Introduction

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Future Best Practices

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Stardust Center for Affordable Homes and the Family has prepared this report for the Housing Authority of Maricopa County. The site, located at 1510 South 15th Drive, Phoenix Arizona (85009), is known by the name Coffelt-Lamoreaux. Today, the original 191 structures and six internal streets remain, consisting of 148 duplexes (or 296 dwelling units), a rental office, community building, and a child care facility. The dwelling unit mix is comprised of one to four bedroom units each with one bathroom containing front and rear yards. There is also a playing field with a playground and BBQ area operated and maintained by the City of Phoenix’s Parks and Recreation Department. The child care facility and community center were adapted from their original uses as dwelling units, and as public facilities within in a publicly funded entity, in addition to Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS), must also meet additional Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. Access to these spaces was limited, and while the parking requirements and accessible routes to these buildings were able to be verified, a thorough ADA investigation should accompany any extensive renovations made to any of these facilities.

After meeting with the Director of the Maricopa County Housing Authority, and reviewing the most recent Physical Needs Assessment on record (prepared by EMG), the ASU Stardust Team; Kurt Creager, Executive Director, Nicholas Smith, Project Architect, and (2) ASU student interns, developed a series of checklists for each of the building types, the general site conditions, the required parking standards, and the circulation routes to and from the accessible dwelling units. These checklists identified specific accessibility and safety requirements, and were used to record and measure the existing conditions, most of which were found to be in general compliance with UFAS standards.

The ASU Stardust Team has compiled this report into three general sections; an Immediate Needs assessment, a 2-4 Year Needs assessment, and a Future Best Practices section. Any capital improvement plans should consider items in the Immediate Needs assessment as these are the minimum standards required for federally funded rental communities. In most cases, the report shows the spirit of compliance exists, however maintaining compliance must be done with vigilance and through consistent effort in the areas outlined. Ultimately, it is up to the Housing Authority of Maricopa County to make decisions, weighing initial cost of repairs to life cycle costs of the repair. Items identified as deficient in the 2-4 Year Needs Assessment should be remedied within a reasonable time frame, if the long term goal for Coffelt-Lamoreaux is remain indefinitely and continue to provide a high quality standard of living for the residents. Existing conditions are photographed and accompanied by UFAS graphics to facilitate any improvements required for compliance.

The team at the Stardust Center supports the Housing Authority of Maricopa County in their endeavor to create Future Best Practices for their residents at all housing locations and thus we have included the section by that name in this report. The Future Best Practices section draws on practices found nationally among Accessibility experts and the spirit of good faith to provide ideal affordable housing to all in need. The affordable housing model that encourages residents to build their lives and integrate in healthy ways with society relies heavily on the accessible concept of mobility; allowing reciprocal interaction with surrounding communities.

This accessibility report has been done as a companion to the social asset mapping report performed concurrently by the ASU Stardust Center’s Director of Research and Strategy, Dr. Sherry Arhentzen and ASU Professor of Planning, Dr. Ruth Yabes with assistance from her planning class.

ASU Stardust Team:

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Summary

There are a total of 296 units at Coffelt-Lamoreaux. Of the total number of units 5% are required to be “accessible” per UFAS requirements. The 15 accessible units meet this requirement. UFAS also requires that 3% of the units also meet hearing and visually impaired requirements. The on-site property manager has informed us that a "handful" of the accessible units meet this requirement and renovations are made on a as-need basis.

Key Plan

1. Child Care Center
2. Community Center W/ Computer Lab
3. Rental Office And Park Building
4. (2) Three Bedroom Accessible Units
5. (2) Two Bedroom Accessible Units
6. (2) Two Bedroom Accessible Units
7. (2) One Bedroom Accessible Units
8. (2) One Bedroom Accessible Units
9. (2) One Bedroom Accessible Units
10. (2) One Bedroom Accessible Units
11. (1) Two Bedroom Accessible Unit

SUMMARY OF CODES

Due to their age, occupancy classifications and the inclusion of federal funds in the design and renovation, the site, buildings, and amenities at Coffelt-Lamoreaux are required to meet the minimum accessibility standards set forth in multiple acts and ordinances. The spirit of these acts and guidelines all speak to providing quality of living for people of all ages with a variety of physical challenges; including but not limited to limited visual ability, reduced memory and motor perception, and limited mobility. Listed below are the applicable acts and ordinances and the standards under which these acts and ordinances are enforced. Instances where requirements from multiple codes apply, the more restrictive govern.

- Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- The Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG)
- Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- The Uniform Federal Accessibility Standard (UFAS)
- City of Phoenix Ordinances
- 2006 International Building Code

Because the ADA is civil rights law and not a building code, specific accessibility requirements for the site (including the sidewalks, streets, crosswalks, public spaces and parking lots), and the public amenities (including common spaces, the rental office, the community center and child care facility) are enforced by private suits or by certain federal agencies when discrimination is alleged.

On the contrary, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) enforces Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as it relates to federally funded rental housing, and uses the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards as the minimum standards for "facility accessibility by physically handicapped persons". The 148 duplexes must therefore meet these minimum uniform standards for the design, construction and alteration. (UFAS code 4.1 & 4.34).
1. Laundry
2. No Step Front Entry
3. Bedroom
4. Bathroom
5. Kitchen
6. Living/Dining Room

Two Bedroom Accessible Unit

1. Laundry
2. No Step Front Entry
3. Bedroom
4. Bathroom
5. Kitchen
6. Living/Dining Room

Three Bedroom Accessible Unit

1. Office/Storage
2. Computer Room
3. Sub-Station
4. Foyer
5. No Step Front Entry
6. Meeting Room

Community Center

1. Office
2. Accessible Bathroom
3. Commercial Kitchen
4. Children’s Bathroom Boys
5. Children’s Bathroom Girls
6. Activity Room
7. 32” Hall + Door Clearances
8. No Step Front Entry

Child Care Facility

Accessible Path to Accessible Parking

Accessible Path to Accessible Parking
Immediate Need Assessment
INTRODUCTION

In July of 2009, the students began the field observations documenting and photographing the existing conditions. Site accessibility was verified first. They collected information on the sidewalks, street conditions, curb cuts, and crosswalks along circulation paths between the accessible units, public amenities, and accessible parking spaces throughout the site. Both UFAS and ADAAG require that these circulation paths both meet specific design criteria and provide a continuation of the required accessible routes to the public amenities and within the dwelling units. Accessible routes are defined as the unobstructed paths connecting all accessible elements and spaces.

Parking requirements were verified with the City of Phoenix's parking ordinances. UFAS parking counts are used to calculate the total number of accessible spaces required for the accessible dwelling units. ADAAG parking requirements are used when calculating the total number required for the public amenities and common spaces. The number of accessible spaces was found to meet the required numbers. The students then documented circulation paths and maneuvering clearances to ensure the minimum requirements are being met.

Upon completing an extensive review of the site, the students began to document the accessible dwelling units. Access to individual units was made possible, however access to all 15 accessible units was not, and therefore recommendations made in this section of the report assume the general conditions and types of renovations made are consistent throughout all of the accessible units. UFAS code 4.34, addresses the minimum interior requirements to be met in accessible units.

ACCESSIBLE ROUTES

The ADAAG requires that there is at least one accessible route between buildings on a site, and from passenger loading zones, transportation stops, accessible parking and the site. When ever possible, the accessibility route should also be the same as the route that is used by the general public. (ADAAG, 4.3.2 Location, Section 1). These routes must be at the minimum thirty-six inches wide, but may narrow to thirty-two inches for a maximum of two feet such as would be found in a doorway or archway. UFAS requirements for accessible routes as they relate to the dwelling units are identical.

(1) At least one accessible route within the boundary of the site shall be provided from public transportation stops, accessible parking, and accessible passenger loading zones, and public streets or sidewalks to the accessible building entrance they serve.

(2) At least one accessible route shall connect accessible buildings, facilities, elements, and spaces that are on the same site.

