



INCLUSIVE BUILDING PERFORMANCE STANDARD

A Pathway for Advancing Equity in the Built Environment

Steven Winter Associates, Inc. and Victoria Lanteigne Consulting Co.



ABOUT

The Inclusive Building Performance Standard was developed by Steven Winter Associates, Inc. in collaboration with Victoria Lanteigne Consulting Co. This resource is intended to support the adoption of Inclusive Design pathways from WELL v2, LEED v4, the Living Building Challenge, and Enterprise Green Communities.

The authors of this resource were integral in the development of the Inclusive and Universal Design standards for LEED v4 and WELL v2 and are uniquely positioned to issue this complementary guidance for pathway certification. The Inclusive Building Performance Standard seeks to centralize Inclusive Design guidance that exists across building performance initiatives. This resource aims to underscore the important connection between Inclusive Design and building performance.

Authors: Victoria A. Lanteigne and Peter A. Stratton

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OVERVIEW

Inclusive Design is a process for creating products, environments, and systems that support a wide range of human diversity. Inclusive Design is often used interchangeably with Universal Design, Human-Centered Design, and Barrier-Free Design, among other similar initiatives. While it is the opinion adopted here that each of these approaches have important nuances and unique philosophical underpinnings, Inclusive Design is used in this resource as an umbrella term to represent all processes that aim to create more inclusive and equitable environments.

Inclusive Design and Equity

Demands for social justice continue to rise around the world. As design practitioners mobilize their response, Inclusive Design should be considered as a pathway for advancing equity through the design of our buildings, spaces, and communities. Most notably rooted in disability inclusion, modern examples of Inclusive Design include gender-neutral restrooms; quiet or meditation spaces; colors, patterns, and textures to accommodate people who are neurodivergent; and more. While equity is a complex issue to address, Inclusive Design can support the development of environments that foster a sense of belonging, promote health, and impact human performance.

Inclusive Design offers a unique pathway for advancing equity through the design of our buildings, spaces, and communities.

Inclusive Design as Building Performance

Inclusive Design is an emerging trend in building performance. This is evident by the recent adoption of Inclusive Design in building performance standards that address sustainability, healthy building, energy efficiency, and resiliency. Despite this significant progress, Inclusive Design has not yet achieved mainstream status and election of these (often optional) Inclusive Design pathways remains low. Likely contributing to this indifference is the inconsistency of available Inclusive Design guidance across practitioner resources. The Inclusive Building Performance Standard aims to integrate relevant guidance into one convenient resource to support the adoption of Inclusive Design as a critical component of building performance.

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INCLUSIVE DESIGN PATHWAYS

The Inclusive Building Performance Standard is a compilation of the Inclusive and Universal Design pathways from WELL v2, LEED v4, the Living Building Challenge, and Enterprise Green Communities.



THE WELL BUILDING STANDARD

WELL v2 **Feature C13: Accessibility and Universal Design** strives to accommodate a diverse range of occupant abilities and needs. This is an optional (optimization) feature worth 2 points towards WELL Certification.

ENTERPRISE GREEN COMMUNITIES

Beyond ADA: Universal Design is an optional pathway for creating inclusive communities and multifamily residential projects. The achievement of this strategy is worth 8 points towards certification.

LEED®

The LEED v4 **Inclusive Design Pilot Credit** addresses inclusion by considering the full range of human diversity. The pilot credit is optional and worth 1 point towards LEED Certification.

THE LIVING BUILDING CHALLENGE

The Equity Petal of the Living Building Challenge outlines **Core Imperative 17: Universal Access** to elevate equity as a project goal. Meeting the Universal Access imperative is required to achieve Equity Petal Certification.



USING THE INCLUSIVE BUILDING PERFORMANCE STANDARD

The Inclusive Building Performance Standard supports compliance with the Inclusive Design pathways across WELL v2, LEED v4, the Living Building Challenge, and Enterprise Green Communities. Meeting the criteria outlined in this resource will position projects to achieve certification across all four Inclusive Design pathways.

