

Welcome

HEALTHY AGING
CORE Collaborative Online
Resources & Education
ALBERTA

Age-Friendly Housing Series Session 3: Characteristics of Age-Friendly Housing for Seniors

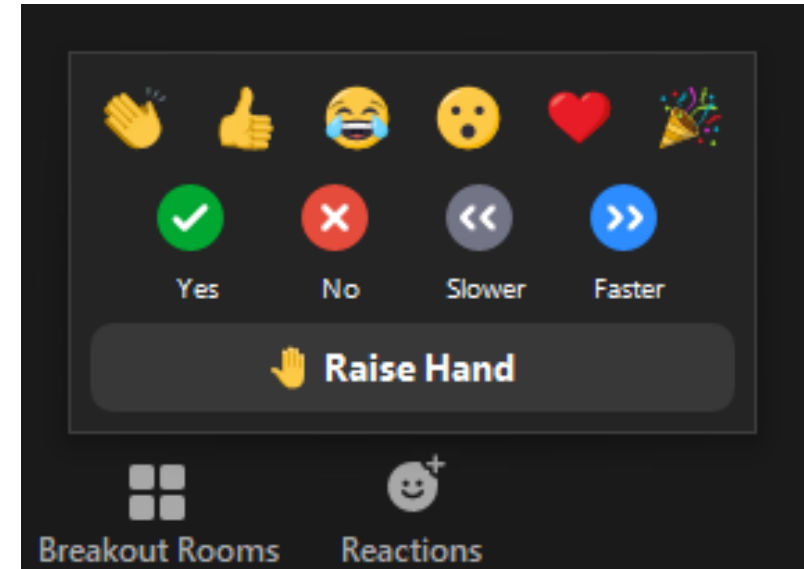
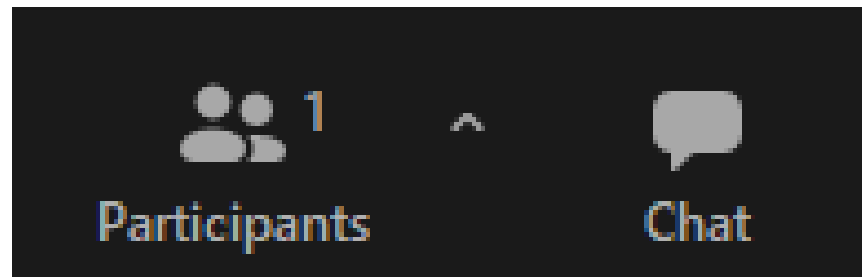
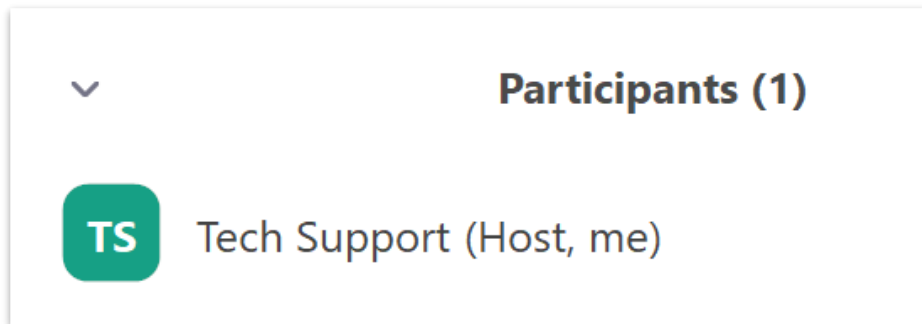
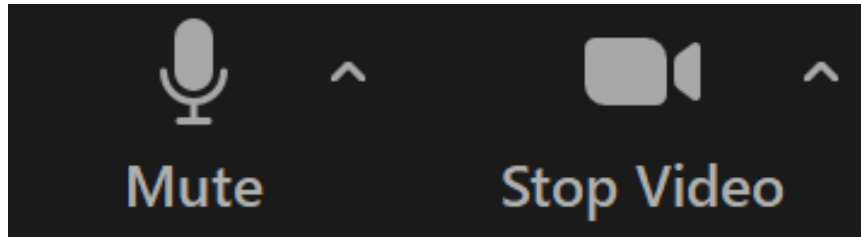
April 27, 2022 - 10 am to 12:00 pm



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the spirit of our journey to promote reconciliation, we would like to honour the truth of the shared history and acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit who have lived in and cared for these lands for generations. We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us.

HOUSEKEEPING



This session will be recorded, and the slides will also be available.

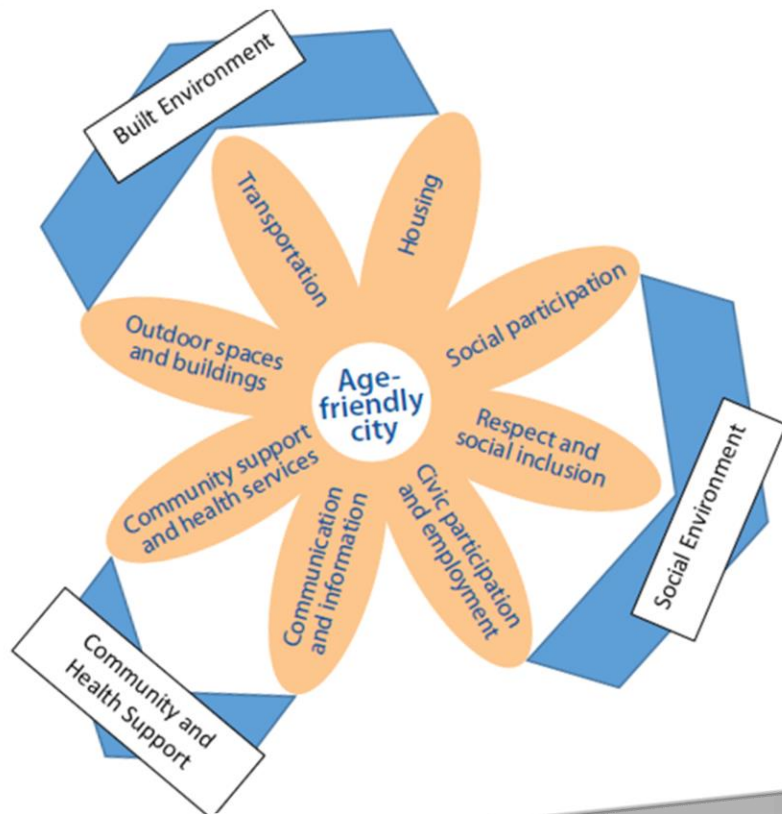
They will be uploaded on the CORE Alberta platform

<https://corealberta.ca/>

*“Design for the young and you exclude the old.
Design for the old and you include everyone.”*

~ The late Bernard Isaacs, Founding Director
Birmingham Centre for Applied Gerontology

What is Age-Friendly?



- Age-friendly is a model to enable active, healthy aging by focusing on eight domains of community living.
- Age-friendly communities help seniors remain engaged in their communities through the development of supportive built and social environments that facilitate exercise, social connection and respect for seniors.
- The cornerstone of the age-friendly model is the development of a community plan which brings together traditional and non-traditional partners to identify community assets and strengths that facilitate social inclusion of seniors and factors that hinder it.

Alberta Age-Friendly CORE Groups

Community of Practice

- Communities considering or pursuing an age-friendly plan
- Offer mentoring support
- Meets regularly
- Members actively support the Community of Practice.



Discussion Group

- Open to anyone
- Information sharing
- May or may not be involved in an age-friendly initiative.



Age-Friendly Housing – Setting the Stage

- Most seniors want to remain in their own homes for as long as possible.
- Majority of Alberta seniors live in private dwellings.
- The majority of seniors in private dwellings are homeowners.
- While about 1 out of every 7 Alberta seniors in a private dwelling is a renter.
- Close to a quarter of Alberta seniors in private dwellings live alone.



Checklist of Essential Features of Age-friendly Cities

Housing

- Sufficient, affordable housing is available in areas that are safe and close to services and the rest of the community.
- Sufficient and affordable home maintenance and support services are available.
- Housing is well-constructed and provides safe and comfortable shelter from the weather.
- Interior spaces and level surfaces allow freedom of movement in all rooms and passageways.
- Home modification options and supplies are available and affordable, and providers understand the needs of older people.
- Public and commercial rental housing is clean, well-maintained and safe.
- Sufficient and affordable housing for frail and disabled older people, with appropriate services, is provided locally.

Recap Session 1 - Setting the Stage for Seniors Housing

Housing is a unique journey

Understanding those barriers and strategies in each setting gives us better insights on how to move forward.

- Not everyone should stay at home
- Some people aren't suited to community living
- At times, maybe the solution is a blended model

We might be creating a model that causes isolation by keeping people at home who aren't suited to that.

Variable, options and choice will ensure people have access to the supports when they need them.

Stronger Foundations: Alberta's 10-year strategy to improve and expand affordable housing

Action highlights – housing for seniors

Action 1.7: Increase seniors housing in line with population growth.

Action 2.4: Collaborate with partner ministries to co-ordinate supports and transitions for Albertans as they move through the housing continuum. This includes people receiving income support, youth exiting government care, women and children fleeing violence and seniors moving to higher levels of care.

Action 5.6: Work with partners to enable seniors' lodges to serve as community hubs in rural areas, and expand the Lodge Partnership Program to increase designated supportive living spaces in seniors' lodges where stand-alone continuing care facilities are not feasible.

Recap Session 2 - Late Life Homelessness and Affordable Housing

Homelessness among older adults is not just a housing problem; it is multidimensional, touching upon several issues including mental health, physical health, loneliness, and community wellbeing.

Responses and best practices:

- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Affordable Accessible Housing
- Eviction Prevention
- Rental Assistance
- Housing Navigation Supports
- Coordinated Access
- Housing First Philosophy
- Policy Changes

Living well in community, from a housing perspective:

- Safety and security
- Accommodation costs no more than 30% of income
- Well maintained building and suitable space
- Responsiveness of landlord to problems/financial issues
- Close to amenities, support network and community services

It takes a village:

- Seniors/Community Centres
- Home Care
- Schools
- Health clinics/including diagnostics
- Wellness supports – foot care, dental, therapies, etc.
- Friends and Family
- Transportation
- Volunteers
- Support service availability – grounds maintenance, repairs, etc

Agenda

- Welcome and session overview
- Presentations:
 - Ron Wickman, Architect specializing in barrier-free design
 - Rachelle Butler, Program Coordinator, Residential Accessible Design (RAD) Renovations Program, Accessible Housing
 - Stephanie Firestone, Senior Strategic Policy Advisor, Health & Age-friendly Communities, AARP International
- Question and Answer
- Wrap-up

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April 27, 2022 - 10 am to 12:00 pm



The Alberta Age-Friendly
Community of Practice

Age-Friendly Housing Series:
From homelessness to continuing care

Age-Friendly Housing Series
Session 3: Characteristics of Age-
Friendly Housing for Seniors
April 27, 2022

Ron Wickman

BA, BEDS, M. Arch., Architect, AAA, MRAIC



Ron Wickman
Architect, Ron Wickman Architect



On Friday December 11, 1964 I was 23 years old when I traded my legs for a set of wheels. It was just past noon when my back was crushed by a thousand pound steel door falling off its rails in the boxcar I was unloading. I could feel nothing below my waist as I lay there expecting to die, puzzled rather than panicked, with my body seemingly carved in half. I was left a permanent paraplegic with my spinal cord severed at the L-2 level...

Percy Wickman

WHEELS IN THE FAST LANE... a blessing in disguise





ENNETT RESIDENCE



INFILL HOUSING COMPETITION



FLEXHOUSING



JENN'S PLACE GROUP HOME



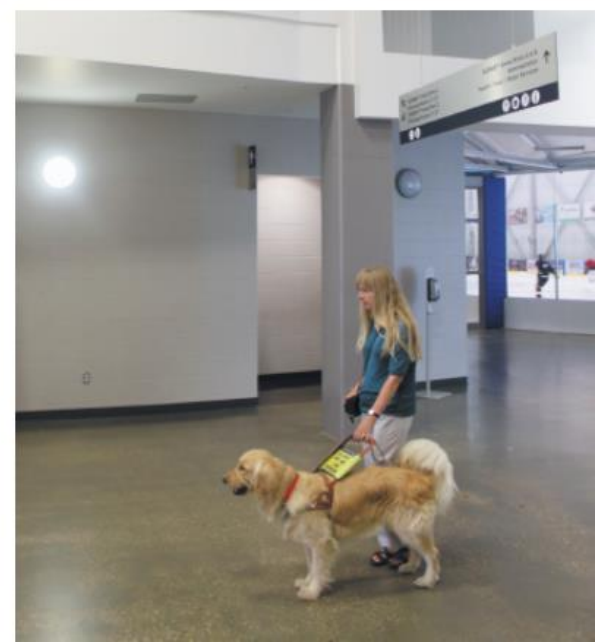
PREMIER'S COUNCIL OFFICE SPACE



AMBROSE PLACE

My lived experience.

You cannot design spaces for persons with disabilities without working with people who have disabilities.





Visitability is a design strategy that focuses on three main features within a home – a zero-step entrance, wider doors, and a bathroom on the main floor – that allows people with disabilities, including seniors with limited mobility, to enter the first floor of the home.