(3) At least one accessible route shall connect accessible building or facility entrances with all accessible spaces and elements and with all accessible dwelling units within the building or facility.

(4) An accessible route shall connect at least one accessible entrance of each accessible dwelling unit with those exterior and interior spaces and facilities that serve the accessible dwelling unit.

Observations made of the accessible routes found that access is being provided as required, and that minimum width requirements are also being met. Access to the dwelling units from accessible parking spaces is provided, and accessible circulation throughout the site can be accommodated within the network of cross walls and curb cuts. A map is provided on page 14 identifying the accessible routes required throughout the site, and page 15 details the general conditions along this route. This will be covered in more detail in the 2-4 year assessment section of this report.
There have been multiple attempts to upgrade sections of the site’s sidewalks, ramps and curb cuts done in several phases over several years. The result is a mix of sidewalks of varying widths and surface conditions, but combined they create the accessible routes required to move freely around the site.

CURB RAMP LOCATION. Curb ramps shall be provided wherever an accessible route crosses a curb.

SLOPE. The least possible slope shall be used for any ramp. The maximum slope of a ramp in new construction shall be 1:12. The maximum rise for any run shall be 30 in (760 mm). The slope shall be measured as shown in Fig. 11. Transitions from ramps to walks, gutters, or streets shall be flush and free of abrupt changes. Maximum slopes of adjoining gutters, road surface immediately adjacent to the curb ramp, or accessible route shall not exceed 1:20.

WIDTH. The minimum width of a curb ramp shall be 36 in (915 mm), exclusive of flared sides.

OBSTRUCTIONS. Curb ramps shall be located or protected to prevent their obstruction by parked vehicles.

PASSING SPACE. If an accessible route has less than 60 in (1525 mm) clear width, then passing spaces at least 60 in by 60 in (1525 mm by 1525 mm) shall be located at reasonable intervals not to exceed 200 ft (61 m). A T-intersection of two corridors or walks is an acceptable passing place.

Additionally, ADAAG checklists require the accessible route to include paths to the dumpsters and clotheslines. The previous physical needs assessment stated that residents were responsible for bringing their own trash receptacles to the street on the appropriate day.

In addition to the degrading conditions of the route’s surface, there are also several deficiencies in the design criteria of many of the upgrades that have been made.
EXISTING ACCESSIBLE ROUTE MAP

The Required Accessible Route Map on page 14 was designed based on the reading of the UFAS code 4.3 Accessible Route. There are marked accessible exterior routes that connect accessible dwelling units with public facilities and spaces in orange and red.

LEGEND

- Primary Accessible Exterior Route (approx. 48” wide)
- Primary Accessible Exterior Route (approx. 60” wide)
- Secondary Sidewalk (approx. 36” wide)
- Secondary Accessible Exterior Route (approx. 48” wide)
- Marked Crosswalk to Public School
- Accessible Ramp (sidewalk width at ramp = 48”)
- Accessible Ramp (sidewalk width at ramp = 60”)
- (60” x 60” passing landing)
- Typical Unit w/ Stepless Entry
- Renovated Unit w/ Stepless Entry
- Public Facilities

Existing sidewalk drop
Existing sidewalk passing space drop
Existing street pot hole at crosswalk
Existing sidewalk deterioration
EXISTING PARKING MAP

The Existing Parking Map reflects the location and number of current parking lot spaces in relation to both accessible units (in orange) and public facilities (in blue).

- Typical Unit w/ Stepless Entry
- Renovated Unit w/ Stepless Entry
- Public Facilities

LEGEND
The graphic on this page demonstrates a typical existing accessible lot found within the Coffelt community. The image, which is a montage of existing parking lot A, demonstrates how well a lot such as this can comply with the UFAS typical lot dimension requirements, and also can be modified to alter the accessible space into a van-accessible space.

UFAS:
Accessible parking spaces shall be reserved as a sign showing the symbol of accessibility.

UFAS:
Curb ramp located & protected to prevent obstruction by parked vehicles.

UFAS:
Parking spaces 96" min. width.