To preserve the authenticity and intent of the originating standard, the Inclusive Design criteria outlined in this resource have been minimally altered from their original form. For reference, the sources of the originating standards have been indicated. At this time, the Inclusive Building Performance Standard is scoped for commercial projects and common use areas of multifamily residential communities. The Inclusive Building Performance Standard can be used to support standalone design initiatives or as part of a pathway to building performance certification.

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INCLUSIVE BUILDING PERFORMANCE STANDARD

	WELL v2	LEED v4	Enterprise Green Communities	Living Building Challenge
	Feature C13: Accessibility and Universal Design	Inclusive Design Pilot Credit	7.12. Beyond ADA: Universal Design	Equity Petal: Core Imperative 17 Universal Access
OPERATIONS & MANAGEMENT				
Provide an inclusive design training for building operations and management staff.	✓	✓		
Identify tailored Universal Design features to specifically address occupant needs during the integrative design process (if applicable). Prioritize the experience and participation of building users by considering the full range of ability, age, gender, language, cultural understanding, and other characteristics of human diversity in the context of place.		✓	✓	
Develop an operations and management handbook with policies and procedures that are inclusive of people with disabilities and others with a diverse range of needs.	✓	✓		
Implement inclusive recruitment, job profiles assessments, and access to jobs for people with disabilities; as well as policies that support a diverse range of needs (i.e. flexible working hours for people with disabilities).	✓	✓		
Establish inclusive emergency preparedness elements, systems, policies, and procedures.		✓		

PROGRAMMING

Provide lactation room(s).		✓		
Provide storage space adequate for wheelchairs, walkers, electric scooters, and strollers.			✓	
Provide quiet, wellness, and/or meditation room(s).		✓		
Include universal, gender neutral restrooms available for use in common areas.		✓	✓	
Include public spaces and services, such as exterior green space, public restrooms, public education areas, publicly-available event space, indoor weather shelters, and locally-designated emergency-related outreach/points of distribution		✓		
Include fitness spaces with accessible and inclusive activities and equipment.		✓		
Install drinking fountains, assistance animal areas, and bike racks that are easily accessed from all sides.		✓		
Provide spaces that encourage frequent, casual social interaction to reduce probability of social isolation.		✓		
For shared interior or exterior spaces, include permanent essential amenities, including seating, toilets, and drinking water to promote comfort and use.			✓	

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DESIGN				
Ensure the project meets accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or relevant equivalent.				✓
Create approachable building entries that are welcoming, are easy to identify, promote feelings of safety, and are accessible without the use of stairs. Include a covered entryway with seating, greenery, and lighting.			✓	
Provide accessible routes that are 43 inches (1.1 meters) in width, at minimum.		✓		
Provide circulation paths that are 20% wider than required, at minimum.		✓		
Increase the size of turning space to 72 inches (1.83 meters) in diameter, at minimum		✓		
Increase clear floor space at appliances and fixtures to 30 by 52 inches (0.76 by 1.32 meters), at minimum		✓		
Use step-free entry and egress, operable windows, and automatic doors when possible.	✓			
Recess or protect with physical barriers (niches, rails, etc.) drinking fountains, vending machines, and wall-mounted elements such as fire extinguishers, lighting, and similar that protrude more than four inches from a wall.		✓		
Design all interior and exterior doors to be accessible without the use of steps or raised thresholds and all sloped surfaces to have proper support on both sides (wheelchair and walker, dementia, age- in-place, vision impaired).			✓	
X Install 36-inch (0.91 meters) wide doors, at minimum, in all occupied spaces.		✓		
Ensure that equipment and controls are easily navigable by all people (e.g., HVAC controls, switches, dimmers, appliances).			✓	
Install lever handles on all doors.			✓	
Door and drawer hardware that requires no grasping, pinching, or twisting of the wrist.			✓	
Install slip-resistant flooring in the common spaces, frequently used pathways, units, and entryways.			✓	
Install thermostatic or anti-scald control faucets.			✓	
Install accessible bathtub or roll-in shower with hand-held adjustable shower head.			✓	
Install grab bars to provide extra support in bathrooms, including in the shower and other areas where they would provide assistance.			✓	
Install all towel bars to support the same loads that grab bars.			✓	
Provide ambient lighting at levels appropriate to space use controlled by occupancy, daylight, or other auto-sensor methods; include adjustable task lighting at work or public-use surfaces.		✓		
Ensure high levels of even, natural, and artificial lighting within circulation and common areas.			✓	
Address mental health by incorporating access to nature, art, daylight, biophilic elements social connection, and connectivity to outdoor space.	✓			
Apply strategies that use color, texture, images and other multi-sensory visually perceptible information (e.g., to accommodate sensory requirements of neurodiverse individuals.	✓			