Adaptability or FlexHousing™ is a term used by CMHC to describe an approach to housing design that incorporates features at the design and construction phase that will allow homeowners to adapt their space to meet their changing needs. In the U.S. this is known as “adaptable design.”

Accessibility or Universal Design is a relatively new concept that goes beyond mere visitability and accessibility and aims to create housing and environments that can be used by people of all ages, abilities and mobility levels, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. Universal design focuses on creating homes that are comfortable, attractive, safe and usable by everyone at every stage of life.



The Building Blocks that Allow for Housing for Everyone

1. No-Step Entrance
2. Accessible Bathroom
3. Vertical Access
4. Interior Space
5. Accessible Kitchen
6. Wayfinding

1. NO STEP ENTRANCE



A visit from Pops



A no step entrance helps everyone and hurts no one



A wheelchair accessible door threshold



2. ACCESSIBLE BATHROOM



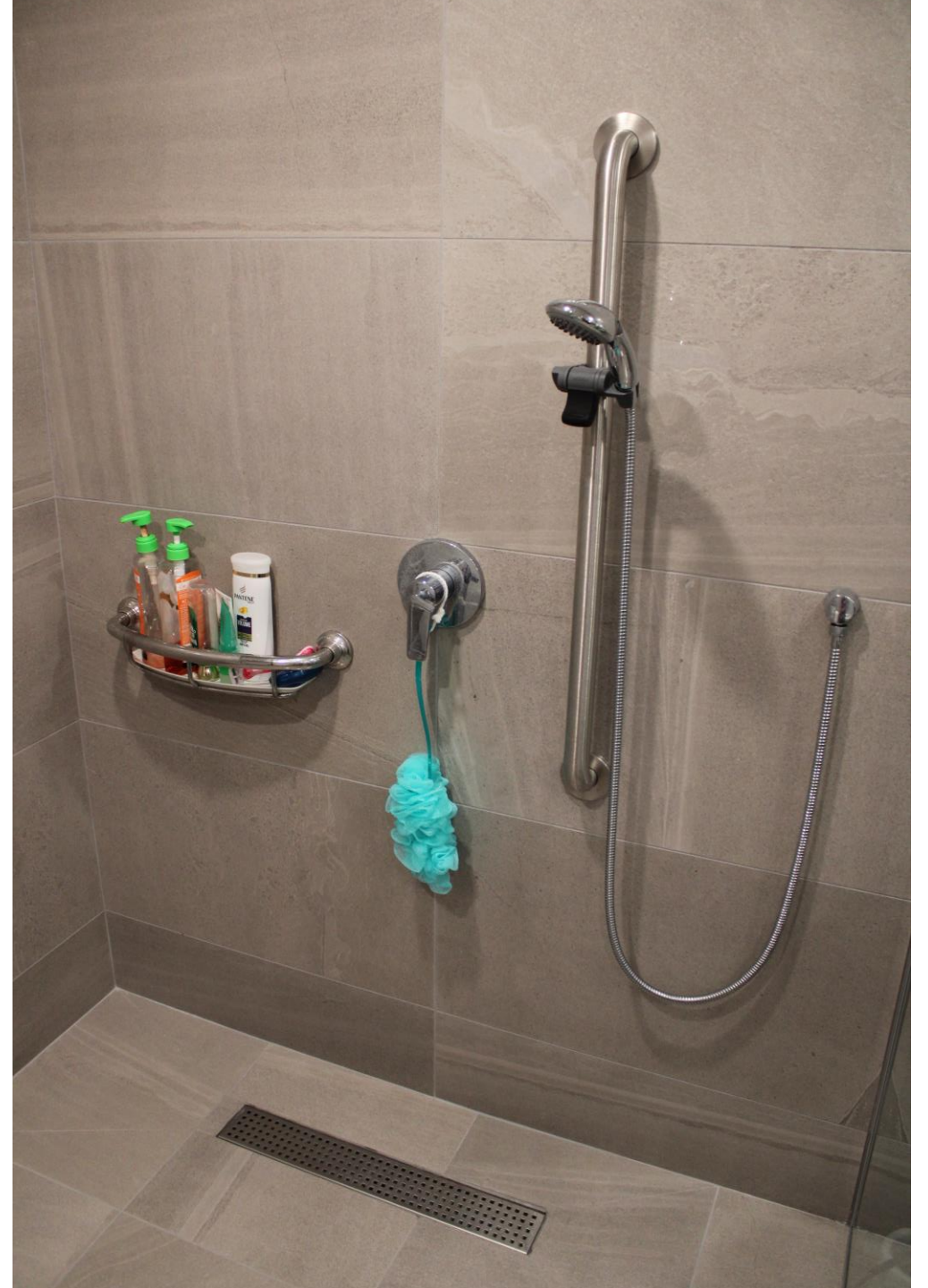
The accessible bathroom that is beautiful and functional



The bathroom/wetroom can look
anyway you want



The trench drain



3. VERTICAL ACCESS ELEVATOR



Elevators can fit any style



4. INTERIOR SPACE

Hallways and Doors



INTERIOR SPACE

Bedrooms



An accessible kitchen is the kitchen of your dreams



An accessible kitchen benefits everyone



Wayfinding in Group Homes

Color and Texture Contrast



Wayfinding in Group Homes Good for Everyone



Critical Date 2030: In about 2030, the baby boomers will reach their 65th birthday. Almost twice as many people were born in 1964 than in any of the years of the 1980s.



Critical Date 2050: The balance between young and old will only start to swing back slightly after 2050 when the baby boomer generations reach the end of their lifetime and the following lower-birth-rate generations reach retirement age.



Infill Housing Aging in Place

AGING IN PLACE: OPTION B - ATTACHED DWELLINGS

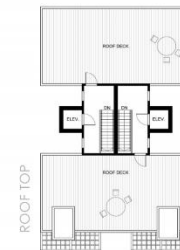
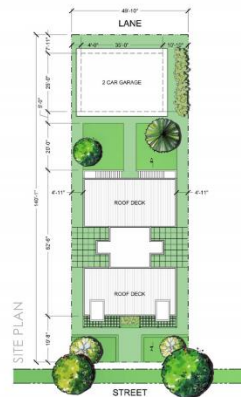
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VISITABLE

ADAPTABLE

ACCESSIBLE

The design of these homes is inspired by the concept of "aging in place." Edmontonians aged over 65 years have become our fastest growing population. Yet few new homes are designed with their needs in mind. This is an expanding new market for developers and home builders. Everyone wants to "age in place" so that they can continue to remain independent and live in their community for as long as possible. They want their homes to be beautiful, safe, and secure so that they can "age in place" through their retirement years.



Infill Housing Aging in Place

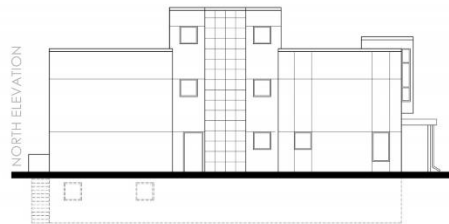
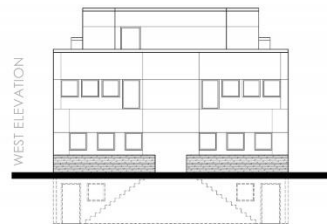
AGING IN PLACE: OPTION B - ATTACHED DWELLINGS

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The homes are designed to be **Visible**, **Adaptable**, and **Accessible**. The homes are made **Visible** by constructing no-step entrances at the exterior doors. The homes are made **Adaptable** by constructing the bathrooms as wetrooms complete with large curbless shower areas. The homes are made **Accessible** by incorporating residential elevators.

Other guiding sustainable design features include:

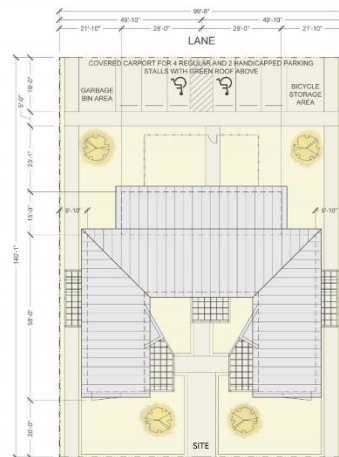
- Roof deck gardens
- Energy efficient building envelop
- Rainwater collection
- Living walls
- Provision for secondary suites



Infill Housing Triplex

**Affordable, Accessible,
Adaptable, Sustainable**

This project addresses the various issues associated with FlexHousing™ design principles. This TRIPLEX is intended to look like a duplex from the street, yet it subtly incorporates a third ground level wheelchair accessible dwelling. The three unit complex then is made up by two 2-storey (11560 Sq. Ft.) dwellings and one (1668 Sq. Ft.) single floor dwelling. It is designed to accommodate a variety of family types: young couples with children, single parents, shared accommodations, seniors and persons with disabilities. Furthermore it can accommodate changes in the accessible needs of residents as they age. The key concepts that guide the design of this proposal are Community, Flexibility, Accessibility, Environmental Issues, and Affordability.



BASEMENT



MAIN FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

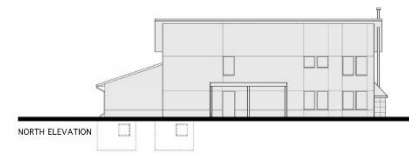
Infill Housing Triplex

Affordable, Accessible, Adaptable, Sustainable

The drawings identify the two 2-storey dwellings with three second storey bedrooms and an optional bedroom/home office on the ground level. A single wheelchair accessible dwelling houses two bedrooms where one could be used as a home office. Our intent is to identify a design placed in the "middle of the road" in terms of size and affordability. The dwelling could also be smaller thus reducing the building's area and selling price or larger with a greater number of features. What we would most like to reveal is a working methodology for creating the maximum in FlexHousing—that can still be marketable in today's marketplace.

Major features include:

- No-step entrances
- Residential elevators or future elevators
- Bathrooms that function as wet rooms
- Superior building envelope for energy efficiency
- Recycling of rain water
- Greenroof located on garage structure
- Potential for secondary suites in basement



Multi – Generational Housing



Cohousing: “I know I live in a community because on a Friday night it takes me 45 minutes and two beers to get from the parking lot to my front door.”
Cohousing Resident



CONCEPT 8

ACCESSIBLE ARCHITECTURE IS BEAUTIFUL

“In no way were the family’s aesthetics compromised by the accessible features.”

–Ron Wickman, Architect and Author

THE FAID HOUSE

AGING-IN-PLACE

One of the biggest myths about accessible design is that such structures will be ugly, their beauty compromised by functionality.

Accessible design need not compromise a designer’s approach but rather becomes an element in that approach, as are the principles of site, light and views. Nor should sustainability and energy-efficiency be left out of the equation when Visitability, adaptability and accessibility are the guiding features.

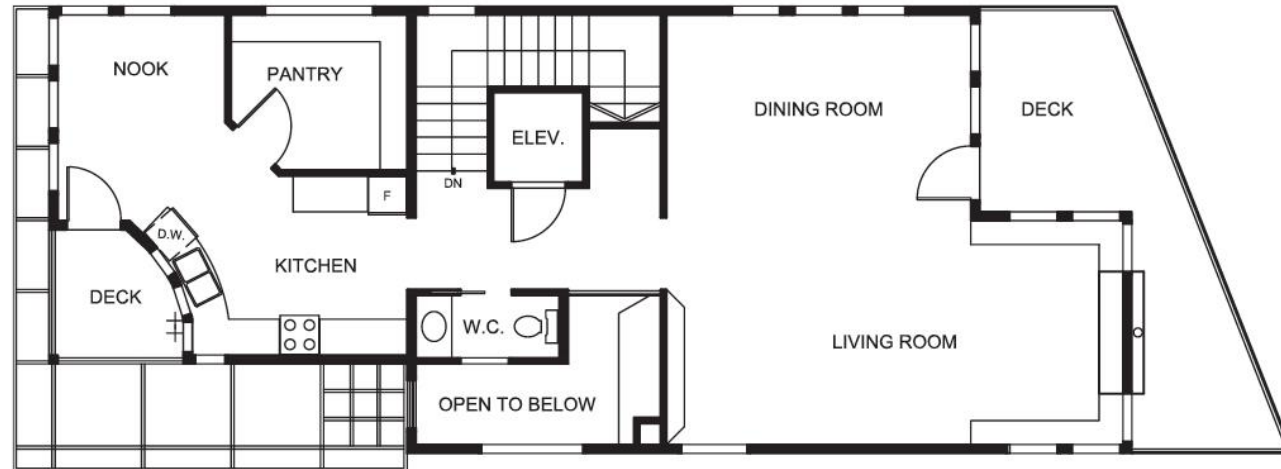
As Peter Faid expressed their dreams for the house, “We planned this house as an empty nester/retirement home. The trend these days is called *aging-in-place*. That’s why we have wide halls, an entrance at grade, lever handles, better lighting and an elevator. The latter is a bonus since neither of us currently need it, but it’s great for taking groceries inside and the movers loved it! We feel really lucky to be living in such a great place and the bonus of not having to look for something more suitable for our older years will save us money and heartache in the future.”





The image beside represents the back perspective of the house, including a level deck and a walkout basement.

The floor plan below illustrates the main living area, found on the top level and accessible to people of varying disabilities via the elevator.

