

Adaptable Housing Design Standards

Adaptable Housing is housing that has been designed to easily accommodate future renovations to improve accessibility. Adaptable Housing allows people to “age in place” and includes features such as a bathroom, kitchen and bedroom on the main floor; wider hallways and doors; lever-type door hardware; and blocking in bathroom walls to accommodate future grab bars.

The Adaptable Housing Design Standards specify minimum standards and best practices for apartment buildings and group-oriented buildings.

- **Apartment buildings** are defined as multi-family residential developments that require a common main entry and interior or exterior corridors to access individual dwellings.
- **Ground-oriented buildings** are defined as buildings with ground –level, individual entries to each dwelling (i.e. single-family dwellings, row housing, townhomes, fourplex, etc.).

The Adaptable Housing Design Standards include minimum standards (-) and recommendations for best practices (+). The Adaptable Housing Design Standards exceed the requirements for Accessibility and Adaptable Dwelling Units outlined in the B.C. Building Code. **In cases where a design element is not specified in these Adaptable Housing Standards, projects must follow the relevant requirements for accessibility and adaptability outlined in the current B.C. Building Code.**

Building Access/Exterior Path of Travel

- For both apartment and ground-oriented buildings, the path of travel must include a minimum width of 59” (1500 mm) and a maximum 1:20 grade (5%). The path of travel must be an uninterrupted path from the street, sidewalk, back lane, or on-site parking area to the first storey accessible entrance.
- For apartment buildings, the main building entry and the door providing secondary access from the parking area must have a clear opening of 36” (915 mm).
- For apartment buildings, an auto door opener must be installed at accessible building entry.
- For ground-oriented buildings, the main door entry must have a clear opening of 36” (915 mm).
- For both apartment and ground-oriented buildings, doors in the path of travel must have a no or low profile threshold at the door. Raised thresholds must be ¼”(6 mm) or less); thresholds exceeding ¼”(6 mm) to a maximum of ½” (13 mm) must be beveled a maximum slope of 1:2 (50%).
- + It is recommended that apartments include an overhang at main entry with minimum dimensions 59” x 59” (1500 mm * 1500 mm), for the purposes of weather protection.
- + It is recommended that the main door entry to adaptable units is pre-wired to accommodate electronic swing-free closers.
- + It is recommended that ground-oriented developments include an overhang at main entry, for the purposes of weather protection.

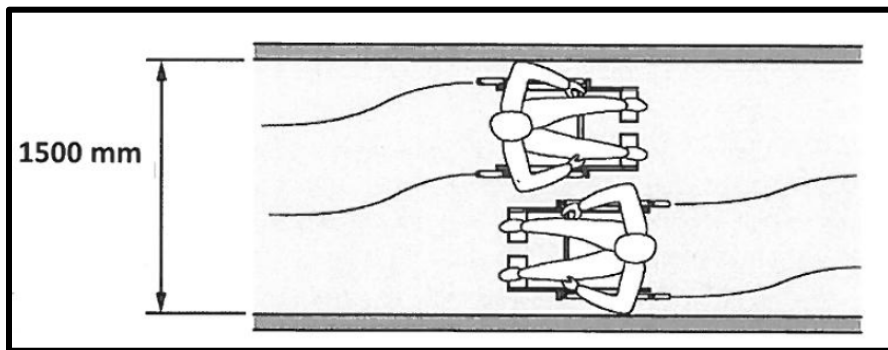
Circulation within Common Areas

The following standards apply to apartment buildings:

- Hallways in common areas must be at least 48" (1220 mm) wide.
- Doorways in common areas must have a clear opening of at least 36" (915 mm).
- Lever-type door hardware.

The following best practices are recommended:

- + Doors in common areas should be pre-wired for electronic swing-free closers.
- + Hallways should be at least 59" (1500 mm) wide to accommodate larger mobility devices and allow mobility devices to pass each other in the hallway.



Dwelling Unit Entry

The following standards apply to apartment buildings:

- 36" (915 mm) clear opening for all dwelling unit entry doors.
- A no or low profile threshold at the door. Raised thresholds must be ¼" (6 mm) or less; thresholds exceeding ¼" (6 mm) to a maximum of ½" (13 mm) must be beveled a maximum slope of 1:2 (50%).
- Lever-type door hardware
- + 2 door viewers: one at 1050 mm (41.3") and one at 59" (1520 mm).
- + Main door entry should include or be pre-wired to accommodate electronic swing-free closers.

Circulation and Internal Doors within Units

On the main floor the following requirements must be met:

- Internal hallways must have a minimum width of 36" (915 mm).
- All internal doors must provide a clear opening of 33.5" (860 mm).
- All internal doors must provide a lever-type door hardware.

- + It is recommended that hallways in the units have a clear opening 48" (1220mm).
- + It is recommended that doorways in the units have a clear opening of 36" (915 mm) to accommodate larger mobility devices.

