



**To:** Richmond City Council  
**From:** Terry Crowe  
 Manager, Policy Planning  
**Re:** Affordable Seniors Supportive Housing Design Guidelines

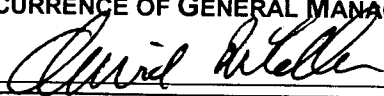
*To Planning - Oct. 8, 2002*  
**Date:** September 24, 2002  
**File:** 8060-20-7425

**Staff Recommendation**

1. That Bylaw No. 7425 which amends Section 3.2 Housing, of the Official Community Plan Bylaw 7100 to add direction regarding the use of the Design Guidelines for Affordable Seniors' Supportive Housing, be introduced and given first reading.
2. That Bylaw No. 7425, having been examined in accordance with Section 883 of the Local Government Act regarding the Financial Plan, the Capital Expenditure Program and the Waste Management Plan, is hereby deemed to be consistent with said program and plans.
3. That Bylaw No. 7425 having been examined in accordance with the requirement in the Accord between the City and the Vancouver International Airport Authority, is hereby deemed to be outside the areas affected by aeronautical operations.
4. That the Seniors' Affordable Supportive Housing Design Guidelines (attached to the report dated September 24, 2002, from the Manager, Policy Planning), be adopted and used to guide the development of seniors affordable supportive housing.

Terry Crowe  
 Manager, Policy Planning

Att.

<p><b>FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY</b></p> <p>CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER</p> 
--

## Staff Report

### Origin

On June 11, 2001, Richmond City Council endorsed recommendations from the Seniors' Affordable Supportive Housing Study which recognized the immediate and growing need for seniors affordable supportive housing in the City.

Supportive housing was identified as an appropriate option for many seniors in the community who do not wish or who are not ready for a residential care facility, but who are living at risk in their current situation. It is specifically defined as:

“housing which combines a supportive and appropriate physical environment designed for privacy and independence, with a social model of flexible supports and assistance including emergency call, meals, and access to personal care and professional health care as required.”

A priority recommendation from the Study directed the City to develop a set of planning and design guidelines for seniors affordable supportive housing.

In January 2002, the City retained the services of Katherine Taylor of Options Consulting Ltd. to undertake this work. Katherine worked with staff and an advisory committee comprised of representatives of the City's Seniors' Advisory Council, the private sector including the Greater Vancouver Homebuilders Association, Progressive Construction, Richmond Health Services, the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority and the Greater Vancouver Housing Corporation. This advisory group provided important input and direction to the project and the development of the guidelines. A complete list of Advisory Committee members is included in **Attachment 1**.

The proposed guidelines are included as **Attachment 2**. A copy of the consultant's study which provides background on the proposed guidelines is included as **Attachment 3**.

### Findings Of Fact

The City's Official Community Plan encourages a broad variety of housing types, tenures and price ranges to meet the needs of everyone in the community including seniors. Specific policies encourage “supported seniors' housing options such as congregate housing and “Abbeyfield” models. (eg. Abbeyfield housing is designed to be residential in scale and character housing 8 to 10 seniors) Each resident has a separate bedroom but will share common areas such as a kitchen, dining room and living room. Supports include 24 hour on site staff and emergency call response.

The Seniors' Affordable Supportive Housing Study which Council endorsed in June, 2001 provided a comprehensive overview of information and requirements for the planning, development and operation of affordable seniors supportive housing. The Study recognized the immediate and growing need for affordable seniors supportive housing in the City.

The scope of work in preparing the guidelines has included:

- a review of comparable guidelines in Burnaby, Vancouver and the North Vancouver City;
- interviews with municipal staff in each municipality;
- site tours of five selected seniors supportive housing projects in Greater Vancouver;
- interviews with architects and developers of selected projects;
- documentation and comparison of municipal guidelines; and
- the development of specific guidelines for seniors supportive housing in Richmond

## **Analysis**

### Housing Forms

The Richmond Seniors Affordable Supportive Housing Study noted that there is no single or “best” design for seniors’ supportive housing. Design can vary widely depending on the housing type, the scale of the project, the type and level of supports, cultural considerations and any unique development conditions of a project. Supportive housing can also take many forms ranging from a cluster of bungalows, a high rise or low rise apartment building, a renovated large house or converted hotel. It includes sheltered housing, congregate housing, assisted living and Abbeyfield houses.

### Design Features

The Study also recognized that seniors supportive housing must include important design features which are unique to this form of housing. Seniors supportive housing should include features which:

- accommodate the provision of support services such as offices and communal spaces for on site meal service, social activities and common amenities such as bathing facilities;
- support “aging in place” (such as wheelchair accessibility, handrails, specially designed bathrooms, plenty of light etc) so that as residents’ frailty increases, the built environment does not limit their activities; and
- accommodate changing resident profiles.

### Affordability

The provision of sufficient levels of affordable seniors’ supportive housing to meet projected needs is a major challenge for communities. The provision of affordable housing options for seniors with the lowest incomes requires a co-ordinated response from all levels of government, regional health authorities and the community through local fundraising initiatives.

The attached guidelines report also includes a number of strategies which can contribute to affordability of seniors supportive housing. These include:

- Land Costs: eg. the provision of land at a reduced or zero capital cost where sites may be redeveloped by existing owners
- Subsidies: eg. the provision of subsidies such as SAFER (Shelter Aid for Elderly Residents) for some units.

- Tenure Options: eg. land acquired on a leasehold basis, rental including subsidized rental
- Unit size: eg. provision of smaller units
- Mixed Use Building: eg. provision of commercial or market residential space that could be sold or rented to off set capital or operating costs
- Shared Facilities: eg: co-location of programs and facilities such as kitchens or administrative space to provide operational efficiencies
- Flexibility: eg: relaxation of parking requirements

A significant challenge will also be the need to balance affordability with livability. Design features should contribute to affordability by providing functional and aesthetic design without “gold plating”. The design of this form of housing must be economical and contribute to affordability without compromising functionality.

### Proposed Guidelines

The proposed guidelines for Richmond address the following factors:

- neighbourhood location/compatibility
- building form
  - e.g. residential in character, density and scale
- pedestrian and vehicle access
  - e.g. safe, convenient and comfortable
- aging in place
  - circulation space/common areas and units should comfortably accommodate persons using walkers, canes, or wheelchairs and persons with impairments of reach, dexterity, balance and vision
- private space
  - e.g. fully self contained and large enough to provide comfortable, appropriate and accessible accommodation (e.g. minimum unit size of 38 m<sup>2</sup> (410 square feet)
  - provide private bathroom, storage, bedroom or sleeping area
- common areas and amenities
  - e.g. sitting rooms, social areas, dining room, common laundry, adequate, accessible outdoor garden/patio space, on site parking, scooter parking/storage and charging areas
- safety features
  - e.g. fire and emergency alarms and systems, evacuation plan, emergency power
- program of supports
  - e.g. emergency call system with a 24 hour on site response, at least one meal/day, weekly housekeeping in units, weekly laundry, social and recreational activities

### *Implementation of the Guidelines*

The guidelines are intended to provide a consistent framework, based on community input, to help guide the planning, design, review and approval of seniors supportive housing projects in Richmond. The guidelines set out community standards and expectations regarding seniors supportive housing design in the City.

The guidelines are intended to be used by community stakeholders including the private and non profit development industry and City staff to facilitate the development and review of seniors supportive housing in Richmond.

### Implementation Strategy

Staff propose the following approach and mechanisms to assist in the implementation of the guidelines:

- An amendment to the City wide OCP to include a specific reference to the “Affordable Seniors Supportive Housing Design Guidelines” within the Special Needs Housing Policies;
- The guidelines will apply on a voluntary basis to all seniors supportive housing, regardless of type, scale, cost, type of operator (e.g. private or non profit). Staff recommend however that the guidelines be considered as mandatory for projects in which the City of Richmond is directly involved as a project partner (ie. through financial support including the contribution of land or other assets);
- The guidelines will be used in conjunction with the existing multi family residential development permit guidelines which are included in the City’s Official Community Plan. Policy Planning and Development Applications Department staff will encourage proponents of seniors’ supportive housing project to use the guidelines in the design, planning and development of their respective projects. Staff will also use the guidelines as they assess specific projects through the development review phase (ie rezoning or development permit processing) for seniors supportive housing projects;
- Building Approvals staff have reviewed the proposed guidelines and have indicated that they exceed Building Code requirements in the following areas:
  - provision of a security system monitoring capacity;
  - common corridor and circulation area minimum widths of 1500mm (five feet);
  - provision of two elevators for multi storey buildings with more than 30 units above the first floor;
  - provision of elevator capacity to accommodate wheelchair turning radius and a stretcher in a prone position;
  - magnetic holdbacks on fire doors;
  - provision of light fixtures in residents’ closets.
- At building permit and construction stages, Building Approvals staff will continue to review and issue permits based on compliance to current building code requirements. To further facilitate implementation of the guidelines at the building permit and construction stages, Building Approvals staff propose that project architects be required to provide written confirmation at both the design stage and the completion stage of a project that the guidelines have been considered and incorporated into the development.

**Financial Impact**

None.

**Conclusion**

The Seniors' Affordable Supportive Housing Design Guidelines have been prepared in response:

- to the anticipated increase in the amount of seniors' housing that will be needed and built in Richmond in the future, and
- for the need to provide a consistent framework to help guide the planning, design and development approvals of seniors supportive housing in Richmond.