UFAS:
Adjacent aisle 60" min. width. Front entry of accessible unit.

UFAS EXCEPTION:
Adjacent aisle for van parking spaces 96" min. width, therefore these 96" adjacent parking spaces could be striped to meet this requirement for van parking.

Parking for the common facilities are also determined by the City of Phoenix’s Parking Ordinances. Requirements are as follows:

1 space per 200 sq ft of public assembly space
1 space per 400 sq ft of private schools
1 space per 250 sq ft of office floor area

The community center is approximately 1785 sq ft which nets 9 required spaces. UFAS requires 1 accessible space for every 25 or less public parking, further it must be a van accessible space.

The child care center is approximately 2088 sq ft; which nets 5 required spaces, one of which must be a van accessible space.

The area of the rental office is currently unknown. Thus, the parking requirements for employees was not included in this report. The parking lot to the north of the rental office and lacks stripping and a designated accessible space.

Total Dwelling Units: 300 units

Dwelling Unit Parking Counts
• Total Spaces Required: 600
• Existing Accessible Spaces: 18
• Accessible Spaces Required: 30

Community Center Parking Counts
• Total Spaces Required: 9
• Existing Accessible Spaces: 1
• Accessible Spaces Required: 1

Child Care Parking Counts
• Total Spaces Required: 5
• Existing Accessible Spaces: 1
• Accessible Spaces Required: 1
ACCESSIBLE UNITS

ADAAG requires that “to the maximum extent feasible, distribute accessible units throughout projects and sites, and make them available in a sufficient range of sizes and amenities so as not to limit choice.” These units must be located on accessible routes with access to the accessible parking. Our research finds there to be a broad enough range of unit sizes and locations around the site to meet these requirements. In addition to these criteria, UFAS requires the following minimum standards:

1. Common spaces and facilities serving individual accessible dwelling units (for example, entry walkways, trash disposal facilities, and mail boxes) must be on accessible routes.
2. At least one accessible route shall connect the accessible entrances with all accessible spaces and elements within the dwelling units.
3. Doors to and in accessible spaces that are intended for passage shall be a minimum of 32” wide clear. This applies only to the doors at accessible entrances to the unit itself.
4. All controls in accessible spaces shall comply with 4.22. Those portions of heating, ventilating, and air conditioning equipment requiring regular, periodic maintenance and adjustment by the resident of a dwelling shall be accessible to people in wheelchairs.
5. Emergency alarms shall be provided in the dwelling unit.
6. At least one full bathroom, including a water closet, a lavatory, and a bathtub or a shower shall meet all of the required accessibility standards.
7. A full kitchen shall comply with all of the required accessibility standards.

ACCESSIBLE ROUTES

Exterior circulation routes leading to the accessible dwelling units have recently been updated. The original front step has been replaced with a zero step entry into the unit. Inside, the living room, kitchen, bath and at least one bedroom are located on the accessible route. Hallways meet the minimum 36” width requirements and have surface textures that comply with the standard.

CLEAR FLOOR AREAS / MANEUVERING REQUIREMENTS

KITCHENS. Accessible or adaptable kitchens and their components shall be on an accessible route.

CLEARANCE. Clearances between all opposing base cabinets, counter tops, appliances, or walls shall be 40 in (1015 mm) minimum, except in U-shaped kitchens, where such clearance shall be 60 in (1525 mm) minimum.

CLEAR FLOOR SPACE. A clear floor space at least 30 in by 48 in (760 mm by 1220 mm) complying with 4.2.4 that allows either a forward or a parallel approach by a person in a wheelchair shall be provided at all appliances in the kitchen, including the range or cooktop, oven, refrigerator/freezer, dishwasher, and trash compactor.

BATHROOMS. Accessible or adaptable bathrooms shall be on an accessible route.

DOORS. Doors shall not swing into the clear floor space required for any fixture.

The required clear floor areas for each fixture are shown below. The kitchens and bathrooms in all of the accessible units meet these requirements.
DOORS

CLEAR WIDTH: Doorways shall have a minimum clear opening of 32 in (815 mm) with the door open 90 degrees, measured between the face of the door and the stop.

