

Step 5. Analyze target occupants and establish resident-related design goals for the project

Why is this important?

Exactly who the anticipated occupants or “users” of a development are has many important implications for the success (or failure) of the design. For example, the needs of young families are very different from the needs of elderly single people.

Defining the needs of future occupants in very specific, physical terms at the earliest stages of the project helps ensure that the development, both inside and out, will effectively meet those needs. In addition, the very activity of establishing design goals based on the users’ needs helps make sure all participants are making the same assumptions about the physical design of the project from its earliest stages. As an added benefit, a clear description of the development’s target group helps the surrounding community understand and value the aims your project is trying to serve.

When should this be done?

During the Concept phase of development. See the **Design/Development Matrix**.

Who should do this?

The owner/developer with input from user group(s) and the community.
Professional design assistance would be very helpful at this stage.

What should be done?

- Drawing on your own experience and on information gathered from other sources such as those mentioned below, fill out the **User Activity Checklist** to analyze and understand the specific needs of your future residents and to understand how these needs will impact the project’s physical design.
- Analyze the completed Checklist and develop a short (no more than a few paragraphs) **statement** listing the main, resident-related design goals for the project.
- Research existing facilities in your area that serve the same target population.
- Contact **regional HUD office** for a list of recent projects funded.
- Contact local/regional Housing and Community Development office for a list of recent projects funded in your area.
- Contact local/regional **community design centers** or affordable housing coalitions for lists of recent projects.
- Visit relevant projects, if possible, or contact the owner or property manager to discuss how residents use the facilities and grounds.
- Contact possible funding sources for your project/user type and determine if they have any guidelines on user needs or activity patterns.

- Contact organizations who support the target user population and determine if they have any guidelines on user needs or activity patterns.

How can this step help move the project forward?

- A clear understanding of resident-related design goals for the project will simplify and clarify critical go/no go decisions early in the development process.
- In particular, the **User Activity Checklist** helps streamline the “**programming**” phase of the design process and clarifies what the owner/developer needs from the design team.
- A user needs analysis also provides useful input to the feasibility study normally developed for project funding.

Additional resources available from the Affordable Housing Design Advisor CD-ROM.

- An example of a **community input package** used in Richmond, VA to gauge potential occupants’ design and amenity preferences.

User Activity Checklist Introduction

Printing Instructions: Review and then print out this entire file, consisting of introductory paragraphs (1 page); a blank User Activity Checklist (5 pages); a blank Statement of Resident-related Design Goals (1 page); an example filled-in User Activity Checklist (5 pages); an example filled-in Statement of Resident-related Design Goals; plus 2 additional typed in Checklists – one for a family development, one for the elderly(2 pages).

Review the User Activity Checklist and fill in all categories that apply with short (a few words) descriptions of how your proposed occupants might undertake the specific activity listed and how this activity pattern might affect the design of the building, open space and/or parking for your project. Use the two filled-in examples as guides, and add new activity categories as appropriate.

The checklist can be filled in by individuals and then compared, or in a group setting. The goal is to begin to understand what potential occupants might need from the housing you hope to provide. Ultimately, this new knowledge will help you create a project that better meets these needs through good design.

Once the Checklist is complete, use it to develop a short (no more than a few paragraphs) statement describing the main, resident-related design goals for the project.

Add the completed Checklist and the Statement of Resident-related Design Goals to the Project Book.

User Activity Checklist

User Type:

Date:

Activity Category	User Activity Pattern	Implication for Building	Open Space/Parking
Cooking & eating			
Bathing & toileting			
Sleeping			

Activity Category	User Activity Pattern	Implication for Building	Open Space/Parking
Working & studying			
Socializing & community activities			
Entertaining & watching TV			

Activity Category	User Activity Pattern	Implication for Building	Open Space/Parking
Inside play/outside play			
Inside circulation			
Storing			

Activity Category	User Activity Pattern	Implication for Building	Open Space/Parking
Housekeeping/chores/laundry			
Arriving/leaving On foot By car By public transport			
Parking			

Activity Category	User Activity Pattern	Implication for Building	Open Space/Parking
Other			

Example User Activity Checklist

User Type: HOMELESS DISABLED ADULTS

Date:

Activity Category	User Activity Pattern	Implication for Building	Open Space/Parking
Cooking & eating	SOME USERS LOOK FORWARD TO DINNER PARTIES,	MAKE KITCHENS ADAPTABLE FOR VARIOUS USERS.	PROVIDE BBR AREA.
	OTHERS HAVE NEVER COOKED.	PROVIDE A D.W. & MICROWAVE	
	MANY RESIDENTS HAVE LIMITED STRENGTH & STAMINA.		
Bathing & toileting	SPACE IS REQUIRED FOR LATERAL TRANSFER.	ALL BATHS MEET ANSI STANDARDS	N.A.
Sleeping	AT TIMES RESIDENTS WILL BE CONFINED TO BED	PROVIDE SPACE IN BEDROOM FOR VISITORS & MED. EQUIPMENT	LOCATE ACTIVE AREAS AWAY FROM BEDROOMS

Example (con't)

Activity Category	User Activity Pattern	Implication for Building	Open Space/Parking
Working & studying	DUE TO	PROVIDE SPACE	SERVICE
	PHYSICAL	FOR A DESK IN	PROVIDERS
	REQUIREMENTS	EACH UNIT. PROVIDE	REQUIRE
	MANY	MEETING SPACE.	PARKING
	RESIDENTS		
	WILL WORK		
	FROM HOME.		
Socializing & community activities	THE SPONSORS	PROVIDE ACCESS	PROVIDE
	WILL FACILITATE	PATHS WHICH	PARKING FOR
	COMMUNITY	PROVIDE OPTIONS	RESIDENTS &
	WITHIN THIS	FOR SOCIALIZATION.	VISITORS.
	BUILDING, WI.	PROVIDE A	PROVIDE
	OTHER PROJECTS	COMMUNITY RM.	STOOPS FOR
	& IN THE	& WORK SPACE	COMMUNITY.
NEIGHBORHOOD	FOR PROVIDERS.		
	PROVIDE COMMUNITY		
	GARDEN SPACE.		
Entertaining & watching TV	PROVIDE	PROVIDE WALL	PROVIDE
	LIVING SPACE	SPACE FOR TV	OUTSIDE
	WHICH ALLOWS	& AREA TO	SPACE FOR
	VISITING AND/OR	LOCATE SEATING.	BB, GARDEN
	TV WATCHING.	ALLOW TABLE	& VISITING
		SPACE TO EXPAND	
		FOR LARGE	
	GATHERINGS. HALL		
	SPACE TO		

ACCOMMODATE
FUNDRAISERS &
NEIGHBORHOOD
EVENTS.

Example (con't)

Activity Category	User Activity Pattern	Implication for Building	Open Space/Parking
Inside play/outside play	TENANTS WILL	PROVIDE AN	LAYOUT
	BE ADULTS	AREA FOR	PARKING TO
	MANY FAMILY	EXERCISE	ALLOW USE
	VISITORS ARE	EQUIPMENT.	FOR BB ALSO.
	EXPECTED.		PROVIDE AN
	MOST RESIDENTS		AREA FOR
	HAVE EXERUSE		GARDENING
	PROGRAMS.		INCLUDING
			RAISED BEDS.
Inside circulation	MANY TENANTS	PROVIDE AN	PROVIDE
	WILL HAVE	ELEVATOR ↓	TWO H.C.
	MOBILITY	WHEELCHAIR	SPACES.
	RESTRICTIONS.	ACCESS TO ALL	
		SPACES.	
Storing	MANY USERS	PROVIDE EXTRA	PROVIDE
	HAVE	STORAGE IN	STORAGE FOR
	SEVERE	BATH & BEDROOM	LAWN ↓
	HEALTH	TO ELIMINATE	GARDEN
	PROBLEMS.	INSTITUTIONAL	EQUIP.
		FEEL.	
		PROVIDE STOR.	
		FOR MAINT.	
	FUNCTIONS.		