Staff recommend that Council:

- amend the City OCP to include a specific reference directing the use of the Design Guidelines (**Attachment 2**), and
- adopt the Design Guidelines for Seniors' Affordable Supportive Housing (**Attachment 2**) as a framework and guide for the planning and design of such housing.



Rob Innes  
Planner

RI:cas

**Seniors' Affordable Supportive Housing Advisory Committee  
Membership List**

Neil Bernbaum	Richmond Seniors' Advisory Council
Lois Carson-Boyce	Richmond Seniors' Advisory Council
Aileen Cormack	Richmond Seniors' Advisory Council
Mohinder Grewal	Richmond Seniors' Advisory Council
Carol Smith	Richmond Seniors' Advisory Council
Pat Kaspro	Richmond Seniors' Advisory Council
Elain Duvall	Progressive Construction
Gene Durnin	Richmond Health Services
Linda Thomas	Vancouver-Coastal Health Authority
Perry Staniscia	Greater Vancouver Housing Corporation
Peter Simpson	Greater Vancouver Home Builders Association

AFFORDABLE SENIORS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING  
DESIGN GUIDELINES

---

CITY OF RICHMOND

June 2002

OPTIONS CONSULTING



## **DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR RICHMOND**

### ***1.0 Neighbourhood***

- 1.1 Seniors supportive housing projects should be located in an area that is safe, attractive and provides access to community amenities including transit, shopping, services, parks and recreation and social activities.

Once a specific project site has been selected, surrounding walking routes in the immediate area should be assessed to determine if there are any hazards such as narrow sidewalks, unmarked crosswalks, inadequate lighting or other environmental factors which could be mitigated to improve seniors' independence and mobility.

- 1.2 Seniors supportive housing projects should be located where they are compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood. The area should include residential housing, and may also include shopping, services and other community amenities. The seniors supportive housing should be integrated into the surrounding neighbourhood, and impacts caused by the project such as vehicle traffic, servicing, parking demands, and scale and character of development should be considered.

### ***2.0 Building Form***

- 2.1 The building form should be residential (as opposed to institutional) in character, density and scale, and should be compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood.
- 2.2 The building form should be consistent with the goals of accessibility and aging in place.
- 2.3 Outdoor corridors are not acceptable.

### 3.0 Access

**Note:** *These guidelines are minimal required provisions. Additional provisions may be made to further enhance accessibility within the unit and throughout the building.*

3.1 Safe, convenient and comfortable access is required for pedestrian and vehicular circulation between the building and the street. Provisions are to include:

- a) Automatic doors at the building entrance, with security system including monitoring capacity.
- b) Weather protection at entrance to maintain comfort in the lobby and waiting areas at the entrance.
- c) Seating within the building which allows visual surveillance of the entry area so that residents can comfortably wait to be picked up by a car or taxi.
- d) A covered portico at the passenger pick up/drop off area. This area is to be located at or near the front entrance if possible.
- e) A continuous and level walkway, suitable for walking, scooters and wheelchairs, from the building entrance to the public sidewalk. The walkway is to be separated from vehicle circulation, or, as a minimum alternative, be delineated as a defined walkway (for example, with contrasting paving).
- r) Lighting along pathways and at the approach and entrance to the building.
- g) Designated wheelchair accessible short term parking near the main building entrance.
- h) Stairways should be avoided, and a ramp is required adjacent to stairways where feasible.
- i) Enterphones and signage should have large scale buttons and large scale, high contrast lettering and numbering. Enterphones are to be located to facilitate access and use by persons in wheelchairs.

## ***4.0 Design Features to Support Aging in Place***

***Note:*** *These guidelines are minimal required provisions. Additional provisions may be made to further enhance accessibility within the unit and throughout the building.*

4.1 Circulation space throughout the common areas should comfortably accommodate persons using walkers, canes, or wheelchairs. Specifically, provisions include but are not necessarily limited to:

- a) All common corridors and circulation routes are required to provide a clear width of 1500 mm (5').
- b) All doorways are required to provide a clear opening of not less than 915 mm (3').
- c) For any change in level that requires stairs, an elevator must also be provided.
- d) A minimum of two elevators is required for any building that is greater than one storey and has 30 units or more located above the ground floor.
- e) If there is a parking level, a minimum of one elevator is required to provide access to that level.
- f) At least one elevator is required to accommodate a stretcher in a prone position and provide a 1500 mm (5') wheelchair turning radius.
- g) Fire doors are required to be on magnetic holdbacks, with no doorframe in the centre of the doors.

4.2 The residential units should comfortably accommodate persons using walkers, canes, or wheelchairs. Specifically, provisions include but are not necessarily limited to:

- a) An electrical box above the unit entrance, to provide wiring for the potential future installation of a power door opener.
- b) Lever handles on all doors.
- c) Large, offset lever style deadbolts for unit entrance and any balcony or patio doors.
- d) Each unit is required to have individual control for heating and ventilation.
- e) Ceiling light fixtures in all rooms.

- f) A light fixture in all bedroom closets.
- g) A three way switch next to the bed in the bedroom.
- h) “D” type handles on all cupboards, drawers and any pocket (sliding) doors.
- i) Window hardware that is of a lever type, with the hardware located no higher than 1 200 mm (4’) above the floor. Window placement and hardware must ensure that the window is easy to reach and to open and close.
- j) All doorways within the unit are required to provide a clear opening of not less than 800 mm (2’ 10”).
- k) If outdoor patio or deck space is provided, the access must be a swing door, not a sliding patio door. The doorway must have a flush or bevelled threshold.
- l) Unit bathrooms are required include the following features:
  - a toilet with grab bars along the adjacent wall.
  - a counter with a sink. Storage drawers (not cupboards) are to be provided below the counter. The counter must also provide full clearance below the sink to allow a person seated in a wheelchair to use the sink.
  - A shower stall with a telephone style showerhead and a modular seat is required. (The shower stall does not need to be large enough to accommodate a commode chair.) Grab bars are required within the shower stall. Vertical grab bars are required at the front edge of the shower stall at both ends.
  - Lever style faucets at the sink and in the shower.
  - A heat lamp.
  - Grab bars to be used as towel rails (do not install standard towel rails).

**4.3 Provision should be made in both common areas and within residential units to accommodate individuals with impairments of reach, strength, dexterity, balance and vision. Specifically, provisions include but are not necessarily limited to:**

- a) All electrical outlets are required to be located a minimum of 450 mm (18") above the floor.
- b) All switches and thermostats are required to be located a minimum of 1100 mm (3' 6") above the floor.
- c) Rocker type switchplates are required for all light switches.
- d) Thresholds should be flush to the greatest extent possible. Thresholds that are not flush must be bevelled and cannot exceed 13 mm (1/2"). Particular attention should be paid to changes in flooring, and doorways.
- e) Elevator controls should be designed for accessibility and legibility for the visually impaired.

## 5.0 Private Space

**Note:** *These guidelines are minimal required provisions. Additional provisions may be made to further enhance accessibility within the unit.*

5.1 Private residential units must be fully self-contained and sufficiently large to provide comfortable, appropriate and accessible accommodation. The minimum unit size is 38m<sup>2</sup> (410 square feet).

In addition to the minimum unit size, each unit is required to provide:

- 1 500 mm (5') wheelchair turning radius on the inside of the unit entrance
- clearance on the latch side of all doorways: 300 mm (1') for doors that swing away, and 600 mm (2') for doors that swing toward the person
- 1 500 mm (5') turning radius in the bedroom/sleeping area, with a single bed
- 1 500 mm (5') turning radius in the kitchenette area (without resident furniture)
- 1 500 mm (5') turning radius in the living room area (without resident furniture)

5.2 Each unit is required to have a three piece bathroom as per 4.2(1). Additionally, the bathroom must provide the following clearances:

- a 1 500 mm (5') turning radius, this may include clearance below the vanity;
- a total clear area around the toilet of not less than 1500 mm (5') deep from the wall behind the toilet; and a 900 mm (35") wide; and,
- a clear floor area of not less than 750 mm (30") in front of the shower stall. The flooring must be of a slip resistant type.

5.3 Each unit is required to include a kitchenette with, at a minimum, the following:

- Cabinetry above and below the counter. Provide drawers for cabinetry below the counter and cupboards for cabinetry above the counter.
- Not less than 1000 mm of clear, continuous counterspace, excluding the sink. Provide appropriately located electrical outlets for a toaster oven, coffee maker and other appliances.
- A sink with a single, lever style handle.
- A small refrigerator, with a separate, frost free freezer compartment. The refrigerator must be mounted on a cabinetry base to reduce bending and reaching.

- A wall mounted microwave oven located not more than 1 400 mm above the floor.

5.4 For all units, provide not less than a total of 2.3m<sup>2</sup> (25 sq. ft.) of storage area(s), including closets.

5.5 For all units, provide either a bedroom or an alcove sleeping area.

## **6.0 Common Areas and Amenities**

6.1 Provide common amenity areas, for the use of residents, of not less than 4.0m<sup>2</sup> (43 square feet) per unit. Amenity areas should include sitting rooms and social areas. Other amenities that may be considered include a private dining room for family visits, library, computer room, hair salon, exercise facilities, guest suite, family kitchen, “spa” tub room or other amenities for the use and enjoyment of residents.

6.2 Consideration should be given to the provision of space for on-site or visiting health care professionals. It is recommended that space be provided for an enclosed office for nursing or other health care staff use. Space for a multipurpose assessment/treatment area (such as podiatry clinics, rehab assessment and treatment, or other clinic type services) should also be considered. (This space is in addition to the 4.0m<sup>2</sup>/unit allocation above.)