MINIMUM MANEUVERING CLEARANCES AT DOORS: Minimum maneuvering clearances at doors that are not automatic or power-assisted shall be as shown in Fig. 25 of the appendix. The floor or ground area within the required clearances shall be level and clear.

THRESHOLDS AT DOORWAYS: Thresholds at doorways shall not exceed 3/4 in (19 mm) in height for exterior sliding doors or 1/2 in (13 mm) for other types of doors. Raised thresholds and floor level changes at accessible doorways shall be beveled with a slope no greater than 1:2. See below.

DOOR HARDWARE: Handles, pulls, latches, locks, and other operating devices on accessible doors shall have a shape that is easy to grasp with one hand and does not require tight grasping, tight pinching, or twisting of the wrist to operate. Lever-operated mechanisms, push-type mechanisms, and U-shaped handles are acceptable designs. When sliding doors are fully open, operating hardware shall be exposed and usable from both sides. In dwelling units, only doors at accessible entrances to the unit itself shall comply with the requirements of this paragraph.

Our investigation found that with the exception of the door hardware, the remaining accessible door requirements are being met. However, hardware on the front entry doors are recommended to be replaced immediately.

BATHROOM

MIRRORS: Mirrors shall be mounted with the bottom edge of the reflecting surface no higher than 40 in (1015 mm) from the floor.

WATER CLOSET: The height of the water closet shall be at least 15 in (380 mm), and no more than 19 in (485 mm), measured to the top of the toilet seat. Structural reinforcement or other provisions that will allow installation of grab bars shall be provided in the locations as shown in Fig. 47(b). If provided, grab bars shall be installed as shown in Fig. 29, and the toilet paper dispenser shall be installed within a reach of no more than 54 inches from wall behind and no more than 32 inches above the finished floor and no lower than 15 inches.

CONTROLS AND ALARMS

HEIGHT: The highest operable part of all controls, dispensers, receptacles, and other operable equipment shall be placed either no more than 54 inches above the finished and no lower than 9 inches for a side approach; or no more than 48 inches above the finished floor and no less than 15 inches where only front approach is possible. Controls including light switches and thermostats were found to be within UFAS reach requirements.

AUDIBLE ALARMS: If provided, audible emergency alarms shall produce a sound that exceeds the prevailing equivalent sound level in the room or space by at least 15 decibels or exceeds any maximum sound level with a duration of 30 seconds by 5 decibels, whichever is louder. Sound levels for alarm signals shall not exceed 120 decibels.

VISUAL ALARMS: If provided, electrically powered internally illuminated emergency exit signs shall flash as a visual emergency alarm in conjunction with audible emergency alarms. The flashing frequency of visual alarm devices shall be less than 5 Hz. If such alarms use electricity from the building as a power source, then they shall be installed on the same system as the audible emergency alarms. The students were unable to confirm the functional operation of the alarms, however both audible and visual alarms were noted in the three accessible units they were able to enter.
HUD has several options at its disposal when enforcing Section 504. HUD may condition the receipt of any further funds; it may sue the recipient for specific performance; it may assign the recipient to a suspended or limited denial of participation status; it may initiate binding arbitration proceedings; it may initiate administrative proceedings before an ALJ; and it may, as its ultimate power, suspend or terminate the recipient's HUD funds. In order to avoid these actions, HUD requires a reasonable plan and timeline to make the required renovations needed to bring a rental community up to UFAS standards. It requires a continuous goal of striving to remove all barriers, and reasonable accommodations to be made on behalf of residents with disabilities. A "reasonable accommodation" is a change, adaptation or modification to a policy, program, service, or workplace which will allow a qualified person with a disability to participate fully in a program, take advantage of a service, or perform a job. Reasonable accommodations may include, for example, those which are necessary in order for the person with a disability to use and enjoy a dwelling, including public and common use spaces. Since persons with disabilities may have special needs due to their disabilities, in some cases, simply treating them exactly the same as others may not ensure that they have an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling. In this section, items requiring considerable capital investment are identified. This section, the 2-4 Year Need Assessment, addresses the remaining requirements that should be met in a reasonable amount of time in order to make Coffelt-Lamoreaux more accessible, walkable and safe.