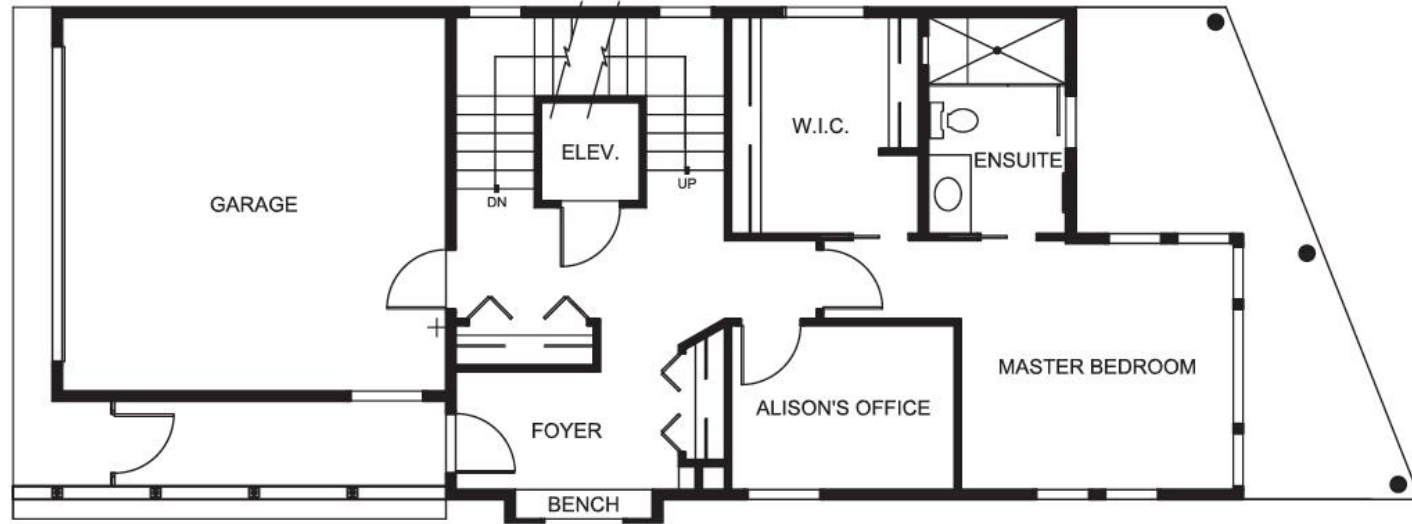


At least five feet of space in front of the elevator enables maneuverability for users in wheelchairs. The home's stairway wraps around the elevator. Designed as short runs of five to six steps each, with sturdy handrails and step lights, the stairway provides for safe vertical travel by foot. The elevator as part of all of the accessible design features integrated into the house design made moving into the home simpler.

To satisfy users with varying disabilities in the best way possible, the house features wider doorways (at least 36 inches wide) and decorative rocker-style light switches which can be operated with a wrist or elbow. Extra insulation in all walls provides better acoustics; color and textural contrast is provided to assist in wayfinding for persons with visual and cognitive difficulties.

In keeping with the principles of Visitability, the hallway is at least 42 inches wide with a high brick red curved ceiling connecting the living / dining room and the kitchen. Red accents including pillows gathered in the Faid's travels to Cambodia and Turkey integrate the space and provide punch. A bank of bright windows faces east and frames the gas fireplace. Natural light fills the gathering spaces and provides spectacular views of the City's River Valley.

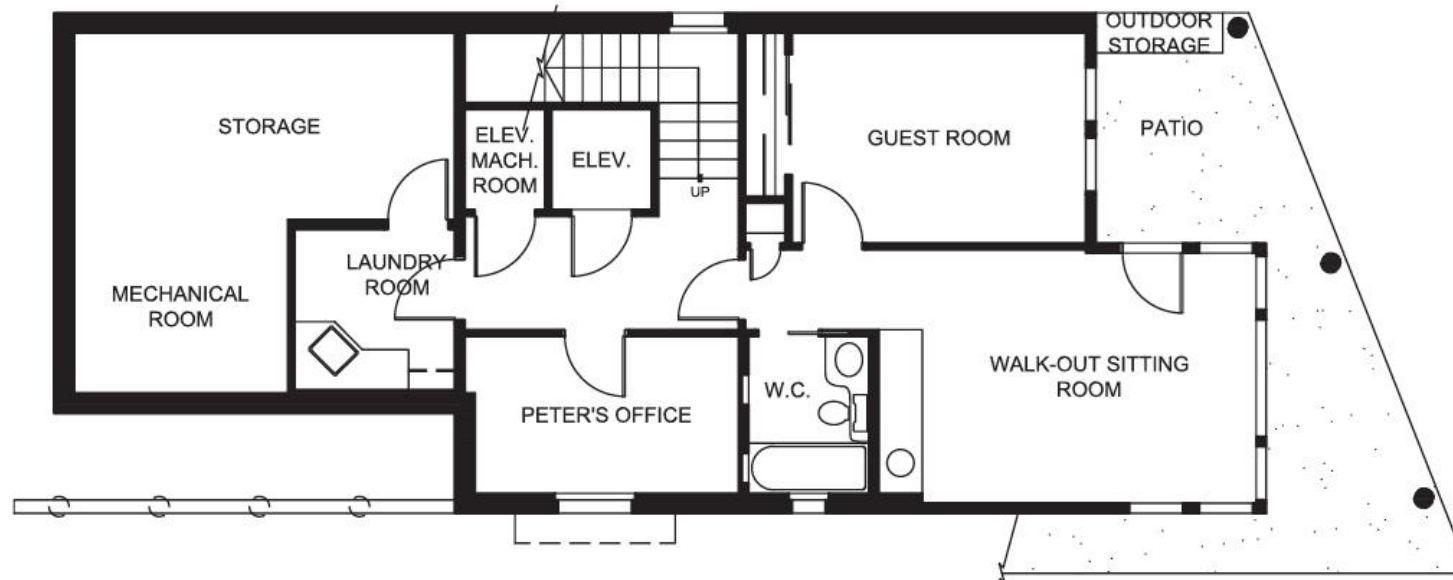
The floor plan below lays out the grade-level first floor of the house into which all guests enter through the front door.



The broad entranceway incorporates a vestibule containing a bench on which visitors can sit while donning or doffing shoes. This level also contains Alison's office (painted a pale mauve) and the master bedroom. Off the master bedroom is a bathroom (one of two full baths and one half bath) that serves as a symbol of the home's combination of form and function.

The clear box shower of glass and ceramic tiles—the color of mottled concrete—is large. On one wall of the shower is a stylish grab bar. A low stool, made out of Asian teak, sits outside the shower. Because its wood can be exposed to water without damage, it can be pulled inside if anybody wants or needs to sit down while bathing.

The floor plan below illustrates the lower level of the home containing Peter's office, a suite with a bathroom and bedroom and the laundry room.



As part of their strategy to *age-in-place*, the Faids wanted a lower-level suite, which could accommodate a live-in caregiver, with a separate entrance that opens out to the backyard.

A counter with a sink, microwave, and small fridge, with space to accommodate a cooktop, provides independence for guests, visiting family or live-in caregivers. Triple glazed windows and high R-value insulation incorporate energy efficiency. An on-demand hot water system saves money and energy, as does the high efficiency furnace.



The above image shows the third floor living room looking out onto Edmonton's beautiful river valley facing east.

Ron Wickman

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RENOVATIONS
by ACCESSIBLE
HOUSING

Let's play a game.



I know someone who is aging and having trouble getting up and down the stairs or in and out of their bathtub.



I have an aging parent who is having trouble getting around their home.



I will age one day.

**Aging
Parents**

**Unexpected
medical
emergency**

**Transition
to
retirement**

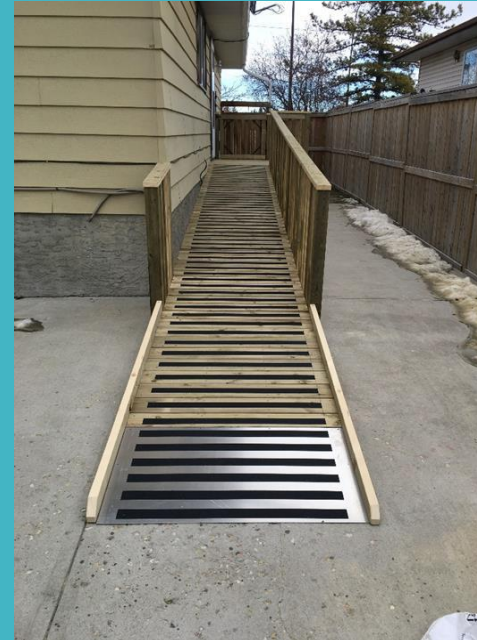
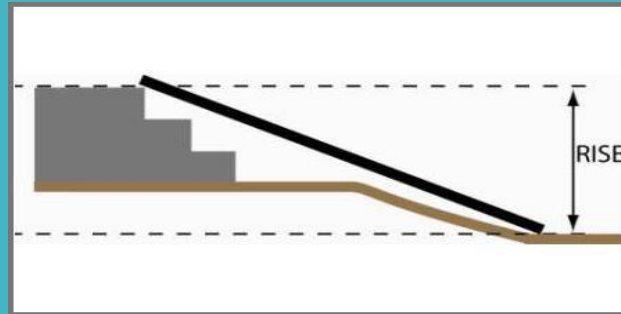
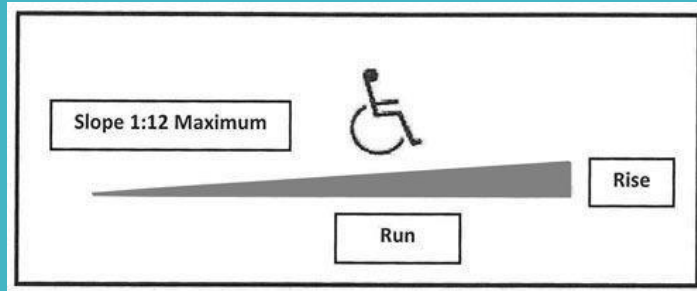
**Parents
with
strollers**

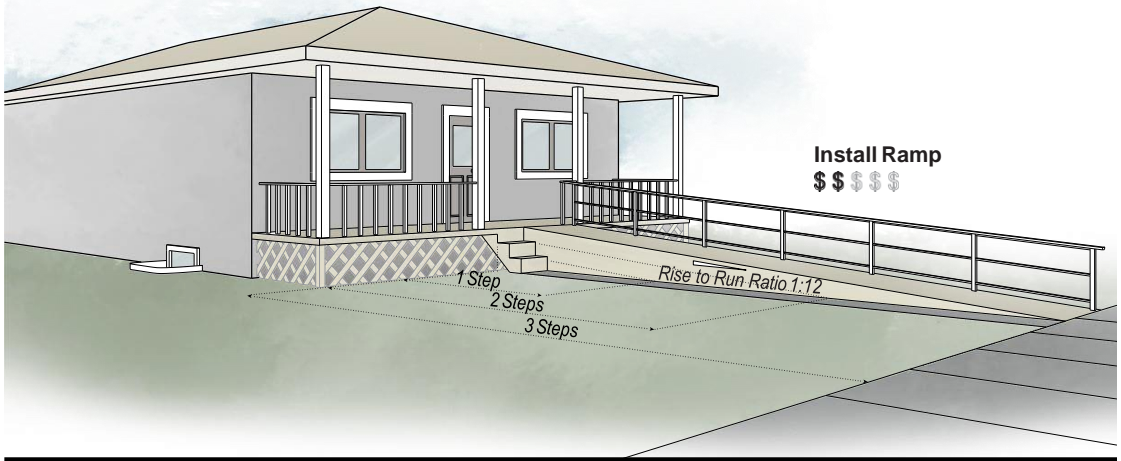
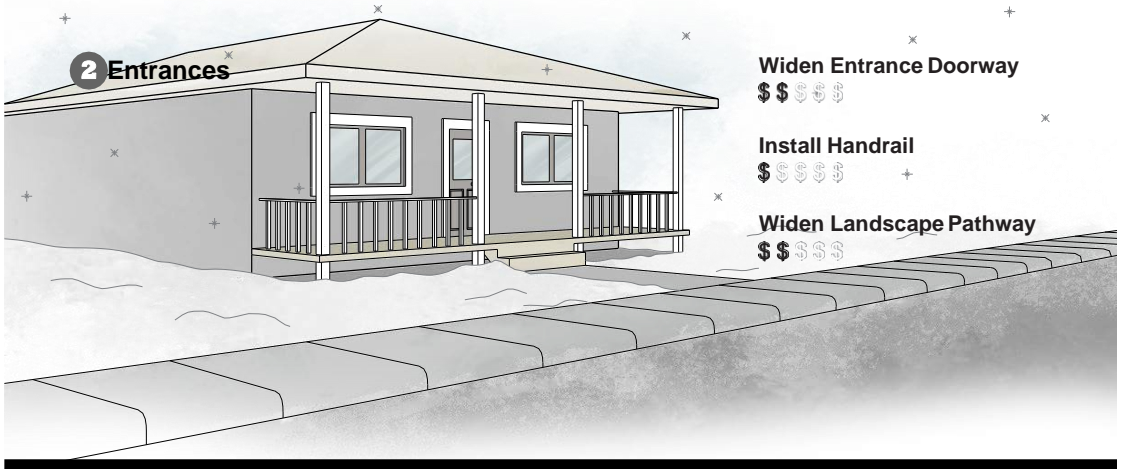
**Loved
ones with
limited
mobility**