6.3 Provide a dining room that seats all residents at a single sitting. Provide not less than 1.5m<sup>2</sup>/person (16 square feet). (This area is included in the total of 4.0m<sup>2</sup> per unit.)

6.4 Provide single occupancy, wheelchair accessible washrooms in common areas – not less than two on the same floor as the dining room.

6.5 A commercial kitchen for on-site meal preparation is required, unless the seniors supportive housing is co-located with existing kitchen facilities.

6.6 Provide common laundry facilities for residents.

6.7 Adequate, accessible, outdoor garden and patio space is required for residents’ access and use.

6.8 On-site parking is required.

-Provide not less than 0.20 parking spaces per unit for residents and staff (or 1:5 ratio – one parking stall per five units) excluding visitor parking.

-Wheelchair access to the parking area is required.

6.9 Provide 0.25 storage spaces per unit (or one per 4 units) for scooter storage and charging.

- Scooter storage is to be wheelchair accessible and located in or adjacent to the parking area.
- The storage area must be secure, ventilated and protected from weather.

6.10 Additional common storage space is required for residents' use.

## ***7.0 Safety Features***

- 7.1 Provide visual fire alarms, in addition to audible alarms in common areas.
- 7.2 Provide a fire and emergency alarm system that allows for public address.
- 7.3 Provide a fire safety and evacuation plan that includes staff accounting for any residents who are missing, and providing assistance and direction to emergency personnel as required.
- 7.4 Provision of emergency power for all lighting, heat, at least one building elevator, and for the emergency call system. Provision for power for at least 24 hours is required.
- 7.5 Provision of emergency lighting levels of 100 lux.
- 7.6 Provide refuge areas to accommodate residents who are able to evacuate their suites but unable to safely negotiate the stairs.

## ***8.0 Program of Supports***

- 8.1 A formal plan for the provision of supports must be included in submissions to the City and should be defined in a Housing Agreement between the City and the project operator.

Seniors supportive housing is to provide at a minimum:

- an emergency call system with 24 hour on-site response
- at least one meal per day, prepared on site
- weekly housekeeping in residents' units
- weekly laundry service for sheets and towels, including changing bed sheets for residents
- social and recreational activities



AFFORDABLE SENIORS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING  
DESIGN GUIDELINES

---

CITY OF RICHMOND

June 2002

OPTIONS CONSULTING

304

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Part I – Comparison of Municipal Guidelines</b> .....	<b>2</b>
City of Burnaby – Supportive Housing .....	3
Overview .....	3
Key Features .....	3
Planning and Implementation .....	5
Considerations.....	5
City of Vancouver – Congregate Housing for Seniors .....	6
Overview .....	6
Key Features .....	7
Planning and Implementation .....	8
Considerations.....	8
City of North Vancouver- Adaptable Design Guidelines .....	10
Overview .....	10
Key Features .....	10
Planning and Implementation .....	11
Considerations.....	13
Comparison of Municipal Approaches .....	14
Definition of Scope .....	14
Role of Guidelines .....	15
Implementation of Guidelines.....	15
Affordability.....	16
Supports .....	17
Accessibility and Aging in Place .....	18
Risks.....	18
<b>Part II – Design Guidelines for Richmond</b> .....	<b>20</b>
1.0 Neighbourhood.....	20
2.0 Building Form .....	20
3.0 Access .....	21
4.0 Design Features to Support Aging in Place .....	22
5.0 Private Space.....	25
6.0 Common Areas and Amenities .....	26
7.0 Safety Features.....	27
8.0 Program of Supports .....	27
<b>Appendix A – City of North Vancouver Adaptable Design Guidelines</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>Appendix B – City of Burnaby Supportive Housing</b> .....	<b>29</b>

**Appendix C – City of Vancouver Congregate Housing for Seniors..... 30**

**Appendix D – Profiles of Site Visits..... 31**

    Southview Terrace .....31

    Shannon Oaks.....32

    St. Margaret’s of Scotland Abbeyfield Houses.....34

    Cavell Gardens .....35

    Summerhill .....36

    Gilmore Gardens .....37

## INTRODUCTION

This report on design guidelines for affordable seniors supportive housing is an initiative arising from the previously completed policy study, *Affordable Seniors Supportive Housing*, completed in April 2001. That study recommended that the City of Richmond “establish general development and design guidelines for seniors supportive housing”. The scope of work for preparing these guidelines has included:

- Review of comparable municipal guidelines in Burnaby, Vancouver, and the City of North Vancouver.
- Interviews with planners and municipal staff in each municipality.
- Site tours of selected seniors supportive housing projects in the Lower Mainland:
  - Summerhill Residence in North Vancouver
  - Cavell Gardens in Vancouver
  - St. Margaret’s of Scotland Abbeyfield Houses in Burnaby
  - Southview Terrace in Vancouver
  - Shannon Oaks in Vancouver
- Interviews with architects and developers of selected projects.
- Documentation and comparison of the municipal guidelines.
- Determination of guidelines for seniors supportive housing in Richmond.
- Review of B.C. Housing’s draft design guidelines for assisted living housing.

This document comprises two distinct sections:

Part I includes a description and comparison of existing municipal guidelines in Burnaby, Vancouver and the City of North Vancouver.

Part II provides design guidelines for Richmond based on the review of other municipalities, existing seniors supportive housing projects, and the general literature and knowledge base established in the preceding report, *Affordable Seniors Supportive Housing*.

## **PART I – COMPARISON OF MUNICIPAL GUIDELINES**

Three municipalities in the Lower Mainland have undertaken to develop design guidelines that address, in varying ways, housing design for seniors. While there are several points of comparison, the design guidelines for each municipality are unique. The complete guidelines are included in the Appendices for reference.

For all three municipalities, the development of the design guidelines has been in response to development proposals which have been challenging to address because of potential gaps in the existing housing categories and uncertainty regarding housing needs for specific target populations.

In Burnaby and in Vancouver, guidelines have been developed for the location, design and support services for seniors supportive housing. In the City of North Vancouver, guidelines have been developed for the location and design of adaptable dwellings. Unlike the guidelines for Burnaby and Vancouver, these guidelines are not specifically for seniors supportive housing.

The guidelines for each municipality are discussed on the following pages.

## ***City of Burnaby – Supportive Housing***

### Overview

The guidelines for seniors supportive housing in Burnaby were adopted by Council in November 2000. The process of developing the guidelines was initiated in 1996 in response to a specific planning submission for a room and board facility for which there was no appropriate zoning. Planning staff recognized the growing need for seniors supportive housing, and Council supported it as a priority. Following the prompting of Burnaby and other B.C. municipalities, the provincial government initiated a policy review of seniors supportive housing in 1998. Municipal staff also consulted with local health authorities and other experts on seniors housing to learn about, and develop a municipal planning response to, seniors supportive housing. The guidelines address the following components:

- definition of supportive housing for seniors
- defined categories of housing types
- definition in the Zoning Bylaw
- minimum unit sizes in the Zoning Bylaw
- parking requirements in the Zoning Bylaw
- location and design guidelines
- commitment to the levels and types of supports formalized in a Housing Agreement

### Key Features

**Definition:** The guidelines in Burnaby are specifically for supportive housing for seniors. Supportive housing is defined as: *“housing in which one or more person in each unit is aged 55 years or older, which includes 24 hour monitoring and emergency response on site, common amenity spaces and dining facilities, and provision of at least one meal a day for residents.”*

**Categories:** The guidelines define two categories of supportive housing:

Category A – developments that have bed-sitting units which contain no kitchen or cooking facilities in the units; and

Category B – developments that have dwelling units which include kitchen or cooking facilities in the units.

**Minimum Unit Sizes:** The design guidelines include minimum unit sizes.

Category A : minimum unit size is 27m<sup>2</sup> (290.6 square feet) in all applicable zoning districts.

Category B: minimum units sizes are based on the existing size requirements for units in the specific zoning categories.

In RM (multi family) zones the areas are:

- 37m<sup>2</sup> (398.28 square feet) for bachelor units;
- 56m<sup>2</sup> (602.80 square feet) for one bedroom units;
- and 70m<sup>2</sup> (753.5 square feet) for two bedroom units.

For P5 (institutional) zones, the current seniors housing unit sizes are:

- 33m<sup>2</sup> (355.22 square feet) for studio units, and;
- 46m<sup>2</sup> (495.16 square feet) for one bedroom units.

In addition to minimum unit sizes, the design guidelines specify that not more than 25% of the units in any Category B development be studio units.

**Parking:** The zoning bylaw specifies 0.4 spaces per unit (or one parking space per 2.5 units) for both Category A and Category B units. Additionally, 0.25 storage spaces (one storage space per four units) is to be provided for scooter storage and recharging.

**Location Guidelines:** The guidelines address building form, suitability of location for seniors, and access to the building and parking.

**Interior Design Guidelines:** The guidelines are intended to complement B.C. Housing design guidelines for seniors supportive housing (currently under revision). The guidelines note that the design “should provide for aging in place”; that all interior and exterior common areas must be accessible to persons with disabilities, and that all units shall be either wheelchair adaptable or accessible. There are specific area requirements for the common dining and lounge areas: 2.0m<sup>2</sup> (21.5 square feet) per person in the dining area, and 1.5m<sup>2</sup> (16 square feet) in the lounge area(s).

An on site kitchen is required and fully wheelchair accessible washrooms are required near the dining room.

## Planning and Implementation

Since the guidelines were adopted, there have been no submissions or new developments that fall under the guidelines. Several projects have reached the discussion and planning stage; some are currently on hold pending review and funding decisions.

