutral Washroom requirements to align with current best Architectural practice, industry norms, and alignment with REFM washroom standards.

These changes support City objective towards Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

Justification

Industry feedback has been that current Gender Neutral washroom requirements are incomplete and do not align with public needs and industrial practice in this area.

This update aligns with current best Architectural practice, industry norms, and alignment with REFM washroom standards.

These changes support City objective for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

Much of these requirements have been developed based on recommended best practice from Public Service Canada's guide for supporting Trans employees, research and survey by Penn State University, Stalled!, and other publications by organizations conducting work in this area.

Cost for buildings up to 200 persons occupant load are expected to be minimal as this does not create any new requirements, since the current universal washroom can fulfill these requirements. However, there may be additional competition for floor space to include an additional washroom, where conventional gendered washrooms are still desired.

Non-gendered washrooms are slowly gaining broader recognition that this is beneficial for all persons, and this is a low barrier requirement in that it leverages requirements already required for accessibility. Actual construction costs are expected to be low since the requirements do not call for nonstandard equipment, or more equipment than is already typically provided.

Where an owner chooses to forgo traditional gendered washrooms entirely, the gender neutral washroom, could possibly reduce floor space costs.

Proposed VBBL content

Legend

Black Text – 2019 Vancouver Building By-law content

Underlined Black Text – Proposed modification to Vancouver Building By-law content

3.7.2.9. Gender Neutral Washroom Requirements

(See Note A-3.7.2.9.)

1) Except as permitted by Sentence (6), a *building* or non-residential *suite* with an occupant load exceeding 200 persons, at least one gender neutral washroom facility shall be provided for the *building* or *suite*, providing at least one *accessible* water closet, plus one additional water closet for each additional increment of 100 persons after the first 200 persons.

2) Waterclosets required by Article 3.7.2.2. may be substituted with individual toilet stalls in gender neutral washroom facilities that

a) have partition walls and doors that are full height with a clear opening height of no less than 150 mm and no more than 300 mm, measured from the finished floor to the underside of the partition wall or door a minimum height of 2000 mm (6'-7") and clear space above of 50 mm, and

b) have a locking devices equipped with

i) display mechanisms to indicates on the outside of the stall door if the stall is occupied, and

ii) means to enable the lock to be released from the outside in an emergency, and

c) A duress alarm is required in the common area, and additional duress alarms are to be located within each stall.

3) The main entrance door serving the gender neutral washroom facilities shall have

a) have no door, or

b) fully or partially glazed doors have a door with have an open transom or louvered grill.

4) Provide a minimum 42" zone of circulation space in front of the sink area.

5) Be provided with a minimum lighting level of 200 lx at the floor

5) Be provided with appropriate signage identifying the washroom.

6) Individual self-contained washroom facilities including a water closet, lavatory, shelf and mirror providing a washroom capacity on the same basis as that required by Sentence (1).

7) At least one stall or washroom facility in a gender neutral washroom provided in accordance with this Article shall be designed to be accessible in conformance with Article 3.8.3.12. or 3.8.3.13. as applicable.