**We are all
affected by
accessibility.**



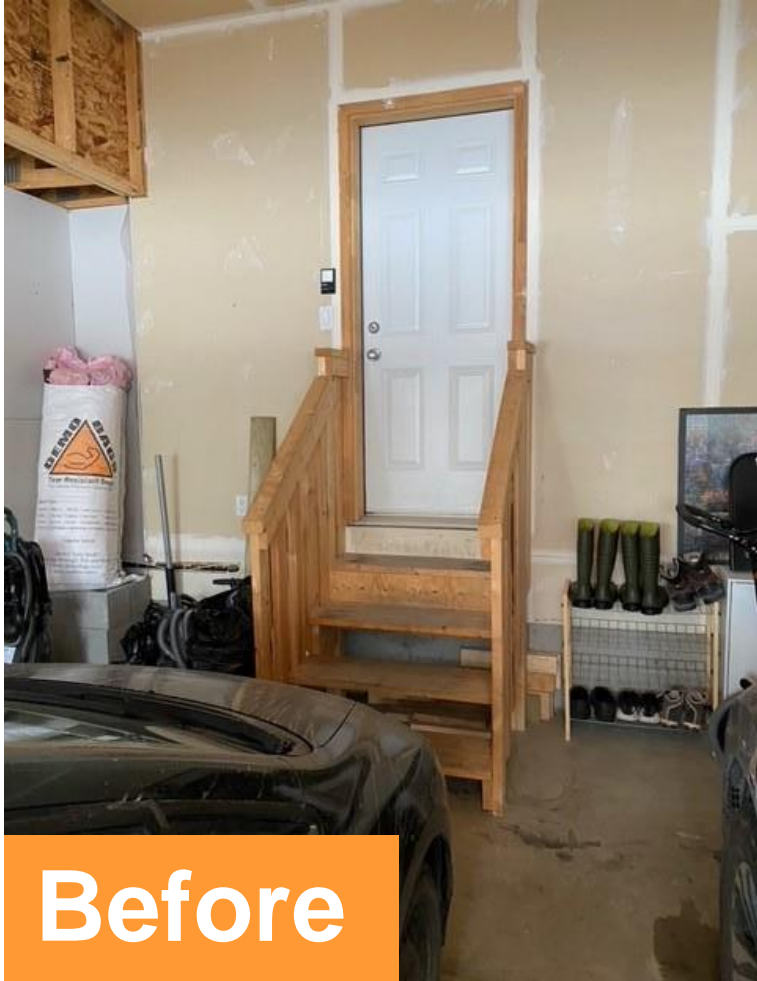
Accessible Entrance - Ramp





Accessible Entrance – Porch Lift





Before

“ I don't need two people to help me balance on either end anymore while I step up the stairs. I don't have to wait for help. Being able to leave the house has been much easier. It's not putting the pressure on my husband anymore who was afraid to drop me. He feels I am much safer now. ”

- Barbara

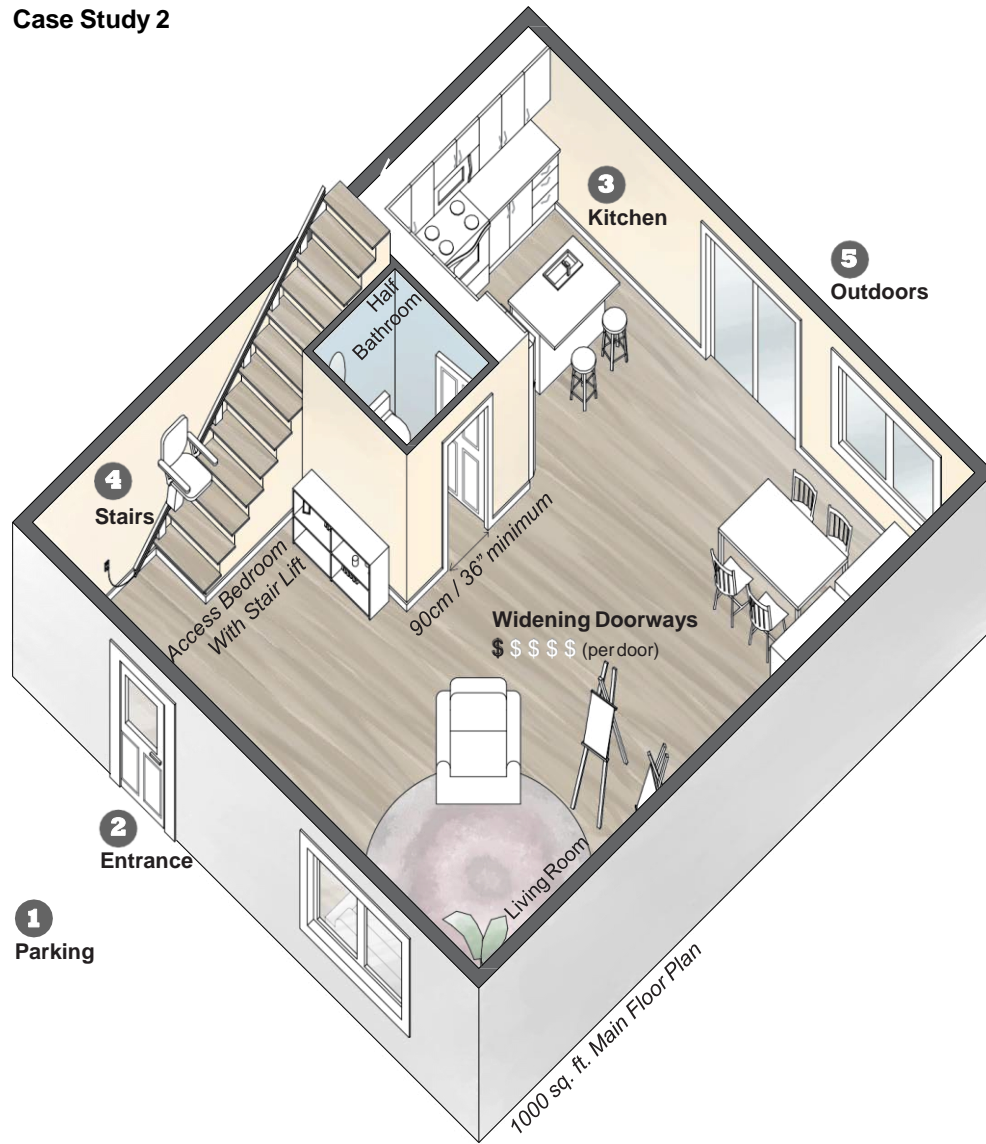


After

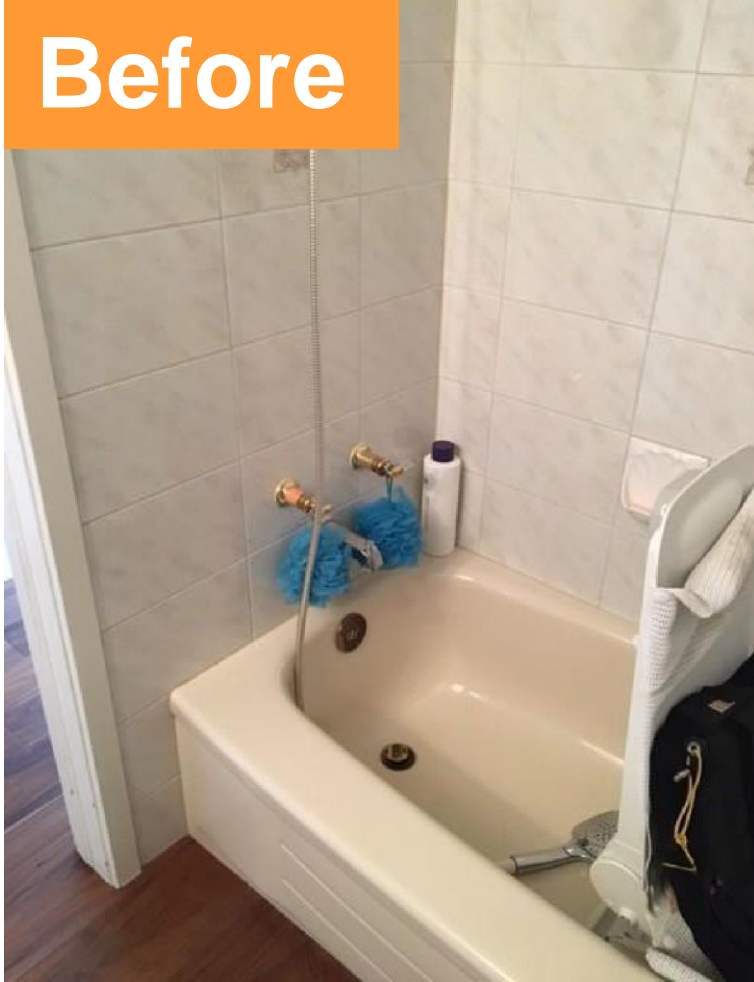
Barrier free, wheel in shower



Case Study 2



Before



After

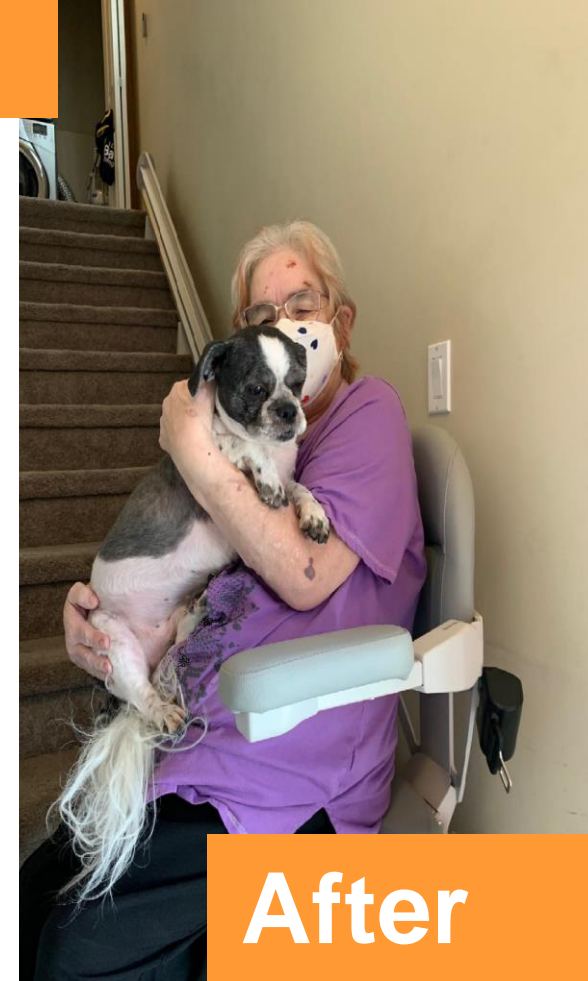


“ I want to thank you for the renovation of my daughter's bathroom. Not only does it look beautiful but the wheel in shower makes our life easier as my daughter grows up and gets heavier day by day. ”
- Marie

Stair Lift

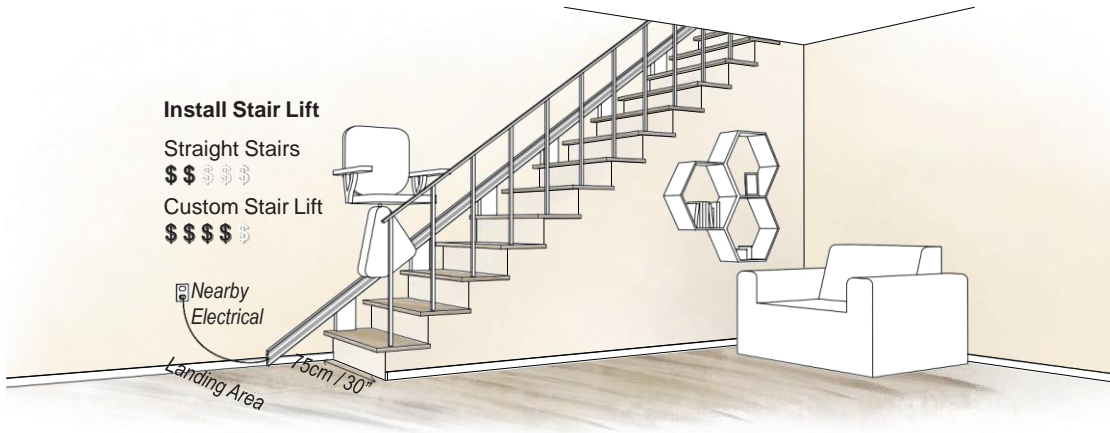
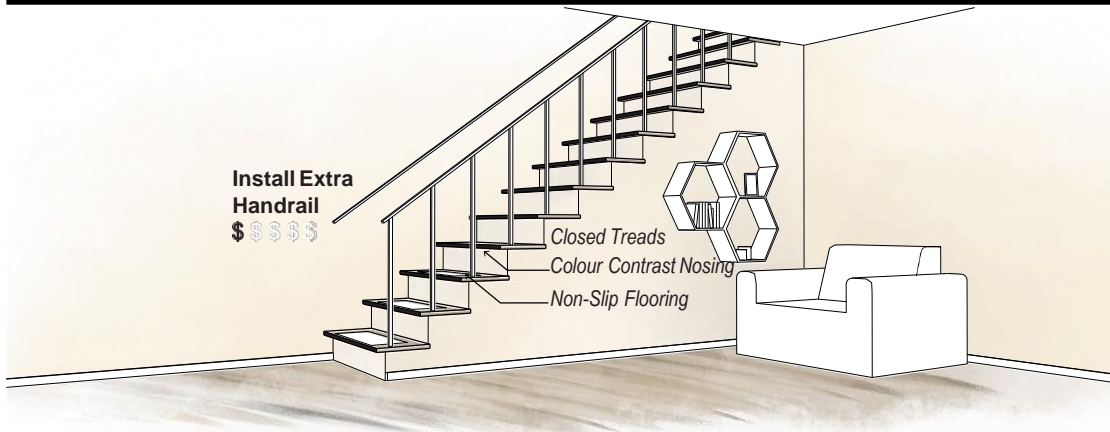


Before



After

4 Stairs





Available Funding For Low Income Individuals

- Residential Access Modification Program (RAMP), Government of Alberta
- Seniors Home Repair and Adaptation Program (SHARP), Government of Alberta
- Easter Seals Alberta
- Diagnosis specific programs such as MS Society of Canada, Cerebral Palsy Association, Muscular Dystrophy Canada



Questions?