SIGNAGE / WAYFINDING

In addition to improving the surface conditions of the accessible routes, wayfinding and signage is critical in assisting those to move freely around the site. Currently, wayfinding at the site is unclear due to either vandalism that occurred and has not been remedied, or a lack of signage all together.

UFAS and ADAAG require signage that meets the following requirements:

**CHARACTER PROPORTION.** Letters and numbers on signs shall have a width-to-height ratio between 3:5 and 1:1 and a stroke width-to-height ratio between 1:5 and 1:10.

**COLOR CONTRAST.** Characters and symbols shall contrast with their background - either light characters on a dark background or dark characters on a light background.

**RAISED CHARACTERS OR SYMBOLS.** Letters and numbers on signs shall be raised 1/32 in (0.8 mm) minimum and shall be sans serif characters. Raised characters or symbols shall be at least 5/8 in (16 mm) high, but no higher than 2 in (50 mm). Symbols or pictographs on signs shall be raised 1/32 in (0.8 mm) minimum.

**MOUNTING LOCATION AND HEIGHT.** Interior signage shall be located alongside the door on the latch side and shall be mounted at a height of between 54 in and 86 in (1370 mm and 2185 mm) above the finished floor.

STREETS AND SIDEWALKS

Much about the site streets and sidewalks has been mentioned by both the residents during the social asset mapping report (performed in conjunction with this report), as well as within the physical needs assessment report performed in 2005 by EMG. For the residents, the perception was that the streets were broken; and similarly in the physical needs assessment, street repairs were recommended and cost estimated.

The physical needs assessment reads,

"The asphalt pavement at the interior roadways is in poor condition. There are significant areas of failure and general deterioration of the asphalt exposing the aggregate and/or the sub-base material. Sections of the asphalt should be removed and the sub-base material repaired prior to the installation of new asphalt."

The total cost estimate to repair and replace asphalt was given by EMG in 2005 to be $225,785.55. Additionally, the sidewalk damage along the streets and interior to the site were highlighted in both the ‘currently critical’ and ‘potentially critical’ sections of the estimate, totaling an estimated $71,541.15 in repair. As previously mentioned in the immediate needs section of this report, there are sections of both street and sidewalk along the accessible route which are in need of repair.
KITCHEN

WORK SURFACES. At least one 30 in (760 mm) section of counter shall provide a work surface that does not exceed the reach limitations.

The counter shall be mounted at a maximum height of 34 in (865 mm) above the floor, measured from the floor to the top of the counter surface, or shall be adjustable or replaceable as a unit to provide alternative heights of 28 in, 32 in, and 36 in (710 mm, 815 mm, and 915 mm), measured from the top of the counter surface.

STORAGE. Fixed storage facilities such as cabinets, shelves, closets, and drawers are required to be accessible.

HEIGHT. Accessible storage spaces shall be within at least one of the reach ranges specified in 4.2.5 and 4.2.6. Clothes rods shall be a maximum of 54 in (1370 mm) from the floor.

HARDWARE. Hardware for accessible storage facilities shall comply with 4.2.7.4. Touch latches and U-shaped pulls are acceptable.

APPLIANCES

The sink and surrounding counter shall be mounted at a maximum height of 34 in (865 mm) above the floor, measured from the floor to the top of the counter surface, or shall be adjustable or replaceable as a unit to provide alternative heights of 28 in, 32 in, and 36 in (710 mm, 815 mm, and 915 mm), measured from the floor to the top of the counter surface or sink rim. The total width of sink and counter area shall be 30 in (760 mm).

Lever-operated or push-type mechanisms are two acceptable designs.

Base cabinets, if provided, shall be removable under the full 30 in (760 mm) minimum frontage of the sink and surrounding counter. The finished flooring shall extend under the counter to the wall.