Burnaby does not have Development Permit Areas, nor are the guidelines in the Official Community Plan, so the guidelines function as a stand-alone document.

All applications for seniors supportive housing require rezoning and submission of a Comprehensive Development (CD) plan. The zoning bylaws specify the two defined categories of seniors supportive housing as permitted uses in various zones. In terms of implementing the guidelines, this provides the municipality with greater opportunity for review, negotiation and flexibility. The guidelines are “guidelines” and there is the latitude to make project specific adjustments without setting a precedent.

The advantage of the guidelines is that the process is now transparent: there is formal recognition of seniors supportive housing and consistent guidelines for project planning and development.

## Considerations

Staff noted that the process of determining the approach and process for the guidelines was critical. For Burnaby this resulted in a definition of a new housing type and amendments to the zoning bylaw.

It is anticipated that as the guidelines are implemented, there will be a need for revision – in particular staff note that the unit sizes and parking requirements may be issues. From the perspective of the municipality, there is uncertainty about how assisted living fits into the existing design guidelines; one project currently nearing completion is to be an assisted living project. The assisted living model may require an additional definition or adjustment of policies or guidelines.

It is recognized that the use of Housing Agreements to formalize the provision of support services is challenging and potentially risky. The position of the municipality is that without the supports, the project is just housing. There are significant policy and practice questions pertaining to monitoring and enforcement, particularly if concessions have been negotiated in terms of the supports.

Affordability was identified as an issue as the guidelines were being developed, but there were no specific actions to formally facilitate affordability. Parking was one area in which affordability was a factor – the resulting guidelines is a compromise.

Staff acknowledge that the principal challenge is the need to balance project viability and affordability with quality of life for the seniors who will be living there.



## *City of Vancouver – Congregate Housing for Seniors*

### Overview

Like Burnaby, the Vancouver guidelines were developed because of development interest and a lack of a framework for evaluating the submissions that were being received. Project viability and affordability versus livability arose in several cases and staff felt that this issue would recur. Additionally, within the context of an aging population, the limited adaptability of the housing stock, shifts in provincial funding, reduced provision of personal care and home support, it was recognized that there was a growing gap in the range of housing options for seniors.

For the past three years, City of Vancouver staff, including rezoning planners, social planners, and the Housing Centre worked to complete a policy study that resulted in the *Congregate Housing for Seniors* report to Council, submitted in July 2001.

The report included three components:

1. Zoning amendments, enacted in the fall of 2001. These included a revised definition of congregate housing for seniors, and regulations regarding unit size and service provision.
2. Design guidelines, adopted in February 2002. These include neighbourhood compatibility, site selection, building characteristics, access, unit size and design, common areas, storage, circulation, safety features, open space, and parking and loading.
3. Parking bylaw changes, adopted in February 2002. The bylaw specifies parking requirements for this land type.

## Key Features

**Definition:** The zoning bylaw has been amended to define congregate housing as “a building, containing residential units designed specifically to accommodate seniors as they age, with separate common areas for dining and socializing, and where support services are provided.”

Additionally, the bylaw has been amended to specify that “all residential units shall contain a three piece bathroom”, and “all congregate housing projects shall provide meal service and 24 hour on site emergency response assistance”.

The definition applies to all supportive seniors housing projects, regardless of scale. There are no categories of housing types, nor is there any differentiation between self contained units with cooking facilities and housekeeping (sleeping) units.

The guidelines specify the amount of amenity space that is required to be provided. The bylaw permits additional amenity space to be excluded from the FSR (floor space ratio – the allowable area that can be built). There is a maximum of 10% excludable area. Bulk storage is also excluded from FSR calculations, consistent with other multiple family dwelling projects.

**Design Guidelines:** The design guidelines are comprehensive and detailed, covering most aspects of the design. The format is “performance” not “prescriptive” guidelines. This is consistent with the trend for the provincial Building Code. This means that in most cases, specific measures or features are not specified. For example, instead of a minimum unit size, the guidelines note the furnishings and activities that must be accommodated. Highlights of the design guidelines include:

- Residential units of at least 28m<sup>2</sup> (300 square feet) are preferred but smaller units may be considered if they are functionally usable.
- The bathroom should be designed to accommodate mobility aids, and enable a support provider to assist the resident.
- A total of 4.0 m<sup>2</sup> (43 square feet) per unit is required for common space, to be equally allocated between dining and socializing areas.
- An on-site common kitchen is required.
- Hallways should be a minimum of 1.5m (5 feet) wide.
- Enhanced fire and life safety features (in excess of the building code requirements).
- Provision of appropriate outdoor space.

**Parking:** The parking bylaw requires a minimum of 1 space per 100m<sup>2</sup> for each residential unit if the unit is less than 50m<sup>2</sup> (538.2 square feet), 1 space per 70m<sup>2</sup> (753.5 square feet) for units 50m<sup>2</sup> – 70m<sup>2</sup>, and 1 space per 70m<sup>2</sup> to a maximum of 2.2 spaces per unit for units over 70m<sup>2</sup>.

The guidelines specify that a relaxation of the parking bylaw may be considered; to a minimum of not less than 1 space per four units, where the units are less than 70m<sup>2</sup> in size; and one space per 100m<sup>2</sup> (1,076 square feet) where the unit is 70m<sup>2</sup> or greater.

## Planning and Implementation

During the development of the guidelines, a draft was distributed to individuals, organizations and businesses that might be interested, including health authorities, project operators, builders, architects, developers, consultants, and seniors organizations.

The zoning bylaw component of the policy report went to public hearing and was adopted in the fall of 2001. While the guidelines have not yet been formally adopted by Council, staff have been distributing the draft guidelines to project applicants, and the guidelines have been in use during project planning and negotiations.

Zoning is the primary tool for negotiating each project. Congregate housing is a “conditional use” as opposed to an “outright use”. This means that the approval process is not automatic, but is subject to review and approval of each project. The Development Board is able to set conditions based on zoning, policy, guidelines and any submissions received from City Advisory Committees.

Staff feel that the most significant advantage of the guidelines is that it formalizes the process and it ensures a common basis for the full range of seniors supportive housing projects. At the same time, it is recognized that there will be negotiations regarding space, amenities and other elements for each specific project.

## Considerations

Although the guidelines have not yet been fully implemented, some potential concerns have been identified by stakeholders. These include concern that the parking standards are too high, that the requirements are not economically viable, and that the emergency and safety requirements are onerous. There is also concern about the requirement that there be on-site response to calls 24 hours a day. However, this feature has been identified by consumers as the most highly desired feature,

and City staff have noted that this component often offers a sales advantage. During the development of the guidelines, the decision to not require in suite kitchen facilities was not an issue.

The intent of the guidelines is to define the minimum standard for ensuring livability. From the perspective of City staff, the greatest potential risk of the guidelines is that they will become the standard instead of the minimum required.

It is also recognized that in general the regulations and guidelines compromise affordability. Affordability was a significant consideration in the development of the guidelines; however, the guidelines cannot enhance affordability, other than through the relaxation of certain requirements, for example, parking.

City staff are also concerned that there is a difficult challenge in ensuring the “livability” of projects. There is recognition that affordability, project viability, and a project in which seniors can live comfortably and safely are often competing objectives. Additionally, most of the projects which have been, or are being, developed, are rezonings in which the increase in density results in a significant increase in land value. This is used as part of the negotiations.

Staff recognize the importance of monitoring the implementation of the guidelines to identify changes that may be required. The challenges are likely to be the same as those addressed in developing the guidelines: “what is congregate housing?”, “what is it not?”, and “who is going to live there?”. The emerging trends in long term care, particularly toward assisted living and projects that are substitutionary models for licensed care facilities is likely to impact on the City’s planning and policies regarding “housing” and “institutional” uses.

## *City of North Vancouver- Adaptable Design Guidelines*

### Overview

Like Burnaby and Vancouver, the guidelines were ultimately developed as an outcome of questions arising from a development submission. However, unlike the other two municipalities, the adaptable design guidelines in the City of North Vancouver were initiated with the goal of creating housing that could accommodate people in wheelchairs, rather than with the goal of providing supportive housing for seniors.

The process began in North Vancouver when a developer submitted a proposal which included giving one unit for a person with a disability to a non-profit organization. Staff researched the need and identified that most organizations required clusters of units in order to provide support. The process of addressing the submission and researching need increased Council awareness and staff proposed further development of guidelines and policies related to appropriate housing for people with disabilities. The initial objective was to target people with disabilities, although during the process the importance of aging-in-place was recognized. The term used by City staff is “accommodating environments”.

The guidelines were developed using a working group of stakeholders, including development sector representatives (architect, designer, developer). The initial guidelines were implemented for a trial period in 1997. In 1998 the guidelines were adopted as a City policy. The advisory committee has continued to guide the implementation of the guidelines, including a major review conducted in 2000. The fall 2000 version included clarification and simplification of some specific components. “Housekeeping” changes were made in 2001.

### Key Features

**Three Levels:** The guidelines comprise three “levels” of specifications:

- Level I is essentially consistent with existing Building Code requirements and is required in all multiple unit buildings with common corridors;
- Level II is intended to allow someone using mobility aids to get in and out of the building, common areas and to visit and use the bathroom of a Level II unit. Level II is required in 20% of all multiple units with common corridors constructed in the Lower Lonsdale area.
- Level III is intended to provide a fully adaptable unit for persons with moderate levels of physical impairment, with some elements supporting those with sight and hearing difficulties. The amount of

Level II and III units required in specific projects is negotiated during project planning and development phases.