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@radrenosyc



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CORE Age-Friendly Housing Series

Alberta, Canada

April 27, 2022

Stephanie K. Firestone

Senior Strategic Policy Advisor

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AGENDA

- **Introduction to AARP**
- **Livable (and Age-friendly) Communities**
- **Equity by Design**
- **Housing**



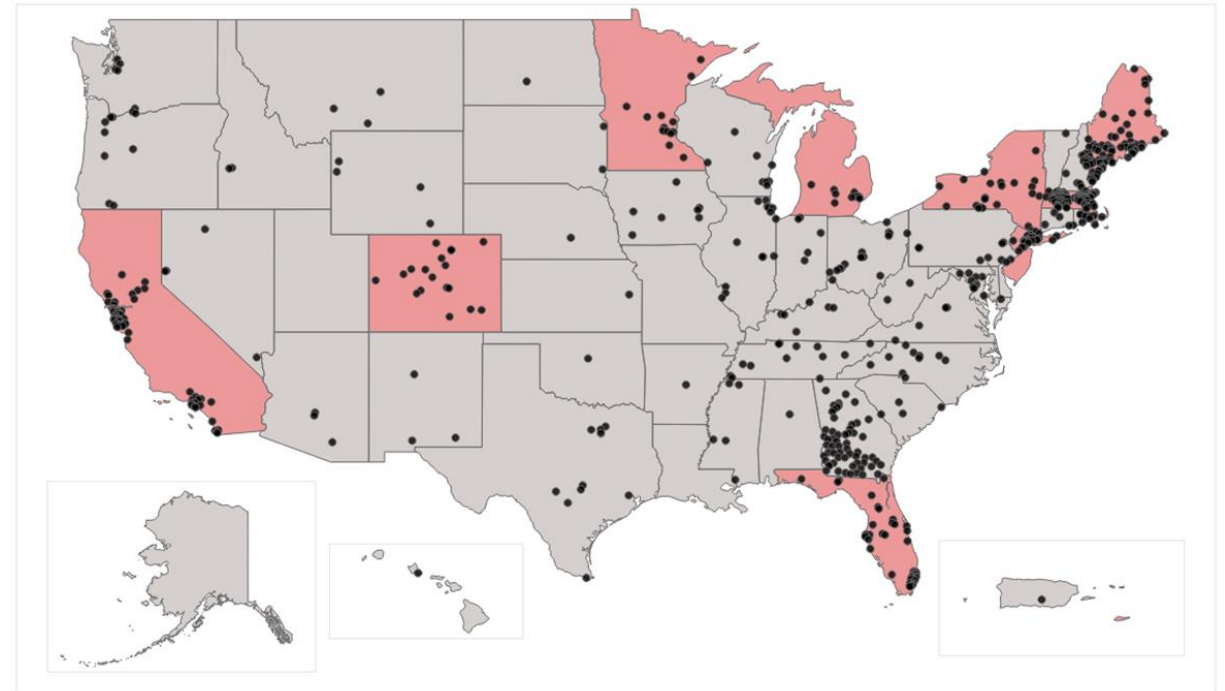
PURPOSE:

To empower people to choose how they live as they age

SOCIAL IMPACT AGENDA:

- **Health Security** – Health care, caregiving
- **Financial Resilience** – Social security, savings & planning, work & jobs, housing
- **Social Connections** – Fun & fulfillment, technology/digital equity

AARP NETWORK OF AGE-FRIENDLY STATES & COMMUNITIES



More than 640 communities have committed to create a more age-friendly future -- plus 9 states and 1 US territory

[AARP Home](#) » [AARP Public Policy Institute](#) » [AARP Livability Index](#)

[Scoring](#) | [Data Sources](#) | [About](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Livable Communities](#)

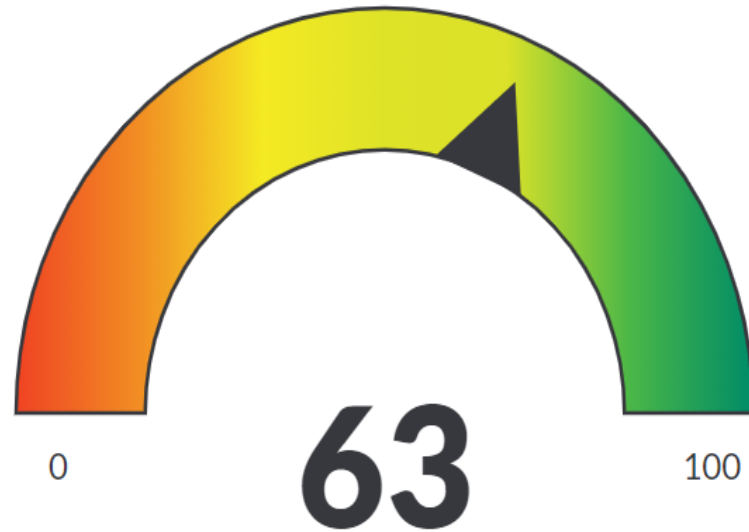
AARP LIVABILITY INDEX | GREAT NEIGHBORHOODS FOR ALL AGES

How livable is your community?

The AARP Livability Index scores neighborhoods and communities across the U.S. for the services and amenities that impact you the most.

Explore your community today.





Overall Livability Score ⓘ

The overall livability index score for **Montgomery County, Maryland** is **63**. This is in the top half of communities in the U.S.

Total Population:

1,043,530

African American: 18%

Asian: 15%

Hispanic: 20%

White: 53%

Age 50+: 35%

Age 65+: 15%

Households w/Disabilities: 8%

Life Expectancy: 83 years old

Households Without a Vehicle: 7%

Median Income: \$124,692

Poverty: 7%

Upward Mobility: 48 ⓘ

[Sources for Demographic Data Points](#)

Overview

Neighborhood Map

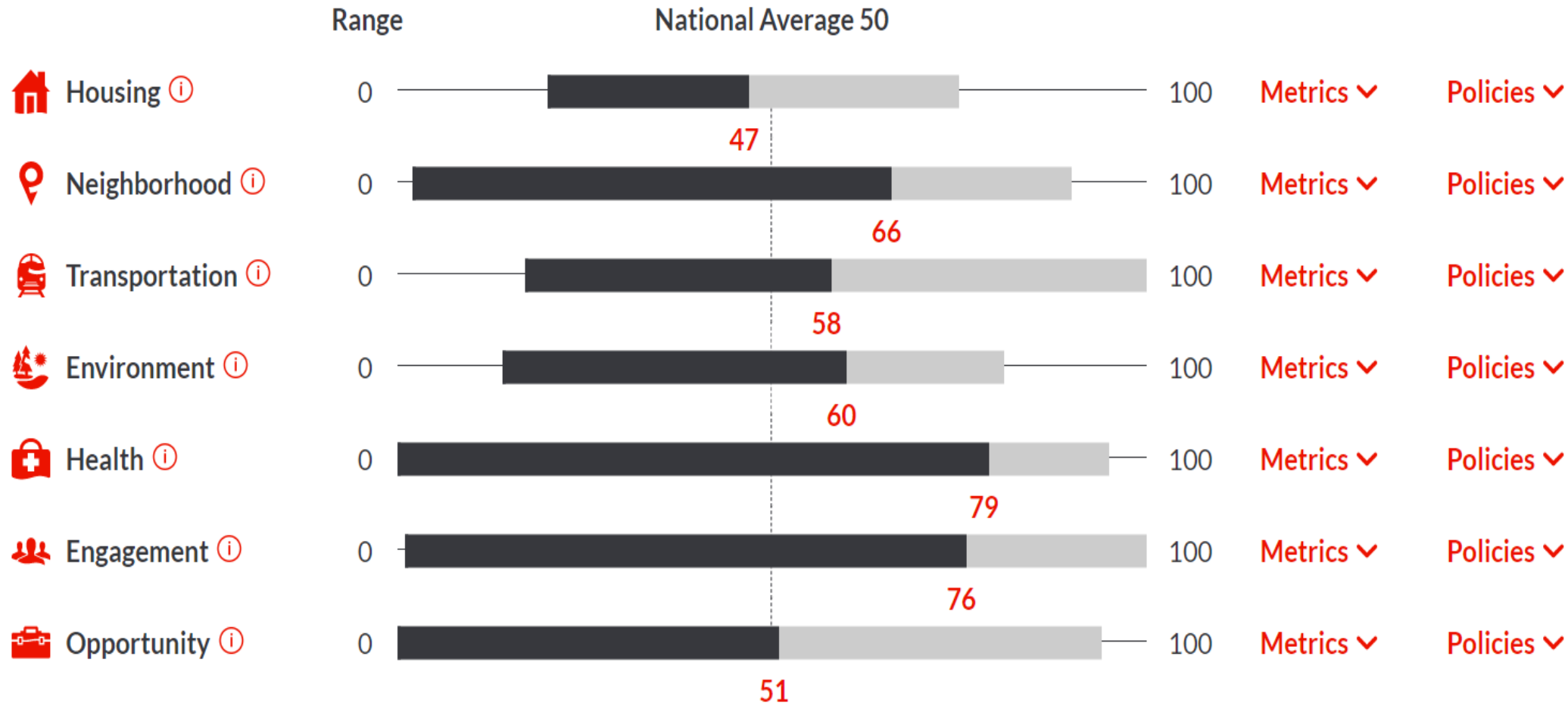
Category Scores

Compare to Other Communities

Improve Your Community

Category Scores

These are the neighborhood scores for Montgomery County, Maryland. Explore the metrics and policies behind the numbers.





Housing ⓘ



Metrics ^

Policies v

Housing Metrics

2015

2022

2022 US Median Neighborhood

Zero-step entrances

* 52.0% of units

50.1%

Availability of multi-family housing

45.5% of units are multi-family



47.8% of units are multi-family

18%

Housing costs

\$2,136 per month



\$2,155 per month

\$1,057

Housing cost burden

24.2% of income spent on housing



20.5% of income spent on housing

16.3%

Availability of subsidized housing

230 units per 10,000 people

0

Key: Getting Better Getting Worse No Change Imputed Data

Range

National Average 50

0



100

[Metrics](#) ▾[Policies](#) ▲

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Housing Policies

Is there a policy here?