A clear floor space of 30 in by 48 in (760 mm by 1220 mm) shall allow forward approach to the sink. Nineteen inches (485 mm) maximum of the clear floor space may extend underneath the sink.

RANGES AND COOKTOPS. The location of controls for ranges and cook-tops shall not require reaching across burners.

OVENS. For side-opening ovens, the door latch side shall be next to the open counter space, and there shall be a pull-out shelf under the oven extending the full width of the oven and pulling out not less than 10 in (255 mm) when fully extended. Ovens shall have controls on front panels; they may be located on either side of the door.

REFRIGERATOR/FREEZER. Have at least 50 percent of the freezer space below 54 in (1370 mm) above the floor and have 100 percent of the refrigerator space and controls below 54 inches.

KITCHEN STORAGE. For cabinets, drawers, and shelf areas, maximum height shall be 48 in (1220 mm) for at least one shelf of all cabinets and storage shelves mounted above work counters.
The laundry facilities have severe structural limitations, which limits their compliance with the maneuvering space required. The clear width is only 32" wide from front of appliance to the wall.

Further, the laundry clothesline in the rear space of the units is not along the accessible route. Due to excessive costs, these requirements may be exempt.

4.34.4 CONSUMER INFORMATION. To ensure that the existence of adaptable features will be known to the owner or occupant of a dwelling, the following consumer information shall be provided in each adaptable dwelling unit available for occupancy:

1. Notification of the alternate heights available for the kitchen counter and sink, and the existence of removable cabinets and bases, if provided, under counters, sinks, and lavatories.

2. Notification of the provisions for the installation of grab bars at toilets, bathtubs, and showers.

3. Notification that the dwelling unit is equipped to have a visual emergency alarm installed.

4. Identification of the location where information and instructions are available for changing the height of counters, removing cabinets and bases, installing a visual emergency alarm system, and installing grab bars.

5. Notification that the dwelling unit has been designed in accordance with this Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards.

In addition, the parties who will be responsible for making adaptations shall be provided with the following information:

1. Instructions for adjusting or replacing kitchen counter and sink heights and for removing cabinets.

2. A scale drawing showing methods and locations for the installation of grab bars.

3. A scale drawing showing the location of adjustable or replaceable counter areas and removable cabinets.

4. Identification of the location of any equipment and parts required for adjusting or replacing counter tops, cabinets, and sinks.

5. Instructions for installing a visual emergency alarm system, if the dwelling unit is equipped for such an installation.
Future Best Practices
INTRODUCTION

“The human right to adequate housing is the right of every woman, man, youth, and child to acquire and sustain a secure home and community in which to live in peace and dignity.”

On Dec 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), creating the first global commitment to universal dignity and justice.

Specifically Article 25 (1) stated, “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

This declaration created the foundation for all international human rights laws and the first universal statement on the basics of inalienable human rights, as well as represented a contract between governments and their people.

In the United States, the movement for accessible environments began shortly afterwards responding to the number of disabled veterans and other advocates for people with disabilities. In 1960, the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) created the first voluntary minimum guidelines and requirements for accessible design standards which are still referenced today in various federal, state and local codes and ordinances. Those voluntary standards became law in 1968 with the passing of the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) in 1968. Inspired by the watershed federal Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, commonly referred to as the Fair Housing Act, the ABA required that all buildings designed, constructed, altered, or leased with federal financial assistance to be accessible to individuals with disabilities. However not until congress passed the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, did the responsibility to enforce this act and the tools with which define accessibility become standardized. Section 504 of the Rehab Act was the first statutory definition of discrimination that included persons with disabilities, and prohibited the exclusion of individuals with disabilities the opportunity to participate in or have access to programs and services provided with public funding.

Today, Section 504 charges HUD with the responsibility of enforcing the right of individuals to live in federally subsidized housing free from discrimination on the basis of disability, and in 1994, the requirements within Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) became the enforceable design standard.