**“Accommodating Environments”**: While the guidelines do not address seniors supportive housing specifically, Level III has been required for all units in a recent supportive housing development. As previously noted, the guidelines were intended to enhance accessibility and adaptability of units and to provide accommodating environments for a range of needs, including aging in place. The design guidelines are intended to be for self-contained independent living units.

**Format**: The guideline format is a checklist with accompanying diagrams to illustrate design concepts. The checklists include design elements and fixtures and finishes. The City has also produced separate guidelines pertaining to sites suitable for seniors housing.

**Key Provisions**: From the perspective of those involved in developing the guidelines, the most critical provisions are barrier free access from the parking to the common areas of the building, all of the building circulation, including access into units (applies to all three levels), and use of the bathrooms (Levels II and III only).

**No Provision for Supports**: Because the guidelines are not specifically for supportive housing, there are no guideline provisions pertaining to common support spaces or services, or to the provision of minimum unit components (such as the required provision of kitchenettes, three piece bathrooms or other features). Any project which is seniors supportive housing is automatically required to meet the Level III guidelines.

**No Minimum Unit Size**: The guidelines do not specify minimum unit sizes; however there are diagrams of sample units, and staff indicate that for a one bedroom unit the appropriate size is approximately 60m<sup>2</sup> (650 square feet) to 56m<sup>2</sup> (600 square feet) if the design achieves optimal efficiency.

## Planning and Implementation

As previously noted, the process of developing the guidelines included a working group of stakeholders and extensive industry consultation. Staff describe the process as beginning with a clear premise and intent. At the outset, they determined what was happening in the community, what initiatives might achieve the greatest success, and defined the desired outcomes. The strategy was based on ensuring the fairness and viability of the initiative. Staff worked to ensure that the outcome was achievable and flexible, and did not simply create additional “red tape”.

The planner responsible for the initiative emphasized a consultative and inclusive approach, with the philosophy that the key to success was to get “buy-in”. There was no significant concern or resistance when the guidelines were initially introduced, and stakeholder support has increased with experience.

Two specific factors contributed to overcoming resistance and securing support:

-Firstly, at the outset, it was determined that an incremental approach would be most appropriate. Therefore, rather than attempting to address all housing forms, the initiative focused on multiple unit buildings with common corridors;

-Secondly, the process and resulting guidelines were clearly and consistently identified as a working document and the process explicitly included reviews following implementation, and incremental revision based on experience.

The guidelines were implemented for a trial period in 1997 and then adopted in 1998, following successful completion of the initial implementation. In 2000 the guidelines were extensively revised. The revisions included clarification of many items, in some cases making the guideline more explicit and prescriptive; deletion of some items (for example items that were included in the Building Code or items that conflicted with the Building Code), and shifting some items to better differentiate between the three levels. Based on experience and feedback, it was determined that Level II and Level III were too similar. Therefore several items were moved up from Level II to Level III so that Level III now clearly represents a larger, more costly and more accessible unit. Clarifications included the provision of both metric and Imperial measures, provision of sample drawings to illustrate design concepts and alternative solutions, and specification of dimensions and measures for some essential guidelines (such as the location of the toilet and clearance at the tub).

The guidelines function as a stand-alone document. In the City of North Vancouver, Comprehensive Development (CD) zoning is used for all new projects because it provides planners with greater flexibility. It is this zoning in conjunction with the guidelines, that is the basis for project specific negotiations regarding the proportion of units of each Level (I, II or III) and any other provisions that are in addition to the basic requirements.

## Considerations

Affordability was a consideration in developing both the initiative and the guidelines themselves. With regard to the initiative, the objective was to create a housing stock that could be more easily adapted, thus reducing the long term costs associated with retrofitting. The intent is that the cost of the unit is cheaper over the lifespan. It was recognized that there was an immediate negative impact on affordability associated with the guidelines. The biggest impact is the floor area required to meet the criteria, and the cost for the fixtures. In order to minimize the cost impact, the guidelines attempted to identify affordable solutions. For example, the doors on a hallway closet could be removed to create a turning radius at the door. Or, instead of wide hallways, doors could be recessed from the corridor to create a turning radius at each door.

Experience has confirmed that there is a need for review and revision as the guidelines were implemented and as developers, designers and municipal staff gained experience. And there is increasing interest in, and support for, the guidelines, with some developments including additional features. In the long term, it is felt that the initiative will make a significant difference in housing choices that are available, especially for people with disabilities and people who are aging and needing some adaptations to the home. The accommodating environments provided by adaptable design will also enable residents to remain in their homes as their abilities change, providing social sustainability.



## ***Comparison of Municipal Approaches***

In comparing the policies and approaches for Burnaby, Vancouver and the City of North Vancouver, there are common themes and issues among the three municipal initiatives. Exploring these themes provides an opportunity for Richmond to identify and address common issues and concerns that may arise in the development and implementation of design guidelines for affordable seniors supportive housing.

The topics identified include:

- Definition of Scope
- Role of Guidelines
- Implementation of Guidelines
- Affordability
- Supports
- Accessibility and Aging in Place
- Risks

### **Definition of Scope**

Both the process of developing and implementing guidelines, and the scope of building types impacted by the guidelines need to be defined. An inclusive and consultative process with defined outcomes is critical to successful implementation.

Richmond has already addressed both of these at least partially with the establishment of an Advisory Committee to address the topic of affordable seniors supportive housing, which includes consumer and industry stakeholders, and the completion of the report, *Affordable Seniors Supportive Housing*.

It is recommended that, once the guidelines have been defined, a formal strategy for implementation be adopted. This should include a consultative process for review and revision of the guidelines following initial implementation and experience with several projects.

It is recommended that the definition of affordable seniors supportive housing from the report, *Affordable Seniors Supportive Housing*, be incorporated with the guidelines to define their applicability to housing types.

## Role of Guidelines

The primary advantage of the guidelines is that, from the perspective of the municipality and the planning staff, it formalizes and standardizes the process. It also provides a common and consistent basis for the development and design of projects. This is important because of the range of housing types, support models, and program costs. Other municipalities found that without clear expectations from the municipality in the form of guidelines, they would receive widely divergent submissions. And all submissions claimed to need the same exemptions and relaxations in order to make the project viable. Staff in other municipalities found that it was difficult to effectively evaluate submissions or negotiate on a project specific basis without any common basis or comparison between projects.

### Recommendation:

It is recommended that the guidelines apply to all seniors supportive housing, regardless of housing type, scale, cost, type of operator (private or non-profit) or other factors.

## Implementation of Guidelines

While there is value in the guidelines providing a consistent framework, it was also recognized by all municipalities that the implementation of the guidelines must be flexible. The guidelines serve as a policy to guide decisions, but experience has shown that in order to meet competing objectives, compromises will often be required. Generally, the application of the guidelines is not rigid and the specific provisions are negotiated for each project.

### Recommendation:

It is recommended that Richmond adopt their guidelines in a format that allows for flexibility and negotiation for each project, and that the guidelines be implemented in a compatible development process, such as CD (comprehensive development) zoning, “conditional use” designation, with “equivalencies”, or other approaches that permit development flexibility and discretionary decision making.

At the same time, it is recognized that there must be some basic provisions which are required, and without which the definition of seniors supportive housing will not be met.

## Affordability

Other municipalities acknowledged affordability to be both a significant concern and a difficult issue to address. The affordability gap is significant. There are strategies, such as those identified below, and municipalities can contribute to the planning, development and affordability of seniors supportive housing. However, it is difficult to provide the resources at the municipal level to ensure affordability for seniors with the lowest incomes. To meet this need, funding is required from significant fundraising initiatives, regional health authorities, and/or senior levels of government for the costs of shelter or support.

In terms of design guidelines, affordability translated into balancing project viability (in terms of capital and operating costs) with livability, particularly unit size and the provision of appropriate supports. Affordability is one of the key reasons why flexibility and negotiation are required in implementing the guidelines.

Specific strategies to address affordability include:

- Land costs: Provision of land at a reduced or zero capital cost because sites were re-developed by existing owners (such as the Baptist Housing Society at Shannon Oaks, Salvation Army at Southview Terrace and private landowners). The site tours included several projects in which projects were built on sites that were being redeveloped, which means that the land cost was zero. Some projects were planned with affordability as a goal. In all cases, even with free land, the capital and operating costs were too high to create a project that was affordable to seniors with the lowest incomes.
- Subsidies: Provision of subsidies for some units. For example, Cavell Gardens has SAFER (Shelter Aid for Elderly Residents) subsidies for five units; this provision has been included in a Housing Agreement with the City of Vancouver in lieu of the Community Amenity Contribution payment.
- Tenure Options: Tenure options can also contribute to affordability. Many of these were described in the previous report, *Affordable Seniors Supportive Housing*. To summarize, these include land acquired on a leasehold basis, units sold with restrictive covenants that limit the increase in land value, life leases, and rental including subsidized rental.
- Unit Size: Provision of smaller units. Experience to date has shown that smaller unit sizes are the most common solution to increasing affordability. However, it is also recognized that adequate private space is required for livability and to support aging in place. For example, in Vancouver some seniors supportive housing units are as small as 18.5m<sup>2</sup> (200 square feet) – this is smaller than a room in a licensed care facility. Seniors desire independence and privacy – if a unit is too

small, it will not meet the needs and desires of those who would be best suited to live there. Unit size is a key design issue, especially as it relates to providing the space and amenities to support independent functioning.