State and local inclusive design laws ⓘ

✓ County Policy

State and local housing trust funds ⓘ

✓ County Policy

State manufactured housing protections ⓘ

✗ No Policy

State foreclosure prevention and protection ⓘ

✗ No Policy

State accessory dwelling unit support ⓘ

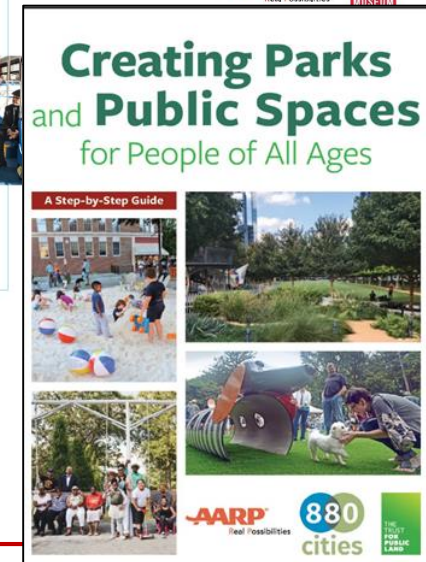
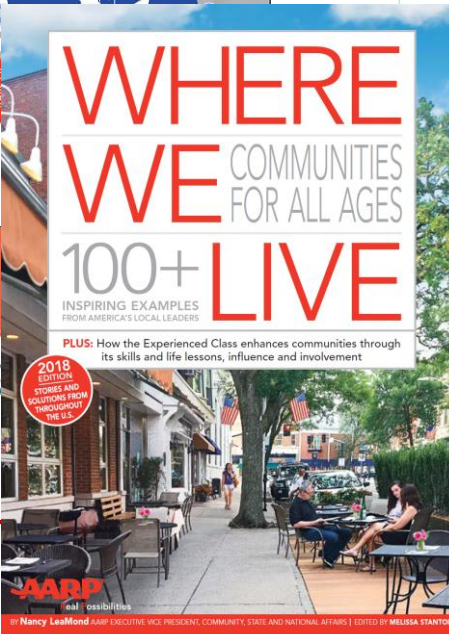
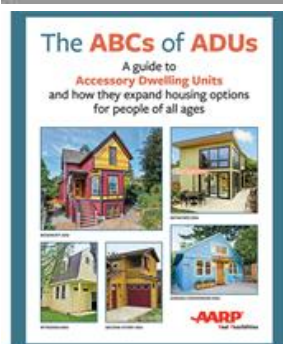
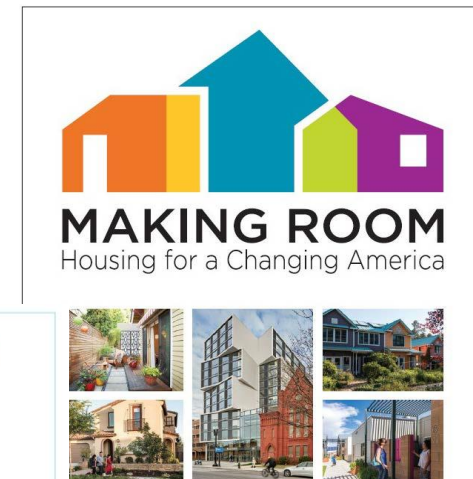
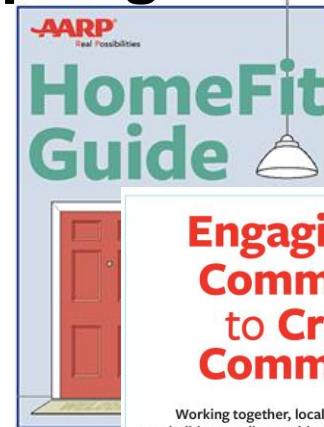
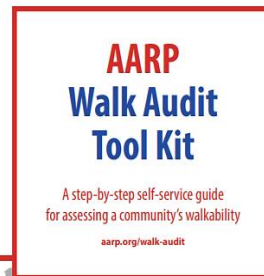
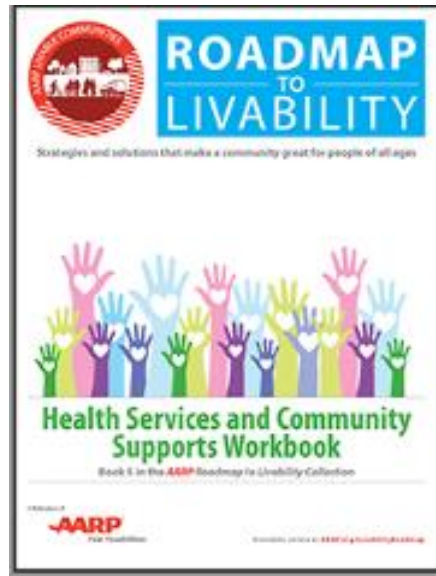
✗ No Policy

State and local plans to create age-friendly communities ⓘ

✓ County Policy

Information and tools communities can use: free in print or download

www.aarp.org/livable



HomeFit™ Guide



Smart ways to make a home comfortable, safe and a great fit for older adults — and people of *all* ages



HomeFit™ Guide

Most houses and apartments are designed for young, able-bodied adults and don't meet the needs of older residents or people with disabilities.

In fact, in many parts of the United States, most housing units were built more than a generation ago to serve a population of family households, generally consisting of two parents and at least two children.

But two decades into the 21st century, America is a nation in which the dominant household type, accounting for about 30 percent of all households, consists of single adults living alone.

By 2030, one in five people in the U.S. will be age 65 or over. And it's projected that by 2034, such older adults will outnumber children under 18 for the first time ever.

America's housing stock doesn't fit a rapidly changing and rapidly aging population.

That's where the AARP HomeFit Guide comes in.

The guide examines what makes a home aging-friendly. And it suggests the kinds of designs and modifications that can make a home safer, more comfortable and a better "fit" for its residents — of every age.

Find the AARP HomeFit Guide online at [AARP.org/HomeFit](https://www.aarp.org/HomeFit)

To learn when AARP releases new livability publications, sign up for the free, weekly, award-winning AARP Livable Communities e-Newsletter. Visit [AARP.org/LivableSubscribe](https://www.aarp.org/LivableSubscribe) or text the word LIVABLE to 50757.

A LOOK INSIDE!



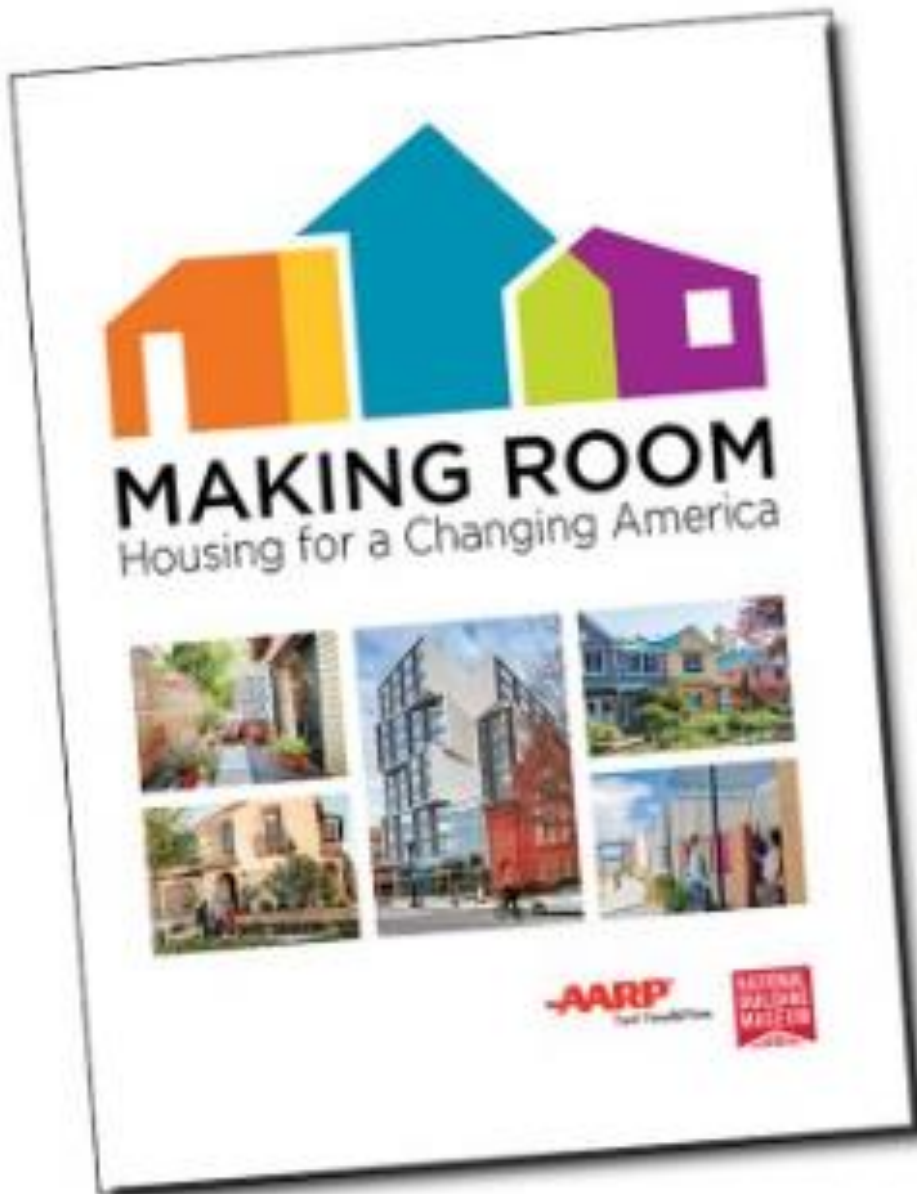
The Kitchen



The Bedroom



Outdoor Places and Shared Spaces



MAKING ROOM

Housing for a Changing America



Just as the housing needs of individuals change over a lifetime, unprecedented shifts in both demographics and lifestyle have fundamentally transformed our nation's housing requirements.

- Adults living alone now account for nearly 30 percent of American households.
- While only 30 percent of today's households are nuclear families, the housing market largely remains fixed on their needs.
- By 2020, 1 in 5 people in the United States will be age 65 or over — and by 2050, older adults are projected to outnumber children for the first time ever.
- The nation's housing stock doesn't fit the realities of a changing America.

Featuring infographics, ideas, solutions, photographs and floor plans from the National Building Museum exhibition of the same name, *Making Room: Housing for a Changing America* is a rallying cry for a wider menu of housing options.

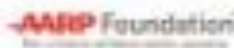
Visit AARP.org/MakingRoom to download a PDF of this publication or order a free printed edition.



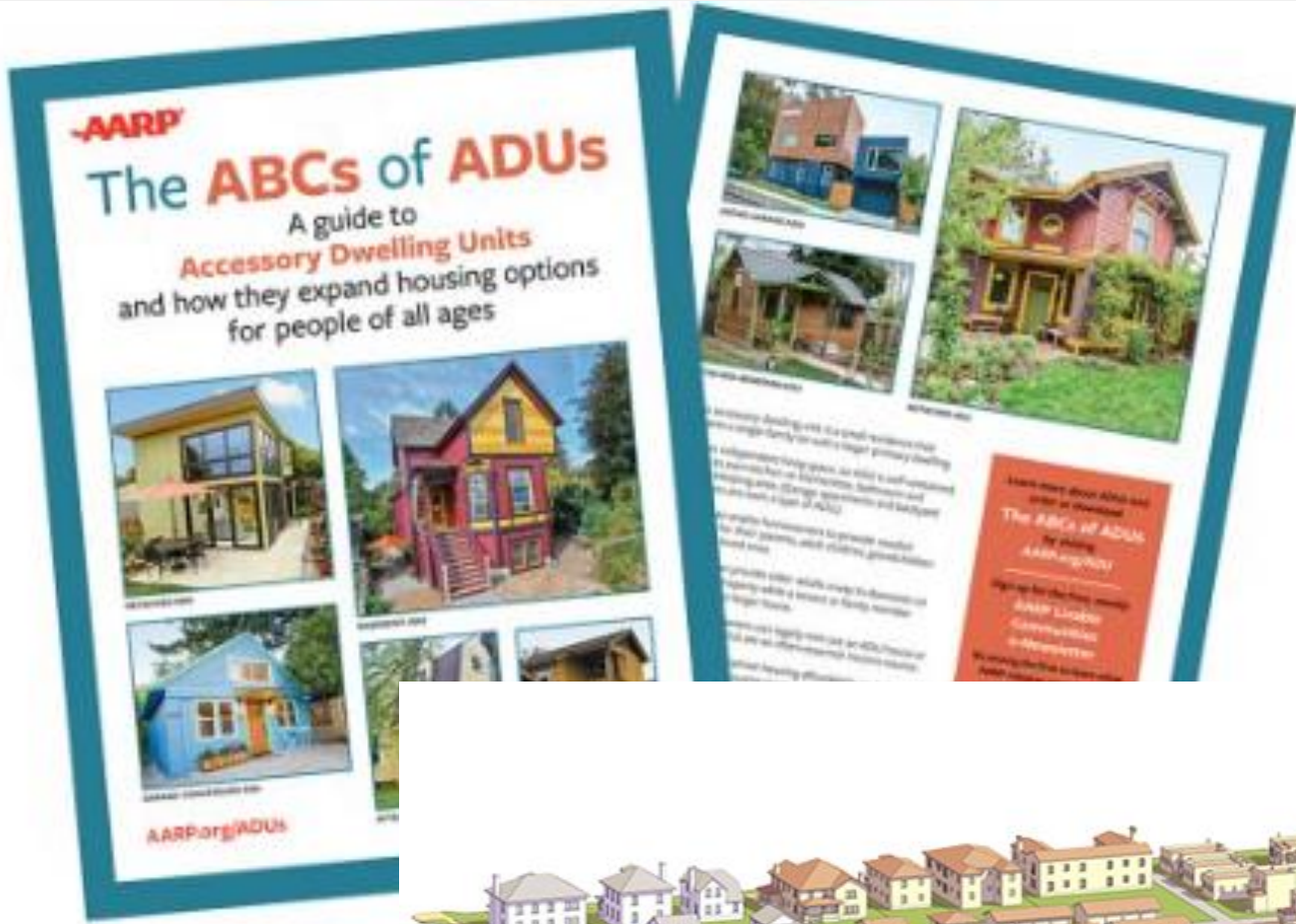
AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. The AARP Local Communities initiative works nationally to support the efforts of neighborhoods, towns, cities, and rural areas to be livable for people of all ages. AARP.org | AARP.org/50andover



The National Building Museum inspires curiosity about the world we design and build through education and programming that explore how the built world shapes our lives. Located in Washington, DC, the Museum believes that understanding the history and impact of architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, construction, and design is important for all ages. NBM.org



The *Making Room: Housing for a Changing America* exhibition at the National Building Museum was made possible through the generous support of AARP Foundation, which works to end senior poverty by helping vulnerable older adults build economic opportunity and social connections. AARPFoundation.org