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WAYFINDING				
Provide continuous linear path indicators along routes.		✓		
Use patterns and/or color blocking to identify key public access spaces (e.g. entries, exits, restrooms).		✓		
Use aromatic elements to guide blind and low-vision people.		✓		
Adopt emergency alarm signaling (audible/visual), safety zones, and clear wayfinding indicators to ensure that emergency egress is inclusive.		✓		
Provide clear signage throughout the building that avoids jargon, uses clear language, incorporates a positive frame, and is multi-lingual where appropriate. Incorporate illustrations to encourage universal understanding. Signage for way-finding and other purposes should be available in the interior and exterior spaces. Consider audio signaling when possible.			✓	
Ensure lighting and clear sightlines to support easy access to all spaces and amenities and minimize risk of injury, confusion or discomfort.	✓			
Create logical circulation patterns and navigability throughout the project. This may include continuous pathways, signage, art, lighting, and multi-sensory features to promote navigability.			✓	
Include exterior signage that is prominent, visible from sidewalk, access road, or parking lot.			✓	

TECHNOLOGY

Provide audio and visual equipment and web access that helps individuals fully utilize a space (e.g., to assist blind or deaf individuals, or those who do not speak the native language), made available to all occupants at no cost.	✓			
Provide height adjustable desks, adjustable height counters (with fixtures, where applicable), and accessible height sales/service counters.		✓		
Install monitors and lit screens with non-glare surfaces.		✓		
Provide voice or touch screen operated controls for devices and systems affecting occupancy of the space and user comfort, including but not limited to lighting, window shades, and thermostats.		✓		

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EXTERIOR SITE AND PLANNING				
Make all primary transportation, roads and non-building infrastructure that are considered externally focused (e.g. plazas, seating or park space) equally accessible to all members of the public regardless of background, age and socioeconomic class—including the homeless—with reasonable steps taken to ensure that all people can benefit from the project’s creation.				✓
Make streets and paths throughout the project site universally accessible, smooth, and sufficiently wide, and provide curb cuts at street crossings and entry points, and turning radii adequate for a wheelchair or walker.			✓	
Design the site with open sight lines to and from entries and public access points		✓		
Include detectable warnings (e.g. truncated domes) where official pedestrian crossings intersect with vehicular paths.		✓		
Provide for and enhance the public realm through design measures and features that are accessible to all members of society, such as street furniture, public art, gardens, and benches.				✓
Ensure the project does not block access to, nor diminish the quality of, fresh air, sunlight, and natural waterways for any member of society or adjacent developments. Projects must also appropriately address any noise audible to the public.				✓
Ensure projects protect adjacent property from any noxious emissions that would compromise its ability to use natural ventilation. All operational emissions must be free of Red List items, persistent bioaccumulative toxicants, and known or suspect carcinogenic, mutagenic and reprotoxic chemicals.				✓
Ensure the projects does not block sunlight to adjacent building facades and rooftops above a maximum height allotted for the area. The project may not shade the roof of an adjacent building, unless that building was built to a lesser density than acceptable for the area.				✓
Projects may not restrict access to the edge of any natural waterway, except where such access can be proven to be a hazard to public safety or would severely compromise the function of the project. No project may assume ownership of water contained in these bodies or compromise the quality of water that flows downstream. If the project’s boundary is more than sixty meters long parallel to the edge of the waterway, it must incorporate and maintain an access path to the waterway from the most convenient public right-of-way.				✓
In properties with more than 12 residential units, create sub-clusters of units with no more than 12 units sharing semi-private space or entry sequence to promote connections with neighbors.			✓	