- **Mixed Use Building:** Provision of commercial space or market residential space that could be sold or rented to offset the capital or operating costs. Of the sites toured, there were no examples of this model. One successful example is the re-development of a VanCity credit union site in Vancouver, with a new credit union on the ground floor and social housing above.
- **Shared Facilities:** Co-location of programs to provide operational efficiencies. For example, Southview Terrace seniors supportive housing has a kitchen and dining room shared with the adjoining seniors lodge. There are also shared common rooms and administrative spaces. One potentially compatible shared use would be a respite program for seniors living at home to come for short stays (several days to two weeks) for respite or convalescence. This is suitable because it is a seniors population, this program does not integrate well within long term care settings, these types of resources are an identified need and they are costly for the same reasons: 24 hour staffing and meal service are required.
- **Flexibility:** Relaxation of municipal requirements. Parking has particularly been identified as a capital cost that is relatively significant and which tends to be underutilized in seniors supportive housing projects. Discussions with design professionals and with operators of seniors supportive housing confirm that the parking requirements for standard multiple unit buildings are significantly in excess of that required for seniors supportive housing.

## Supports

The guidelines in Burnaby and Vancouver both specify the provision of supports in their definitions of supportive housing. In Vancouver, the supports are specified in the amended zoning definition and in additional regulations. Both Burnaby and Vancouver also use housing agreements. There is no provision for supports in the guidelines for the City of North Vancouver, but these guidelines are not specifically for seniors supportive housing. As noted by one planner, the provision of supports is required, because without them, the project is just “housing”, yet it has been planned and designed, often with concessions such as unit sizes, that would not be accepted for simple “housing” only projects.

The greatest concern from stakeholders has been the requirement for 24 hour on-site emergency call response. It is a costly operating budget item and therefore one that is potentially at risk of being compromised. Yet this is also the feature rated as most desired and needed by potential residents.

Overall, given the information obtained from planners, developers, and site tours, it is clear that the provision of supports is critical to the success of the project in providing an environment that meets residents' needs and supports aging-in-place. Given that the design guidelines are based on a model of accommodation that includes both housing and supports, it is reasonable to include some requirements pertaining to supports in the definition and design guidelines for seniors supportive housing.

## Accessibility and Aging in Place

Based on discussions and observations, the trend is clearly toward an older age at the time of assuming residence. On average, tenants of seniors supportive housing are in their eighties. In most cases, tenants seemed to be able to age in place without requiring a move to higher levels of care (although this may be due to all projects being relatively new).

Mobility and accessibility are particularly salient with regard to design guidelines. It was noted that most residents are ambulatory, although some use walkers and scooters. Most projects reported an increased use of scooters. Very few residents were dependent on wheelchairs. With a geriatric population, permanently impaired mobility, requiring a wheelchair, is generally associated with a loss of capacity to care for one's self independently. Most seniors using a wheelchair will require assistance with activities of daily living, and possibly with mobility. In these cases, a senior would probably be unable to manage with the limited supports of seniors supportive housing. This is an important distinction to make in planning design guidelines for a seniors population because design guidelines for wheelchair accessibility make provision for turning radii and other features that are based on independent mobility and functioning.

## Risks

From the perspective of the municipality, there are potential risks associated with establishing guidelines and with negotiating seniors supportive housing projects. Risks identified by other municipal planners include:

- That guidelines specifying minimum requirements become the norm (as opposed to a minimum).
- That the process of evaluating specific projects and negotiating compromises is difficult to implement with fairness, consistency and transparency.
- That, in specifying support requirements (for example, in a Housing Agreement), the municipality may potentially be required to address any cases of non-compliance.
- That seniors supportive housing projects may evolve to assisted living or other substitutionary models for licensed care settings. There are concerns that regulatory responsibilities typically covered by licensing may devolve to the municipal level. Additionally, current design guidelines

are predicated on supportive housing as a “housing” use, not “institutional” use, which has more stringent fire and life safety requirements.

## **PART II – DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR RICHMOND**

### ***1.0 Neighbourhood***

- 1.1 Seniors supportive housing projects should be located in an area that is safe, attractive and provides access to community amenities including transit, shopping, services, parks and recreation and social activities.

Once a specific project site has been selected, surrounding walking routes in the immediate area should be assessed to determine if there are any hazards such as narrow sidewalks, unmarked crosswalks, inadequate lighting or other environmental factors which could be mitigated to improve seniors' independence and mobility.

- 1.2 Seniors supportive housing projects should be located where they are compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood. The area should include residential housing, and may also include shopping, services and other community amenities. The seniors supportive housing should be integrated into the surrounding neighbourhood, and impacts caused by the project such as vehicle traffic, servicing, parking demands, and scale and character of development should be considered.

### ***2.0 Building Form***

- 2.1 The building form should be residential (as opposed to institutional) in character, density and scale, and should be compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood.
- 2.2 The building form should be consistent with the goals of accessibility and aging in place.
- 2.3 Outdoor corridors are not acceptable.

### 3.0 Access

**Note:** *These guidelines are minimal required provisions. Additional provisions may be made to further enhance accessibility within the unit and throughout the building.*

3.1 Safe, convenient and comfortable access is required for pedestrian and vehicular circulation between the building and the street. Provisions are to include:

- a) Automatic doors at the building entrance, with security system including monitoring capacity.
- b) Weather protection at entrance to maintain comfort in the lobby and waiting areas at the entrance.
- c) Seating within the building which allows visual surveillance of the entry area so that residents can comfortably wait to be picked up by a car or taxi.
- d) A covered portico at the passenger pick up/drop off area. This area is to be located at or near the front entrance if possible.
- e) A continuous and level walkway, suitable for walking, scooters and wheelchairs, from the building entrance to the public sidewalk. The walkway is to be separated from vehicle circulation, or, as a minimum alternative, be delineated as a defined walkway (for example, with contrasting paving).
- r) Lighting along pathways and at the approach and entrance to the building.
- g) Designated wheelchair accessible short term parking near the main building entrance.
- h) Stairways should be avoided, and a ramp is required adjacent to stairways where feasible.
- i) Enterphones and signage should have large scale buttons and large scale, high contrast lettering and numbering. Enterphones are to be located to facilitate access and use by persons in wheelchairs.



## ***4.0 Design Features to Support Aging in Place***

***Note:*** *These guidelines are minimal required provisions. Additional provisions may be made to further enhance accessibility within the unit and throughout the building.*

4.1 Circulation space throughout the common areas should comfortably accommodate persons using walkers, canes, or wheelchairs. Specifically, provisions include but are not necessarily limited to:

- a) All common corridors and circulation routes are required to provide a clear width of 1500 mm (5').
- b) All doorways are required to provide a clear opening of not less than 915 mm (3').
- c) For any change in level that requires stairs, an elevator must also be provided.
- d) A minimum of two elevators is required for any building that is greater than one storey and has 30 units or more located above the ground floor.
- e) If there is a parking level, a minimum of one elevator is required to provide access to that level.
- f) At least one elevator is required to accommodate a stretcher in a prone position and provide a 1500 mm (5') wheelchair turning radius.
- g) Fire doors are required to be on magnetic holdbacks, with no doorframe in the centre of the doors.

4.2 The residential units should comfortably accommodate persons using walkers, canes, or wheelchairs. Specifically, provisions include but are not necessarily limited to:

- a) An electrical box above the unit entrance, to provide wiring for the potential future installation of a power door opener.
- b) Lever handles on all doors.
- c) Large, offset lever style deadbolts for unit entrance and any balcony or patio doors.
- d) Each unit is required to have individual control for heating and ventilation.
- e) Ceiling light fixtures in all rooms.

- f) A light fixture in all bedroom closets.
- g) A three way switch next to the bed in the bedroom.
- h) “D” type handles on all cupboards, drawers and any pocket (sliding) doors.
- i) Window hardware that is of a lever type, with the hardware located no higher than 1 200 mm (4’) above the floor. Window placement and hardware must ensure that the window is easy to reach and to open and close.
- j) All doorways within the unit are required to provide a clear opening of not less than 800 mm (2’ 10”).
- k) If outdoor patio or deck space is provided, the access must be a swing door, not a sliding patio door. The doorway must have a flush or bevelled threshold.
- l) Unit bathrooms are required include the following features:
  - a toilet with grab bars along the adjacent wall.
  - a counter with a sink. Storage drawers (not cupboards) are to be provided below the counter. The counter must also provide full clearance below the sink to allow a person seated in a wheelchair to use the sink.
  - A shower stall with a telephone style showerhead and a modular seat is required. (The shower stall does not need to be large enough to accommodate a commode chair.) Grab bars are required within the shower stall. Vertical grab bars are required at the front edge of the shower stall at both ends.
  - Lever style faucets at the sink and in the shower.
  - A heat lamp.
  - Grab bars to be used as towel rails (do not install standard towel rails).

4.3 Provision should be made in both common areas and within residential units to accommodate individuals with impairments of reach, strength, dexterity, balance and vision. Specifically, provisions include but are not necessarily limited to:

- a) All electrical outlets are required to be located a minimum of 450 mm (18") above the floor.
- b) All switches and thermostats are required to be located a minimum of 1100 mm (3' 6") above the floor.
- c) Rocker type switchplates are required for all light switches.
- d) Thresholds should be flush to the greatest extent possible. Thresholds that are not flush must be bevelled and cannot exceed 13 mm (1/2"). Particular attention should be paid to changes in flooring, and doorways.
- e) Elevator controls should be designed for accessibility and legibility for the visually impaired.

## 5.0 Private Space

**Note:** *These guidelines are minimal required provisions. Additional provisions may be made to further enhance accessibility within the unit.*

5.1 Private residential units must be fully self-contained and sufficiently large to provide comfortable, appropriate and accessible accommodation. The minimum unit size is 38m<sup>2</sup> (410 square feet).

