

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS CHECKLIST

UNIT LAYOUT – *A home should “work” for its residents.*

Entry

Consider recessing or otherwise articulating unit entries so as to provide individual identities for each unit and to allow residents to personalize their entry areas.

Room Relationships

Unit layout and room organization will be partly determined by the building type, orientation, location on the site and user profile. Consider activities and behaviors in each space to allow adequate room and durable materials for these activities. Create a clear separation of the private sleeping areas from the less private living areas. Avoid excessive circulation space. To the extent possible in multi-unit buildings, locate similar rooms adjacent to each other; for example, place the bedrooms of one unit adjacent to the bedrooms of the neighboring unit. Try to stack “wet” rooms so that plumbing runs are efficient.

Room Design

Consider how individual rooms will be used. Test furniture arrangements, outlet, telephone and cable jack, and light fixture locations to ensure that all rooms can be reasonably furnished. Consider partly enclosing kitchen to allow flexibility in dining/living room use. The master bedroom may have a private bath; other bedrooms will share bathrooms. Consider how rooms can be arranged to accommodate working at home. Avoid through traffic in living rooms.

Unit Mix

Unless local requirements dictate otherwise, consider providing a variety of unit types – studios, 1, 2, 3 and four bedrooms. The proportion of each type should take into account the population being served and the prevalent mix of units in the area surrounding the project. In multi-story buildings, try to locate larger family units on the ground floor to allow easy access and surveillance of children.

Dining Rooms

Provide enough space to accommodate a large table and enough chairs for occupants and guests. Consider how the space might be used for other activities such as homework.

Bathrooms

Provide visual screening of bathrooms from the entry and from the living and dining areas. When more than one bedroom shares a bathroom, consider separating the lavatory from the toilet/tub area to allow use by more than one person at a time.

Daylight and Ventilation

Access to natural light in all bedrooms and the living room is essential and cross ventilation throughout the unit is encouraged. Consider layouts that allow natural light to the kitchen and allow the natural ventilation and lighting of bathrooms.

Storage Space

Provide as much storage space as possible. At a minimum provide an amount of bulk storage commensurate with the size of the unit and the number and ages of residents it is expected to accommodate, including: coat closets in the entry area, large closets in the bedrooms, linen closets, pantry spaces, and storage rooms adjacent to exterior balconies or patios. Assume two occupants per bedroom for storage purposes.

Window Views

Consider what residents will see when they look out the window. To the extent possible orient the most used rooms to the best views.

Materials

Avoid materials that require frequent maintenance, especially by specialists. Consider materials that residents can maintain themselves. Provide floor coverings appropriate to use in room - generally use resilient flooring in kitchens, bathroom, laundries, dining rooms and entries. Consider "healthy" building materials for interior finishes and materials, such as: carpet, resilient flooring, paint, glues, cabinets. Evaluate selection of materials in terms of lifecycle cost.

Appliances and Mechanical Systems

Avoid appliances that require frequent care at short intervals by specialists. Provide heavy-duty, energy-efficient appliances and fixtures. Consider providing washer/dryer hookups, especially for families and disabled households. Provide adequate duct/chase space for both vertical and horizontal duct runs, especially for ranges and bathroom fans.