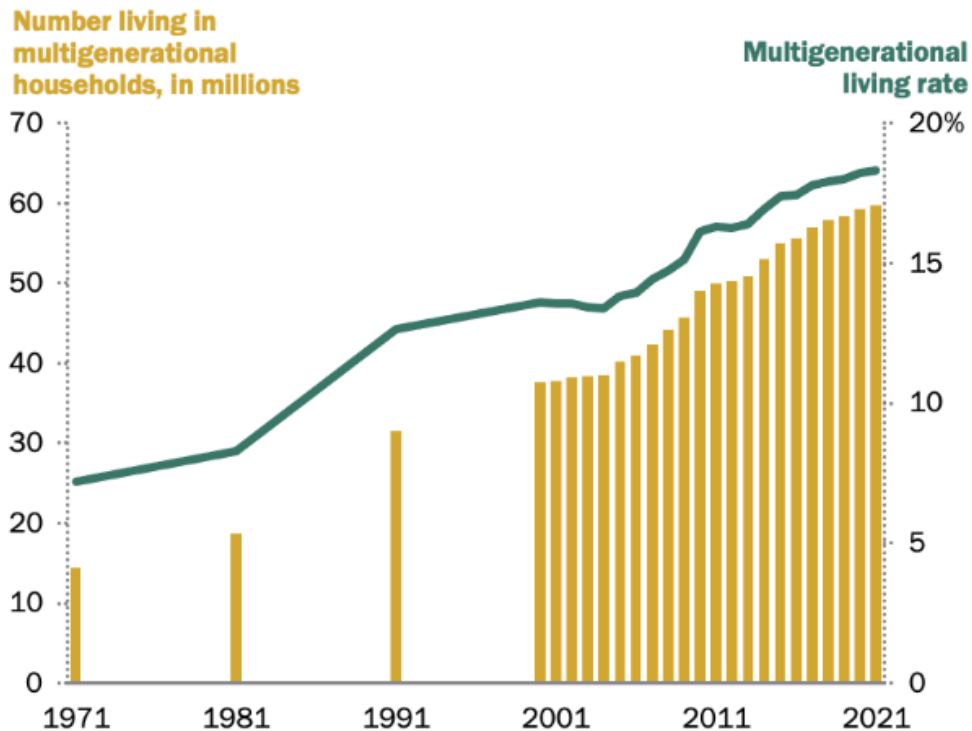


Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) & Missing Middle Housing



U.S. population in multigenerational households quadrupled since 1971

Number and % of people who live in multigenerational households in U.S.



Note: Multigenerational households include at least two generations of adults mainly 25 and older or grandparents and grandchildren younger than 25.

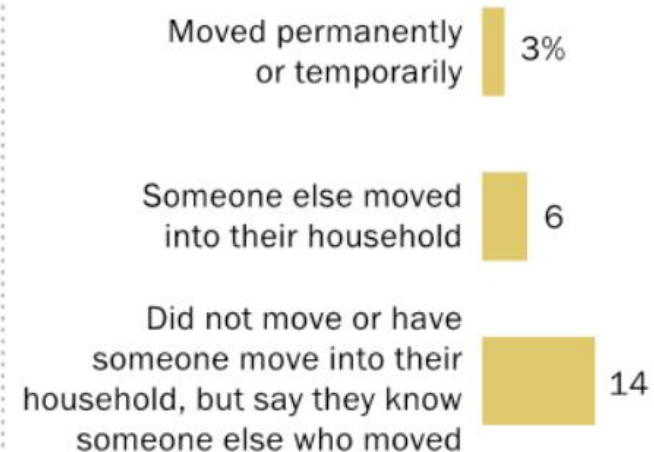
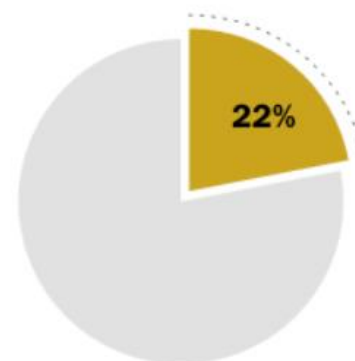
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data files for 1971, 1981, 1991, and 2000-2021 (IPUMS). "Financial Issues Top the List of Reasons U.S. Adults Live in Multigenerational Homes"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Roughly one-in-five Americans either have relocated due to pandemic or know someone who has

% of U.S. adults who ___ due to COVID-19

Relocated, had someone move into their household or know someone else who moved



Note: Response categories do not sum to total since some respondents chose more than one answer.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 4-10, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



Equity by Design

#BuildEquity



[Equity by Design \(aarpinternational.org\)](http://aarpinternational.org)



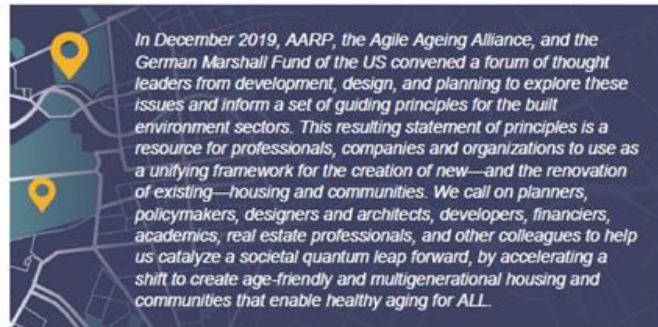
Creating Enabling & Equitable Housing and Multigenerational Communities

A Statement of Built Environment Principles

Societies across the globe are in the midst of long-term growth in the older adult population; by 2050, one in four people will be age 60 or older. Yet our homes and communities do not even meet current lifespan needs, as they were mostly designed for young, typically-abled people. Senior living options can address some of these issues but are often financially out of reach, and most older adults do not want to move to age-segregated communities. Indeed, mixed generations are increasingly living together, as illustrated by the growing trend in multigenerational households.

Many of our communities were built around the automobile, which limits a sense of community, negatively impacts safety and individual health, and increases healthcare demands and costs. Over the past few decades, the public health sector has increasingly shown that the built environment is a significant variable in obesity, chronic disease, and other public health concerns—particularly in low-income and minority communities. The COVID-19 pandemic has illuminated in both the US and UK, disparities in health outcomes, overburdened formal health care infrastructures, failing long-term care models, and housing models that fail to facilitate at-home care, services and supports. This is exacerbated by unequal access to broadband and technologies that can enable telehealth, remote learning and work, and social interaction, and by a lack of standardization that inhibits interoperability.

We aim to flip this equation and spark a movement whereby the built environment, at every scale, is a tool for disease prevention and the promotion of wellness. As architect and urban designer Jan Gehl says: “First *life*, then *spaces*, then *buildings*. The other way around never works.” We have the responsibility to support life through the creation of spaces that support everyone at every stage across increasingly long lifespans. As we begin to build and renovate our homes and communities in a post-COVID-19 world, we must radically accelerate the application of an age-friendly framework that addresses disparities. This means housing and communities that are safe and affordable; facilitate multigenerational interaction; meet sensory, emotional, physical, social, behavioral, and health needs across the lifespan; and include appropriate transportation options and services—enabling every resident to thrive.



In December 2019, AARP, the Agile Ageing Alliance, and the German Marshall Fund of the US convened a forum of thought leaders from development, design, and planning to explore these issues and inform a set of guiding principles for the built environment sectors. This resulting statement of principles is a resource for professionals, companies and organizations to use as a unifying framework for the creation of new—and the renovation of existing—housing and communities. We call on planners, policymakers, designers and architects, developers, financiers, academics, real estate professionals, and other colleagues to help us catalyze a societal quantum leap forward, by accelerating a shift to create age-friendly and multigenerational housing and communities that enable healthy aging for ALL.

Convening Participants

London Convening Participants – December 2019

Anne Marie Brady, Program Officer, GMF Cities, German Marshall Fund of the US

Angela Brooks, Development Manager, Chicago Housing Authority

Tama Duffy Day, Principal and Health & Wellness Leader, Gensler design

Andrew Edkins, Director, Bartlett Real Estate Institute, University College London

Stacey Epperson, President & Founder, Next Step

Stephanie Firestone, Senior Strategic Policy Advisor, International Affairs, AARP

John Godfrey, Corporate Affairs Director, Legal & General

Brooke Greenhouse, Vice President, Cayuga Country Homes

Esther Greenhouse, Built Environment Strategist

Victoria Hills, Chief Executive, Royal Town Planning Institute

Sam Mauger, Chief Executive, Third Age Trust

Jeremy Myerson, Helen Hamlyn Chair of Design, Royal College of Art

Manisha Patel, Senior Partner, PRP architects

Paul Quinn, Director of Regeneration, Clarion Housing Group

Xaviere Roudeix-Crouan, Senior Research Analyst, Grosvenor Britain and Ireland

Henry Smith, Senior Program Manager, Centre for Ageing Better

Ian Spero, Founder, Agile Ageing Alliance

William Thomas, Founder, Minka Homes and Communities

Miguel Vazquez, Healthy Communities Planner, Riverside University Health System

CHALLENGE

The Status Quo is “Dis-Abiling”

Our housing and infrastructure negatively impact people’s level of functioning when not designed with respect to the true range of physical and cognitive abilities. If the environment is overly demanding, people struggle. If under-demanding, people do not have the opportunity to function within their abilities, which then atrophy.

Limited Options and Demand

Housing design and policy solutions are rarely informed by real needs. Housing has been built the same way for so long that people can only envision a narrow range of products. Consumers rarely know what to ask for and thus demand too little.

Disparities in Many Forms

Lack of investment in a supportive built environment, particularly in low-income and minority communities, often unnecessarily disadvantages residents and communities—physically, behaviorally and economically. Consequently, vulnerable communities disproportionately struggle to attain basic health, safety, and wellbeing.

Limited Financial Models Limit What’s Possible

Financial products are restrictive, for example by not fully accounting for people’s assets, such as incomes of multiple people living in a dwelling, or for hidden costs and impacts, such as the future value of modified assets.

Limited Access to Technology

Technology limitations include broadband in rural areas, technology among the poor, and digital literacy among older adults. These limitations in turn restrict access to health care, opportunity, and remote engagement.

Age Bias

A lack of opportunities for people to regularly interact with people in other generations, i.e., intergenerational interaction, perpetuates the generational discord and ageism that are endemic to society.

Siloed Planning Work Results in Limited Outcomes

Planning for housing and communities that does not engage professionals across all relevant disciplines, misses key opportunities to advance important societal agendas.

Limited Focus on Major Issues

Global as well as local priorities such as climate resilience, healthcare, and other efforts to advance UN Sustainable Development Goals, fail to fully consider and address the major demographic change of population aging, often treating these as disparate concerns.

PRINCIPLE

Enable by Design

Regulations and practice should fully consider citizens’ needs, abilities and behaviors. We shall create housing and communities designed to fit people’s varying functional levels, providing an optimal balance between effort and support so people can function well within their abilities at every age.

Drive Informed Demand

Individuals and families have a right to expect living environments that are safe and enabling across the lifespan. We must demonstrate innovations that advance this goal and become the norm and not the exception.

Alleviate Disparities

We shall prioritize the creation and maintenance of enabling built environments in disproportionately impacted communities, as a vehicle for properly addressing the needs of disadvantaged residents and alleviating disparities.

Create Appropriate Finance Products

We shall pursue the expansion of existing, and the development of new, financial models and products to facilitate investment in housing stock and communities that enable independence over the lifespan and view lifelong, multigenerational living environments as an asset.

Prioritize Connectivity

We must prioritize the provision of broadband access and appropriate technologies that enable telehealth and remote learning, work, and engagement, as a means to facilitate greater independence and participation by residents of all ages and abilities in all aspects of society.