In addition to the minimum unit size, each unit is required to provide:

- 1 500 mm (5') wheelchair turning radius on the inside of the unit entrance
- clearance on the latch side of all doorways: 300 mm (1') for doors that swing away, and 600 mm (2') for doors that swing toward the person
- 1 500 mm (5') turning radius in the bedroom/sleeping area, with a single bed
- 1 500 mm (5') turning radius in the kitchenette area (without resident furniture)
- 1 500 mm (5') turning radius in the living room area (without resident furniture)

5.2 Each unit is required to have a three piece bathroom as per 4.2(l). Additionally, the bathroom must provide the following clearances:

- a 1 500 mm (5') turning radius, this may include clearance below the vanity;
- a total clear area around the toilet of not less than 1500 mm (5') deep from the wall behind the toilet; and a 900 mm (35") wide; and,
- a clear floor area of not less than 750 mm (30") in front of the shower stall. The flooring must be of a slip resistant type.

5.3 Each unit is required to include a kitchenette with, at a minimum, the following:

- Cabinetry above and below the counter. Provide drawers for cabinetry below the counter and cupboards for cabinetry above the counter.
- Not less than 1000 mm of clear, continuous counterspace, excluding the sink. Provide appropriately located electrical outlets for a toaster oven, coffee maker and other appliances.
- A sink with a single, lever style handle.
- A small refrigerator, with a separate, frost free freezer compartment. The refrigerator must be mounted on a cabinetry base to reduce bending and reaching.

- A wall mounted microwave oven located not more than 1 400 mm above the floor.

5.4 For all units, provide not less than a total of 2.3m<sup>2</sup> (25 sq. ft.) of storage area(s), including closets.

5.5 For all units, provide either a bedroom or an alcove sleeping area.

## **6.0 Common Areas and Amenities**

6.1 Provide common amenity areas, for the use of residents, of not less than 4.0m<sup>2</sup> (43 square feet) per unit. Amenity areas should include sitting rooms and social areas. Other amenities that may be considered include a private dining room for family visits, library, computer room, hair salon, exercise facilities, guest suite, family kitchen, “spa” tub room or other amenities for the use and enjoyment of residents.

6.2 Consideration should be given to the provision of space for on-site or visiting health care professionals. It is recommended that space be provided for an enclosed office for nursing or other health care staff use. Space for a multipurpose assessment/treatment area (such as podiatry clinics, rehab assessment and treatment, or other clinic type services) should also be considered. (This space is in addition to the 4.0m<sup>2</sup>/unit allocation above.)

6.3 Provide a dining room that seats all residents at a single sitting. Provide not less than 1.5m<sup>2</sup>/person (16 square feet). (This area is included in the total of 4.0m<sup>2</sup> per unit.)

6.4 Provide single occupancy, wheelchair accessible washrooms in common areas – not less than two on the same floor as the dining room.

6.5 A commercial kitchen for on-site meal preparation is required, unless the seniors supportive housing is co-located with existing kitchen facilities.

6.6 Provide common laundry facilities for residents.

6.7 Adequate, accessible, outdoor garden and patio space is required for residents’ access and use.

6.8 On-site parking is required.

- Provide not less than 0.20 parking spaces per unit for residents and staff (or 1:5 ratio – one parking stall per five units) excluding visitor parking.

- Wheelchair access to the parking area is required.

6.9 Provide 0.25 storage spaces per unit (or one per 4 units) for scooter storage and charging.

- Scooter storage is to be wheelchair accessible and located in or adjacent to the parking area.
- The storage area must be secure, ventilated and protected from weather.

6.10 Additional common storage space is required for residents' use.

## ***7.0 Safety Features***

7.1 Provide visual fire alarms, in addition to audible alarms in common areas.

7.2 Provide a fire and emergency alarm system that allows for public address.

7.3 Provide a fire safety and evacuation plan that includes staff accounting for any residents who are missing, and providing assistance and direction to emergency personnel as required.

7.4 Provision of emergency power for all lighting, heat, at least one building elevator, and for the emergency call system. Provision for power for at least 24 hours is required.

7.5 Provision of emergency lighting levels of 100 lux.

7.6 Provide refuge areas to accommodate residents who are able to evacuate their suites but unable to safely negotiate the stairs.

## ***8.0 Program of Supports***

8.1 A formal plan for the provision of supports must be included in submissions to the City and should be defined in a Housing Agreement between the City and the project operator.

Seniors supportive housing is to provide at a minimum:

- an emergency call system with 24 hour on-site response
- at least one meal per day, prepared on site
- weekly housekeeping in residents' units
- weekly laundry service for sheets and towels, including changing bed sheets for residents
- social and recreational activities

**APPENDIX A – CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER ADAPTABLE DESIGN GUIDELINES**

# ADAPTABLE DESIGN GUIDELINES

## DESIGN ELEMENTS

	LEVEL ONE	LEVEL TWO	LEVEL THREE
<b>BUILDING ACCESS</b>	Outside stairs – maximum degree of colour contrast on nosing of each stair	Outside stairs – maximum degree of colour contrast on nosing of each stair	Outside stairs – maximum degree of colour contrast on nosing of each stair
<b>BUILDING ACCESS</b>	Curb cuts have tactile and visual cues	Curb cuts have tactile and visual cues	Curb cuts have tactile and visual cues
<b>BUILDING ACCESS</b>	Unobstructed access to main building entrances from street/sidewalks	Unobstructed access to main building entrances from street/sidewalks	Unobstructed access to main building entrances from street/sidewalks
<b>BUILDING ACCESS</b>	Unobstructed access from parking levels containing accessible parking (5' or 1520mm corridors; 2' or 610mm clear wall space adjacent to door latch) *	Unobstructed internal access: - from parking levels containing accessible parking (5' or 1520mm corridors; 2' or 610mm clear wall space adjacent to door latch) * - garbage and recycling receptacles and storage lockers	Unobstructed internal access: - from parking levels containing accessible parking (5' or 1520mm corridors; 2' or 610mm clear wall space adjacent to door latch) * - garbage and recycling receptacles and storage lockers
<b>BUILDING ACCESS</b>	Canopy over main building entrances (3' or 915mm or 3' x 915mm) and enterphone	Canopy over main building entrances (3' or 915mm or 3' x 915mm) and enterphone	Canopy over main building entrances (3' or 915mm or 3' x 915mm) and enterphone
<b>BUILDING ACCESS</b>	Provide wiring for automatic door opener for building entry door	Provide automatic door opener for building entry door	Provide automatic door opener for building entry door
<b>BUILDING ACCESS</b>	One accessible parking stall per 25 or less required stalls up to 50 unit buildings, and one additional stall for every 50 parking stalls in building with more than 50 units	Two accessible parking stalls per 25 or less required stalls up to 50 unit buildings, and two additional stalls for every 50 parking stalls in building with more than 50 units	Two accessible parking stalls per 25 or less required stalls up to 50 unit buildings, and two additional stalls for every 50 parking stalls in building with more than 50 units
<b>BUILDING ACCESS</b>	2'8" or 800mm building and suite entry doors	3' or 915mm building and suite entry doors	3' or 915mm building and suite entry doors
<b>BUILDING ACCESS</b>	Flush thresholds throughout the building (maximum ½" or 13mm height)	Flush thresholds throughout the building (maximum ½" or 13mm height)	Flush thresholds throughout the building (maximum ½" or 13mm height)
<b>BUILDING ACCESS</b>	Accessible building enterphone, call buttons and, where provided, suite door bells *	Accessible building enterphone, call buttons and, where provided, suite door bells *	Accessible building enterphone, call buttons and, where provided, suite door bells *

\* Illustrations available  
 \*\* Options considered

333



# DESIGN ELEMENTS

	LEVEL ONE	LEVEL TWO	LEVEL THREE
CIRCULATION	Corridors minimum 4' or 1220mm wide (except for service access areas) *	Corridors minimum 4' or 1220mm wide (except for service access areas) *	Corridors minimum 4' or 1220mm wide (except for service access areas) *
CIRCULATION		Provide 5' or 1520mm turning radius inside and outside the entry corridor of each dwelling unit *	Provide 5' or 1520mm turning radius inside and outside the entry corridor of each dwelling unit *
BUILDING & UNIT CIRCULATION		Provide automatic door opener or 2' or 610mm clear wall space adjacent to door latch where door swings toward user (entry doors, bathroom, bedrooms, patio / balcony, storage) *	Provide automatic door opener or 2' or 610mm clear wall space adjacent to door latch where door swings toward user (entry doors, bathroom, bedrooms, patio / balcony, storage) *
COMMON AREAS		Accessible mailboxes for all AD Level 2 units, and 5' or 1520mm turning radius in front *	Accessible mailboxes for all AD Level 3 units, and 5' or 1520mm turning radius in front *
DOORS		Interior doors 2'10" or 860mm clear opening	Interior doors 2'10" or 860mm clear opening
DOORS		Pocket doors in small spaces (provide 2'10" or 860mm clear opening; heavy duty, double-guided hardware and D-handle) *	Pocket doors in small spaces (provide 2'10" or 860mm clear opening; heavy duty, double-guided hardware and D-handle) *
PATIOS & BALCONIES		Minimum 860mm or 2'10 clear door opening	Minimum 860mm or 2'10 clear door opening
PATIOS & BALCONIES		Balcony doorsill level with suite floor level and sloped threshold no higher than ½" or 13mm **	Balcony doorsill level with suite floor level and sloped threshold no higher than ½" or 13mm **
PATIOS & BALCONIES		Minimum 5' or 1520mm turning radius on patio / balcony	Minimum 5' or 1520mm turning radius on patio / balcony
WINDOWS		Opening mechanism maximum 46" or 1168mm above floor (provide notation on window schedule)	Opening mechanism maximum 46" or 1168mm above floor (provide notation on window schedule)
WINDOWS		Sills maximum 2'6" or 750mm above floor	Sills maximum 2'6" or 750mm above floor
KITCHEN		Continuous counter between stove and sink *	Continuous counter between stove and sink *
KITCHEN			Sink cabinet minimum 2'8" or 810mm wide.
KITCHEN			Provide sufficient space for future installation of cooktop and wall oven.
KITCHEN			Adjustable height work space minimum 2'8" or 810mm wide.
KITCHEN			Lower edge of upper cupboards 4'6" or 1350mm above floor