Example (con't)

Activity Category	User Activity Pattern	Implication for Building	Open Space/Parking		
Housekeeping/chores/laundry	HEALTH PROBLEMS REQUIRE FREQUENT LAUNDRING OF SOILED ITEMS. STRENGTH OF MANY USERS IS LIMITED.	PROVIDE WASHER/ DRYER, DISH - WASHER + MICRO- WAVE IN EACH UNIT.	KEEP MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS TO A MINIMUM.		
	Arriving/leaving On foot /wheel	THIS WILL BE THE PRIMARY ACCESS.	CLEAR ENTRY PATH FROM SIDEWALK.		
		By car	USE WILL VARY.	PROVIDE ACCESSIBLE ROUTE TO PARKING.	
			By public transport	WIDELY USED.	ALLOW FOR WAITING AT ENTRY FOR CABS.
	Parking	MOST USERS UTILIZE PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION. PARKING IS REQUIRED FOR GUESTS + PROGRAM STAFF.		ONE SPACE PER UNIT SHOULD BE ENOUGH.	NEIGHBORS WANT TO SEE GREEN NOT ASPHALT.

Example (con't)

Activity Category	User Activity Pattern	Implication for Building	Open Space/Parking
Other	SOME	IT IS IMPORTANT	
	RESIDENTS	TO PROVIDE	
	MAY BE	LIGHT SPACE W/	
	HOMEBOUND	GOOD - LONG	
	FOR PERIODS	VIEWS.	
	OF TIME.		
	MANY	IN UNIT LAUNDRY	PROVIDE
	RESIDENTS	FACILITATES	PARKING FOR
	USE HEALTH	ASSISTANCE.	SERVICE
	AIDS & OTHER	PROVIDE SPACE	PROVIDERS.
	PUBLIC HEALTH	FOR GROUP	
	SERVICES.	MTAS. & PRIVATE	
		COUNSELING.	
	BUILDING	PROVIDE OFFICE	
WILL PROVIDE	& COMMUNITY		
CENTRAL	SPACE.		
SERVICES			
TO OTHER			
RESIDENTIAL			
UNITS.			
FORMERLY	FURNISH UNITS		
HOMELESS			
RESIDENTS			
USUALLY HAVE			
FEW POSSESSIONS			
MANY USERS	NON-GLARE		
ARE LIGHT	SURFACES &		
SENSITIVE.	FIXTURES - BLINDS.		

Example
Statement of Resident-related Design Goals

Based on an analysis of the completed User Activity Checklist list the key design goals that will help your project best meet the activity needs of its residents.

USERS HAVE EPISODIC ILLNESS WHICH
MAY REQUIRE AN ONSITE CAREGIVER,
MEDICINE & MEDICAL EQUIPMENT
STORAGE, IN UNIT LAUNDRY & SPACE
IN BEDROOMS FOR VISITORS.
PROVIDE NON GLARE SURFACES & LIGHT
FIXTURES. PROVIDE LIGHT CONTROL -
SHADES AT WINDOWS.
PROVIDE OPTIONS FOR COMMUNITY OR
PRIVACY.
ALLOW FOR STRENGTH & MOBILITY
RESTRICTIONS.
PROVIDE ON SITE EXERCISE EQUIP.