Bathroom/Bedroom/Kitchen on Main Floor

Adaptable units must include a bathroom, bedroom, and kitchen on the main floor. There must be no steps between the bathroom, bedroom and kitchen on the main floor. Below are detailed requirements:

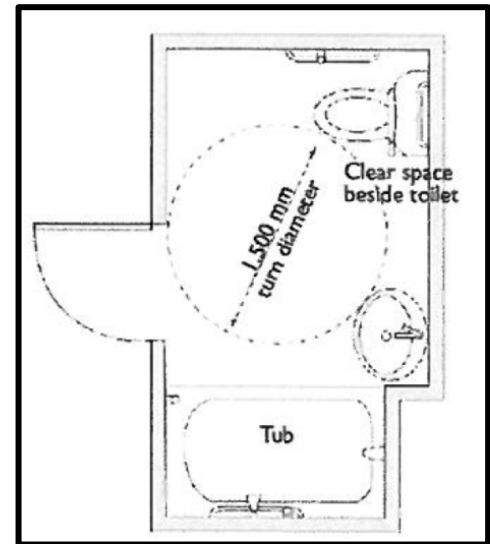
Bathroom

At least one bathroom on the main level must include the following:

- A turning radius of 59' (1500 mm) in front of the toilet with the washroom door not crossing the turning circle while being closed or open (this could include the area under the vanity);
- 3-piece bathroom;
- Solid blocking in walls around toilets, tub/shower and behind towel bars to accommodate future grab bars; and;
- Lever-type sink faucets.

The following best practices are recommended:

- + Roll-under sink
- + Roll-in shower
- + Offset plumbing for vanity, provision for vanity removal
- + Height-adjustable showerhead
- + Tilt mirror



Bedroom

At least one bedroom on the main floor must provide:

- Clear opening to the closet at least 31.5" (800 mm).
- 59' (1500 mm) turning radius on one side of a double-sized bed.
- + It is a recommended practice to include height-adjustable closet shelves and clothing rods.

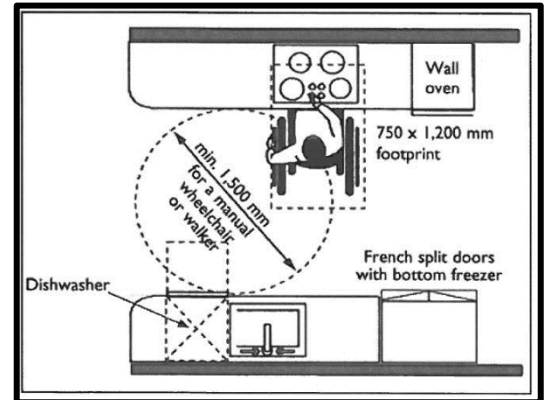
Kitchen

The kitchen must meet the following requirements:

- Continuous counter between stove and sink;
- Lever-type sink faucets; and
- Turning radius of 59" (1500 mm).

The following best practices are recommended:

- + L-shaped kitchens provided several work spaces and allow people to work without bumping into one another.
- + Removable base cabinet under sink
- + Adjustable shelves in all cabinets
- + D-type cabinet handles
- + Grab edge under counters
- + Task lighting at sink, stove and work areas
- + Pull-out work boards at 810mm (32") height
- + Pull-out cabinet shelves
- + Separate stove and oven



Patio/Balcony

- In cases where a balcony is provided, the balcony must provide a clear doorway opening of at least 31.5" (800 mm).

The following best practices are recommended:

- + The patio/balcony should not be less than 59' (1500 mm) deep from the outside face of the exterior wall to the inside edge of the balcony.
- + The patio/balcony should not provide less than 21.5 ft² (2 m²) of balcony space.
- + Patio doors should include a no or low profile threshold at the door. Raised thresholds should be ¼" (6 mm) or less; thresholds exceeding ¼" (6 mm) to a maximum of ½" (13 mm) should be beveled to a maximum slope of 1:2 (50%).
- + The patio should accommodate a 59" (1500 mm) turning radius.
- + Railing or enclosures should not restrict the view of a seated person.

Flooring

The following best practices are recommended:

- + Floor Surfaces must be firm and slip resistant.
- + Floor surfaces must have no abrupt changes in level.

- + Carpet is not preferred as it is not ideal for mobility devices or maintenance. In cases where carpets or carpet tiles are used, they should have a pile texture with a maximum pad and pile height of 0.5" (13 mm) or less.

Windows

Opening and locking mechanisms must be:

- Located adjacent to a clear floor space that has a width of not less than 29.5" (750 mm);
- Operable with one hand and do not require tight grasping, pinching or twisting of the wrist.

Outlets/Switches

- Light switches must be located between 40" (1015 mm) and 44" (1120 mm) from the floor.
- Electrical outlets, cable outlets, and telephone jacks must be located not less than 18" (450mm) from the floor.

Laundry

- + It is recommended best practice that buildings provide access to side-by-side, front loading laundry on the main floor.

Notice of Adaptability

- A permanent information sheet on the location and type of adaptable/accessible features included in the unit shall be posted on, beside or inside the electrical panel.