Facilitate Intergenerational Engagement

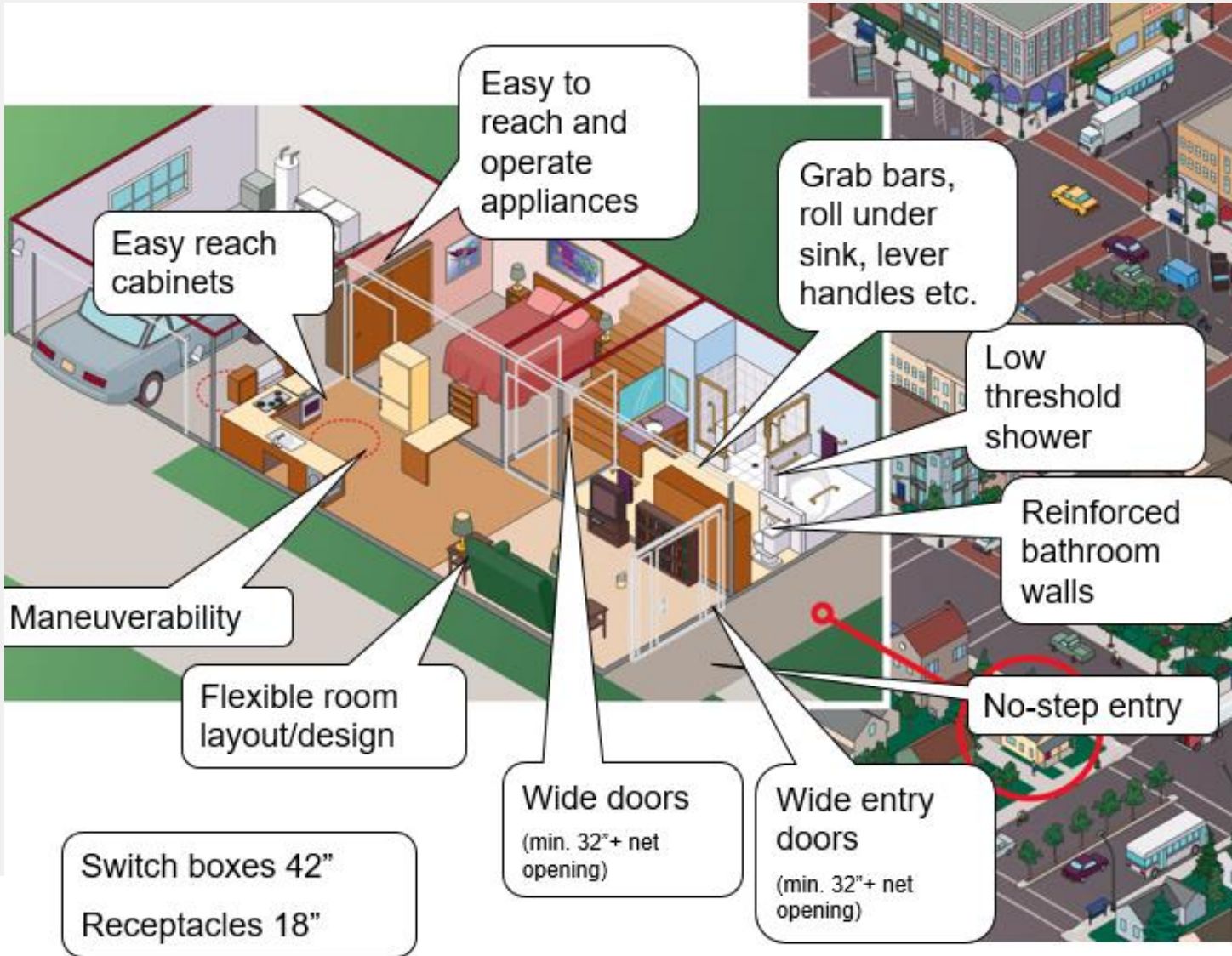
We shall create living environments that facilitate engagement across all generations, for their mutual benefit and the continued contribution to society by people of all ages. This familiarity will also serve to combat ageist stereotypes.

Lead Cross-Sector Collaboration

We must use municipal planning and zoning policies and tools to create public strategies that promote health for all, sustainability, and social cohesion, and advance developments that demonstrate an active contribution to these agendas.

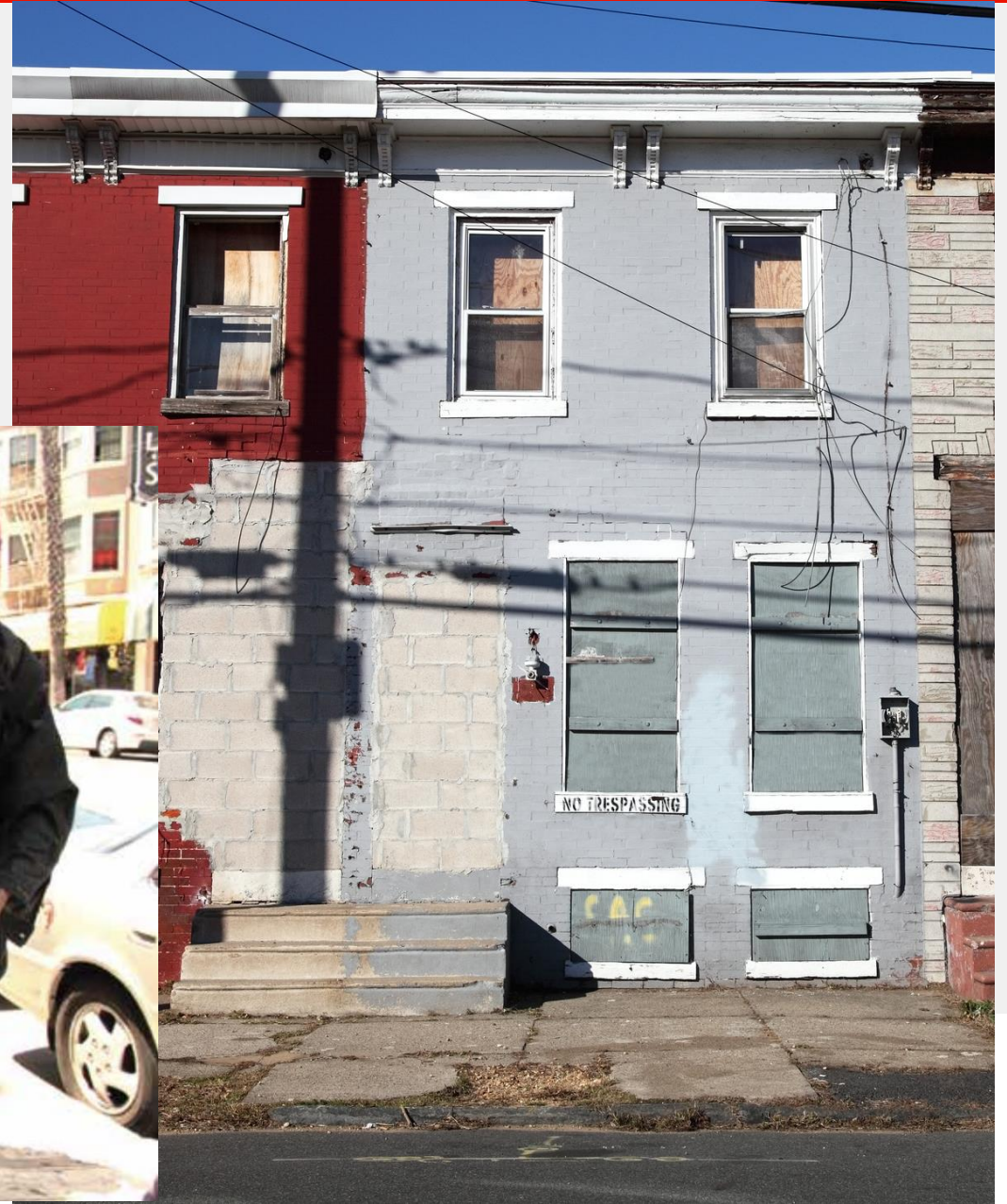
Infuse Age-Friendliness in Other Priorities

We shall tap existing efforts to advance UN Sustainable Development Goals, as opportunities in a post-COVID-19 world to regenerate and retrofit our built environment assets using a lifelong lens.



“Buildings have prospered; people have not.”

- Paul Williams, CEO, Project for Pride in Living



Picture credit to Streetwyze

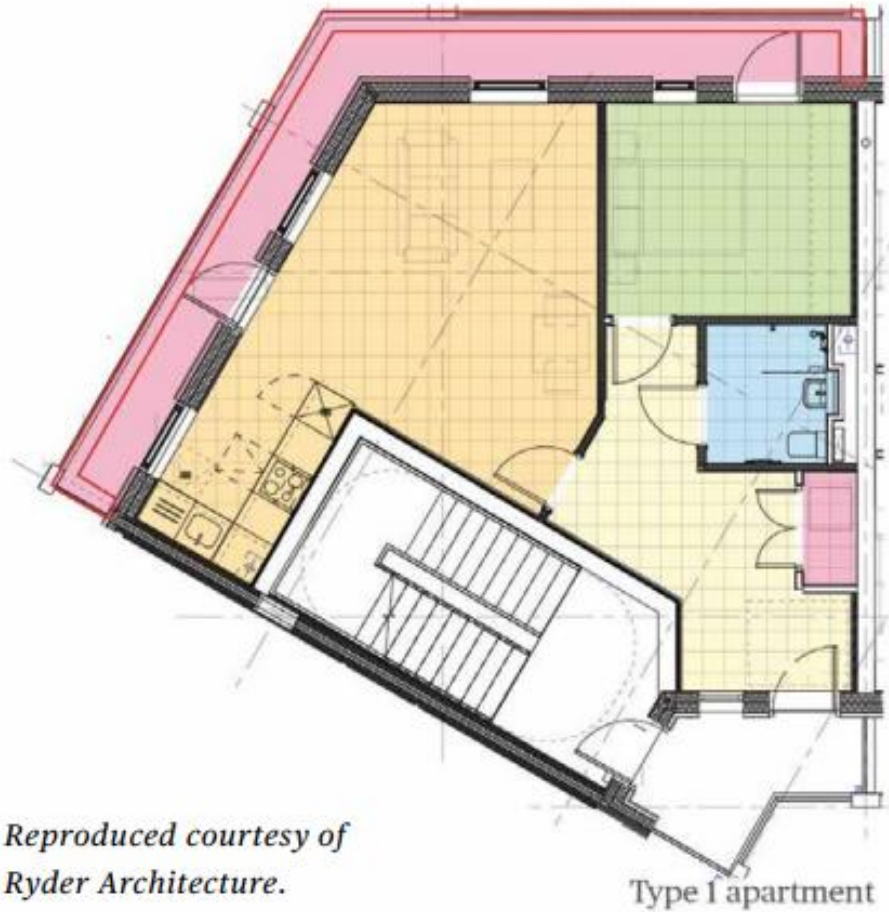




EQUITY by DESIGN— PRINCIPLES in ACTION

[#BuildEquity](#)





Beyond such features, units are being thoughtfully and practically designed for adaptation, so residents will not need to move every time their (or their family's) needs change. All dwellings will be fitted with bathrooms capable of transitioning from rooms with bathtubs to walk-in showers. Two-bedroom units will have one en-suite room on each floor, allowing a person to live entirely at ground level, and movable internal walls will enable residents to change the size of spaces. **Exterior front and back walls will also be movable, enabling the home's footprint to expand or contract, and blueprints will facilitate this expansion by strategically leaving extended perimeters free of underground services.** Should a resident's mobility change, they would not be limited to one floor, since a straight-run and wide enough staircase will allow for the use of a stairlift. Additionally, the option to install a residential elevator will be designed in, by placing closets at the same location on every floor—to enable the creation of a shaft.

PRINCIPLES in ACTION

In an era when a single professional, let's say a social worker, is the only one who designs the physical housing and communities where we live, this series of case studies shows innovations that are advancing a set of guiding principles for built environment professionals— from creative ways to reduce litigation and engage the public in participatory planning, to urban housing and community models that enable every resident to thrive.



Photo: AARP Independent, March 26, 2016

Rightsizing in Place

Ava Housing, Ireland



AARP **Healthy Housing** **PRINCIPLES in ACTION**

In an era where a single president, let's not mention a single professional in the field that shape the physical housing and communities where we live. This series of case studies shares innovations that are advancing a set of guiding principles for built environment professionals from creative ways to address regulations and engage the public in participatory planning, to unique housing and community models that enable every resident to thrive.

Students at Wilby Primary School during Clarion's annual Regeneration Week, where young people work with architects to build models and co-design play areas in the public realm.

Regenerating Affordable and Enabling Housing for All Ages— at Scale

Clarion Housing Group, UK

Our age-friendly commitments

OUR OVERARCHING MISSION IS:
Enabling people to live well in our communities.

Over the last 12 months, we have been collaborating as a cross-business working group to create a set of commitments focused on how we will ensure our communities are places where residents can age positively.



Development

Design and build schemes that enable our residents to live longer, healthier, happier lives.

- ✔ To consider and establish our position on specialist housing; looking at different models, levels of subsidy and specific markets.
- ✔ Ensure our developments are exemplars of age-friendly homes and communities.
- ✔ Cultivate clear design standards and specifications for age-friendly housing.



Housing

Ensure residents have the right home at the right time.

- ✔ Understand how life events could trigger changes in resident needs and explore ways we can prevent a negative impact.
- ✔ Make sure residents know their housing options and help them anticipate changes as they age.
- ✔ Better assist residents to move from one life stage to the next.
- ✔ Understand how we could flex our existing assets to make them more age-friendly.



Clarion Futures

Empower residents to shape their lives and communities, no matter what age.

- ✔ Deliver interventions across resident lifecycles and understand how these contribute to resident wellbeing.
- ✔ Recognise how housing could contribute to improved health outcomes for residents.
- ✔ Specially target a reduction in loneliness and social isolation.



Empowering people



LINKS TO RESOURCES SHARED

- Livability Index: [AARP Livability Index - Great Neighborhoods for All Ages](#)
- [All About Accessory Dwelling Units \(aarp.org\)](#)
- AARP HomeFit Guide: [Free Publication - AARP HomeFit Guide](#)
- [Making Room: Housing for a Changing America:](#)
- Equity by Design (EbD): <https://www.aarpinternational.org/resources/equity-by-design>
- EbD – Principles in Action series: <https://www.aarpinternational.org/resources/equity-by-design/equity-by-design-pia>

REGISTER for the next event on Tuesday, May 24 @ 11am ET: “Restroom Deserts: Where to go when you need to go”

JOIN the Equity by Design Group on LinkedIn.

E-mail: sfirestone@aarp.org

Twitter: [@firekrone](https://twitter.com/firekrone)

Time for Question and Answer



Upcoming Sessions



You're invited to join the
AGE-FRIENDLY HOUSING SERIES!
*Housing in an Age-Friendly World -
From Homelessness to Continuing Care*



- May 18, 2022
Innovative age-friendly housing models for seniors
- June 22, 2022
Supportive housing and Continuing Care

Thank you