It is important to note that the existence of other applicable legislation that impacts the design of housing and its universal accessibility to all in the United States. These acts expand the right of access into the arenas of civil rights protection, and therefore have very different ramifications than those of construction codes only. The most important of these differences, is that construction codes are enforced during the inspection process, whereas civil rights are enforced by our legal system. The Fair Housing Act, amended by congress in 1988, applies to most rental housing and requires at least minimal access to first floor apartments. The Fair Housing Act Guidelines (FHAG) were published in 1990, and represent the first time the Federal Government imposed minimal accessibility requirements on the private sector. That same year congress passed the Americans with Disabilities Act and a year later published the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). ADAA applies to all building private and public, and supersedes all state and local laws unless the state and local laws are more stringent.

Currently there is also legislation introduced in congress known as the Inclusive Home Design Act that attempts to increase the number of accessible homes throughout the country. They introduce higher levels of access and usability within the constraints of affordability. These concepts are commonly referred to as Universal Design, Age in Place and

Visit-ability standards. Municipalities including Atlanta and Tucson, have legislation requiring homes both subsidized and unsubsidized mandating basic visit-ability requirements, and therefore are included as future best practice standards in our report. Private entities must comply with ADAAG, while public entities unless they have specifically adopted either UFAS or ADAAG, may choose to comply with either as their standards for accessible design. Current revisions of the ADAAG which have been adopted by the International Building Code, attempt to reconcile any differences as well as include issues of visit-ability.

Source: www.un.org

United Nations Commission on Human Rights, Mlicon Kothari, on the occasion of World Habitat Day, 3 October 2005

VISIT-ABILITY

Visit-ability is a human-centered approach to design that has weaved its way into the most recent codes and standards; and therefore the housing authority should be aware of these practices, for future projects will most likely be affected.

According to the Center for an Accessible Society, a visit-ability bill was first introduced in Congress on 10 June 2003. It described a requirement that would include all single family homes receiving federal funds to be built with a no-step entry, a 32” clear interior route on the main level and one accessible bathroom. Today, these are the main components of visitability. These design features are a benefit to a variety of residents including disabled veterans and people with mobility impairments.

In the 1980s, other groups focused on basic human rights and improving livability for all were formed, including the grassroots group in Atlanta called Concrete Change in 1986. Atlanta would then become the nation’s first municipality to pass a visitability law which applied to all public housing. Since then, Oregon, Chicago, Austin, Illinois, California and Pima County in Arizona have all had newsworthy ordinances pending and/or passed.

In fact, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development encourages visit-ability features in single family housing built with federal dollars.

Best practices of visit-ability can include:

- Access to public transportation (local bus stops)
- Barrier-free facilities with access to commerce, public services, entertainment and employment opportunities
- Wayfinding by people with visual impairments
- Design for limited reach and grip
- Automated community doors
- Zero-step entry ways

Online, more information on visit-ability can be found at:

www.concretechange.org
www.visitability.org
www.accessiblesociety.org
Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

—Ron Mace

The intent of universal design is to simplify life for everyone by making products, communications, and the built environment more usable by as many people as possible at little or no extra cost. Universal design benefits people of all ages and abilities.

1: Principle One: Equitable Use
The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

2: Principle Two: Flexibility in Use
The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

3: Principle Three: Simple and Intuitive
Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user’s experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.

4: Principle Four: Perceptible Information
The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user’s sensory abilities.

5: Principle Five: Tolerance for Error
The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

6: Principle Six: Low Physical Effort
The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

7: Principle Seven: Size and Space for Approach and Use
Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user’s body size, posture, or mobility.

It is a general approach to designing in which designers ensure that their products and services address the needs of the widest possible audience, irrespective of age or ability. Two major trends have driven the growth of Inclusive Design (also known as Design for All and as Universal Design in the USA) - population ageing and the growing movement to integrate people with disabilities into mainstream society.

Aging-in-place means remaining in one’s home safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level. It means the pleasure of living in a familiar environment throughout one’s maturing years, and the ability to enjoy the familiar daily rituals and the special events that enrich all our lives. It means the reassurance of being able to call a house a “home” for a lifetime.