User Activity Checklist

User Type: Low-income Seniors, Assisted Living

<u>Activity Category</u>	<u>User Activity Pattern</u>	<u>Implication for Building</u>	<u>Open Space</u>	<u>Parking</u>
Cooking	Popular, varied patterns	Consider kitchen location & visual connections	Connect to back patio	
Eating	May need supervision of nutrition	Provide dining facility	Prefer outdoor dining area	NA
Bathing	Physical frailty	Provide 24-hour emergency cord, shower preferred	NA	NA
Toiletting	Physical frailty	Provide grab bars and space per ADA	NA	NA
Sleeping	Physical frailty	Soundproof as much as feasible, allow room around bed	NA	NA
Studying	Minimal, but some preferred	Provide desk area in unit	NA	NA
Working	Minimal, but some preferred	Provide desk area in unit; prefer craft room	NA	NA
Entertaining	Minimal, but some preferred	Ensure living/dining furniture fits	NA	NA
Socializing	Popular	Consider clustering units; provide seating in sunny places & meeting places such as mail boxes	Provide shady & sunny areas for sitting and walking	NA
Watching TV	Popular	Provide TV room, comfortable furniture	NA	NA
Community Activities	Local trips, visiting professionals	Provide flexible common room(s)	Prefer garden with patio	Van parking
Exercising	Light conditioning preferred	Provide flexible common room(s)	Prefer garden with patio	Guest parking
Inside Play	Card games, art classes, etc	Provide flexible common room(s)	NA	NA
Outside Play	Gardening, tai chi, etc	Connect outdoor space with common room	Prefer garden with patio Provide shady & sunny areas	NA
Inside circulation	Physical frailty	Mimize long corridors, provide periodic seating, handrails, elevators close to entry and dining.	NA	NA
Storing	Much needed	Maximize storage in units, provide central lockers Prefer storage for equipment (eg wheelchair) in unit	NA	NA
Housekeeping	Minimal, but some preferred	Ensure unit is efficient and easy to maintain.	NA	NA
Doing Chores	Minimal, but some preferred	Ensure unit is efficient and easy to maintain.	NA	NA
Doing Laundry	Important	Provide comfortable, accessible laundry room	Prefer link to outdoor space	NA
Arriving/Leaving				
On Foot	Minimal, but some preferred	Provide safe, clear, sheltered entry. Consider access to crosswalk and bus stop	Provide ramps and rails as required	NA
By Car	Minimal, but some preferred	Ensure good visibility at auto entry, warning signal	Provide safe path from parking area	NA
By Public Transport	Minimal, but some preferred	Provide safe, clear, sheltered entry.	Provide ramps and rails	NA
Parking	Minimal, but some preferred	Locate safe, well-lit parking area near entry	NA	Provide ade- quate HC stalls

User Activity Checklist

<u>User Type:</u>	<u>Low-income Families, mixed-ethnicity</u>			
<u>Activity Category</u>	<u>User Activity Pattern</u>	<u>Implication for Building</u>	<u>Open Space</u>	<u>Parking</u>
Cooking	Popular, varied patterns	Consider kitchen location & visual connections	Connect to back patio	NA
Eating	Popular, varied patterns	Consider dining location & visual connections		NA
Bathing	Popular	Provide bathtub for child bathing	NA	NA
Toiletting	Popular	Consider separate sink and WC for bathtime rush	NA	NA
Sleeping	Varied patterns	Soundproof as much as feasible, separate noise sources from sleep walls	NA	NA
Studying	Important, varied patterns	Provide desk area in bedrooms and common area	NA	NA
Working	Important, varied patterns	Consider flexible unit design to allow at-home work	NA	NA
Entertaining	Important, varied patterns	Ensure living/dining furniture fits; allow flow to patio	Connect LR through to a yard	Guest parking
Socializing	Popular		NA	NA
Watching TV	Popular		Provide wall for entertainment center, ensure furniture works	NA
Community Activities	Important, varied patterns	Provide flexible common room(s)	Prefer garden with patio	Guest parking
Exercising	Important, varied patterns	Usually off-site	Usually off-site	
Inside Play	Important, varied patterns	Provide flexible common room(s)	NA	NA
Outside Play	Important, varied patterns	Connect outdoor space with common room Supervise tot-lot from common rooms, separate b-ball from units	Provide play equipment for toddlers and preschool kids; consider half-court B-ball	NA
Inside circulation	Daily use	Minimize long corridors, consider daylighting consider security issues	NA	NA
Storing	Much needed	Maximize storage in units, provide central lockers	NA	NA
Housekeeping	Important, varied patterns	Ensure unit is efficient and easy to maintain.	NA	NA
Doing Chores	Important, varied patterns	Ensure unit is efficient and easy to maintain.	NA	NA
Doing Laundry	Important	Provide comfortable, accessible laundry room Consider W/D hookups in unit	Prefer link to outdoor space	NA
Arriving/Leaving				
On Foot	Daily use	Provide safe, clear, sheltered entry. Consider access to crosswalk and bus stop	Consider transition court	NA
By Car	Daily use	Ensure good visibility at auto entry, warning signal	Provide safe path from parking area	NA
By Publis Transport	Intermittent Use	Provide safe, clear, sheltered entry.	Provide safe path	NA
Parking	Important	Locate safe, well-lit parking area near entry Prefer supervision of car from unit	NA	NA