



HOUSING: Types

Photo Credit: Google- Age-friendly community

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Do older people have housing that is safe & affordable and which allows them to stay independent as their needs change?

The patterns of senior residence are the product of a variety of factors both personal & social. The *concentration* of the entire elderly cohort, or of changes in such concentrations over time is the basic parameter used in examining residential patterns of seniors. As well as the age of the elderly, other aspects of the composition of the aged population may be of interest such as gender, ethnicity, marital status, living arrangements, education & income. Making adequate & appropriate housing available for seniors revolve around three basic factors: **DESIGN** (dealing with adaptability factor), **CHOICE** (dealing with types & affordability factor) and **LOCATION** (dealing with accessibility to services factor). A greater range of housing options needs to be explored and implemented, both in terms of house form and lifecycle housing models. There is a need for more community-based options for people, including their ability to continue to live healthy lives in their own homes – or at least within their own communities – as they grow older. For example, common or shared living models, would allow older home owners to remain in their single family houses while offering potentially affordable and manageable livable housing options to companion seniors. The implementation of flexible and inclusionary zoning may help with keeping seniors in the community.

Basic Design Criteria:

Some specific elements of the age-friendly residence are:

- reinforced walls and handrails (for immediate or future installation of grab bars, etc.).
- wider hallways and staircases to accommodate mobility devices.
- kitchen and bathroom fluid design so that top or bottom cupboards and shelves may be used for daily necessities.
- universal fixtures on doors, taps, light fixtures, plug outlets.
- no step entryways (zero-threshold concept), and contrasting colour strips on the edge of stairs.
- community support for house care: e.g., hire/borrow a handy-person schemes, snow removal/lawn care/gardening support.
- adequate motion sensitive exterior lighting.



Photo Credit: Google- Ramps

Figure #1: Zero-threshold concept with handrails





Photo Credit: Google

Figure #2: Adaptable/Visitable Housing: Straight Ramp



Photo Credit: Google

Figure #3: Accessible Housing- Ramp using a Landscape approach

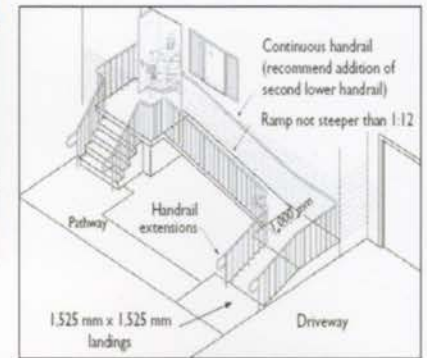


Figure #4: Guideline for Ramp design

- open floor plans to allow easy movement from one room to the next, and simple transfer of uses as a resident ages (e.g., by ensuring closet space in all rooms).

Accessible Housing by Design:

Case 1: Age-friendly Bungalow (Figure#5:)

House Profile: A kitchen that incorporates work surfaces for both standing and seated use. A kitchen that maximizes storage options within resident's reach. Storage cupboards feature pull-out shelves to make it easier to reach items; Lower windows to provide unobstructed viewing from a seated position; Raised, front-loading laundry appliances; To reduce fatigue and conserve energy, Design can have installed central environmental control system that allows the resident to control their environment from a central panel located in the living room. One can control lights, wall outlets and the thermostat, as well as the TV and the entertainment system. The system also incorporates a video connection to the main entrance, to allow the resident to remotely answer and unlock the door (Home Automation features); The stairway to the basement is configured as a straight run, with lots of headroom and space at the bottom of the stair for future installation of an inclined-platform stair lift.

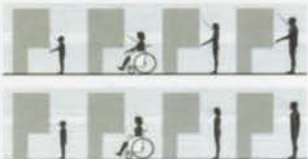


Figure #5: Example of Case 1

Case 2: Modest, single-storey secondary unit (Figure#6:)

House Profile: The design of such suite features a no-step entry, wider doors, easy-to-use switches and controls, and sufficient space to accommodate a walker or a wheelchair in the future.

Also, if the resident have limited vision, different flooring materials can define the boundaries of the various functional zones within the open plan living area — seating area (low pile carpet), kitchen/ eating area (ceramic tile) and circulation/ hall area (hardwood).



Figure #6: Example of Case 2



Photo Credit: Google

Figure #7: Accessible Kitchen with cupboard doors that open to provide knee space under the sink.

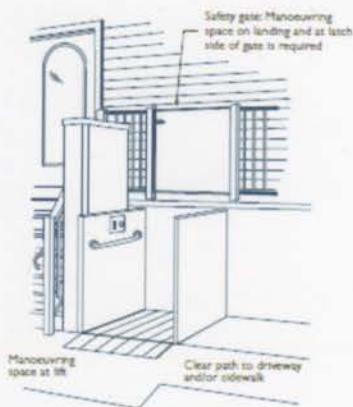
Are there enough options of Affordable Housing for older people?



Photo Credit: Google

Figure #10: Congregate Care Retirement Housing example

Unenclosed vertical platform lift



Source: CMHC



Photo Credit: Google

Figure #8: Nursing Homes



Photo Credit: Google

Figure #9: Retirement Apartments

Accessible Housing by Choice:

Single Family Homes: These homes offer an individualized living environment; some single-family homes are located in age-restricted retirement communities.

Multifamily Housing: These units, including apartments or condominiums, are several connected homes that also offer independent living situations. Some of these facilities are age restricted (e.g., "seniors apartments").

Shared Housing: This involves a group of unrelated, independent older individuals living together and sharing household duties and companionship.

Accessory Dwelling Units: These take several forms, including independent 600- to 700-square-foot cottages in the backyards of single-family homes. Some elder cottages are modular units that can be located temporarily in a backyard. Accessory units are frequently associated with the home of a relative, offering independence along with nearby care when needed.

Congregate Care: This type of older resident apartment typically offers hospitality services, such as group meals, light housekeeping, social and recreational opportunities, and scheduled transportation to shopping and cultural activities.

Continuing Care Retirement Communities: These three-stage facilities provide for life care in a managed community. They provide separate homes or cottages with optional hospitality services, assisted living, and nursing care. Residents can use the services that they need as their lives change.

Nursing Homes: Nursing homes offer the least amount of independence; their residents often require 24-hour care and need assistance with most or all activities.

Conclusion:

Population aging has important implications for housing and related services. The for-profit and non-profit housing sectors are already responding to changing needs with innovative solutions.

These responses are contributing to an ongoing process of change in Canadian communities that is increasing seniors' quality of life and helping them maintain their independence and social participation as they age.

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