**Design Elements**  
June 2001

\* Illustrations available  
\*\* Options considered

# DESIGN ELEMENTS

KITCHEN			Minimum 4' or 1220mm floor space between base cabinets / walls (possible with removal of sink cabinet) *
MIN. ONE BATHROOM		Toilet located adjacent to wall (min 3' or 915mm length) *	Toilet located adjacent to wall (min 4'6" or 1370mm length) *
MIN. ONE BATHROOM		Provide turning radius within bathroom (may result from removal of vanity cabinet) *	Provide turning radius within bathroom (may result from removal of vanity cabinet) *
MIN. ONE BATHROOM		3' or 915mm clearance along full length of tub *	3' or 915mm clearance along full length of tub *
MIN. ONE BATHROOM		Tub control valve placed at outer edge of tub, with tub spout remaining in central position *	Tub control valve placed at outer edge of tub, with tub spout remaining in central position *
MIN. ONE BATHROOM		Accessible storage *	Accessible storage *
MIN. ONE BATHROOM			Provide door swing out, or pocket door *
MIN. ONE BATHROOM			Space under sink minimum 2'8" or 810mm wide *
MIN. ONE BATHROOM			Provide for future installation of shower accessible to wheelchair user (maximum 1/2" or 13mm threshold) *
MIN. ONE BEDROOM			Sufficient maneuvering room between closet and double bed *
MIN. ONE BEDROOM			Provide 3' or 915mm access to window opening *
LAUNDRY FACILITIES			Provide front loading side-by-side washer / dryer in-suite or in common area
LAUNDRY FACILITIES			4' or 1220mm maneuvering space in front of washer / dryer

## ADAPTABLE DESIGN GUIDELINES FIXTURES AND FINISHES

	LEVEL ONE	LEVEL TWO	LEVEL THREE
BASIC	Easy to read building address numbers (min. 4" or 100mm high in contrasting colours)	Easy to read building address numbers (min. 4" or 100mm high in contrasting colours)	Easy to read building address numbers (min. 4" or 100mm high in contrasting colours)
BASIC	Good lighting outside and inside main building entries and unit entries (min. 80 lux)	Good lighting outside and inside main building entries and unit entries (min. 80 lux)	Good lighting outside and inside main building entries and unit entries (min. 80 lux)
BASIC	No polished finish on building entry flooring	No polished finish on building entry flooring	No polished finish on building entry flooring
BASIC	Lever door handles on all doors (provide notation on door schedule)	Lever door handles on all doors (provide notation on door schedule)	Lever door handles on all doors (provide notation on door schedule)
BASIC	Signage throughout common areas has well contrasted colours	Signage throughout common areas has well contrasted colours	Signage throughout common areas has well contrasted colours
BASIC	Elevators have well contrasted control buttons	Elevators have well contrasted control buttons	Elevators have well contrasted control buttons
BASIC	Duplex outlets beside telephone jacks	Duplex outlets beside telephone jacks	Duplex outlets beside telephone jacks
BUILDING ENTRY		Provision of wiring for automatic door	Provision of wiring for automatic door
CIRCULATION		Slip resistant flooring	Slip resistant flooring
CIRCULATION		Colour contrasting exit doors	Colour contrasting exit doors
EMERGENCY PROVISIONS		Provision for visual alarm signal to be tied into fire alarm system	Provision for visual alarm signal to be tied into fire alarm system
COMMON ROOM(S)		Provide carpet and drapes to absorb sound and lessen echoes	Provide carpet and drapes to absorb sound and lessen echoes

• Illustrations available

Fixtures and Finishes  
June 2001

S:\Adaptable Design\Guidelines\Fixtures&Finishes-2000.doc

# FIXTURES & FINISHES

	LEVEL ONE	LEVEL TWO	LEVEL THREE
KITCHEN		Task lighting at sink, stove and work areas	Task lighting at sink, stove and work areas
KITCHEN		Pull-out work boards at 2'8" or 810mm height *	Pull-out work boards at 2'8" or 810mm height *
KITCHEN		Lever handle faucets and "D" cabinet handles	Lever handle faucets and "D" cabinet handles
KITCHEN		Adjustable shelves in all cabinets	Adjustable shelves in all cabinets
KITCHEN			Drawer storage in key areas*
KITCHEN			Provision for removal of sink cabinet and lowering of counter height
KITCHEN			Provision for plumbing services to adjust to 4" or 100mm drop in sink height (offset plumbing)
KITCHEN			Some electrical switches and outlets provided at front of counters
KITCHEN			Where regular refrigerator installed initially, provide adequate space for side by side model
KITCHEN			Contrasting knobs on stove / cook top
MIN. ONE BATHROOM	Solid blocking provided in walls of tub / shower and toilet areas, and behind towel bars *	Solid blocking provided in walls of tub / shower and toilet areas, and behind towel bars *	Solid blocking provided in walls of tub / shower and toilet areas, and behind towel bars *
MIN. ONE BATHROOM	Pressure balanced tub / shower valves	Pressure balanced tub / shower valves	Pressure balanced tub / shower valves
MIN. ONE BATHROOM		Offset plumbing for vanity	Offset plumbing for vanity
MIN. ONE BATHROOM		Provision for vanity sink removal	Provision for vanity sink removal
MIN. ONE BATHROOM		Adjustable height shower head or hand-held shower head on adjustable bracket*	Adjustable height shower head or hand-held shower head on adjustable bracket *
MIN. ONE BATHROOM			Water temperature regulator on tub / shower faucet
LIVING ROOM		One switched electrical outlet	One switched electrical outlet
BEDROOMS		Three-way switched outlet at bed area and doorway	Three-way switched outlet at bed area and doorway
BEDROOMS		Light fixture above closet	Light fixture above closet
BEDROOMS	Telephone jack	Telephone jack	Telephone jack
IN-SUITE STORAGE		Light and electrical outlet provided	Light and electrical outlet provided

\* Illustrations available

- 3 -

**Fixtures and Finishes**  
June 2001

# FIXTURES & FINISHES

	LEVEL ONE	LEVEL TWO	LEVEL THREE
UNIT ENTRIES		Adjustable door closures to reduce force to open door to maximum 22N or 5 lbs.	Adjustable door closures to reduce force to open door to maximum 22N or 5 lbs.
UNIT ENTRIES		Door handle @ 35" or 900mm to 39" or 990mm from floor with deadbolt immediately above	Door handle @ 35" or 900mm to 39" or 990mm from floor with deadbolt immediately above
UNIT ENTRIES			Two door viewers: 3'5" or 1050mm and 5' or 1520mm
UNIT FLOORING		Non-glare kitchen floors and slip-resistant bathroom flooring	Non-glare kitchen floors and slip-resistant bathroom flooring
UNIT FLOORING		High density, low level loop carpet and underlay maximum ½" or 13mm height	High density, low level loop carpet and underlay maximum ½" or 13mm height
PATIOS AND BALCONIES		Outdoor light fixture provided	Outdoor light fixture provided
PATIOS AND BALCONIES		Electrical outlet provided	Electrical outlet provided
ELECTRICAL		Switches and thermostats maximum 3'6" or 1,100mm above floor	Switches and thermostats maximum 3'6" or 1,100mm above floor
ELECTRICAL		Electrical outlets, cable outlets, telephone jacks not lower than 18" or 450mm above floor	Electrical outlets, cable outlets, telephone jacks not lower than 18" or 450mm above floor
ELECTRICAL		Three-way switches in unit circulation areas	Three-way switches in unit circulation areas
ELECTRICAL	Wiring for visual alarm system in living room and minimum one bedroom, connected to fire alarm system	Wiring for visual alarm system in living room and minimum one bedroom, connected to fire alarm system	Wiring for visual alarm system in living room and minimum one bedroom, connected to fire alarm system
ELECTRICAL		Rocker switches	Rocker switches
ELECTRICAL			Double bulb ceiling fixtures
ELECTRICAL			Provide wiring for automatic door opener and strike at unit entry
WINDOWS		Easily grasped and operated mechanism for opening and locking windows.	Easily grasped and operated mechanism for opening and locking windows.

\* Illustrations available

- 2 -

**Fixtures and Finishes**  
June 2001

S:\Adaptable Design\Guidelines\Fixtures&Finishes-2000.doc

**APPENDIX B – CITY OF BURNABY SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**

## Location and Design

### Guidelines for Supportive Housing

#### A) NEIGHBOURHOOD COMPATIBILITY

##### i. Building Form

- a. Where supportive housing is being considered through rezoning to Comprehensive Development District (based on R, RM or P5 District zone), the proposed development must conform to the pertinent maximum density of the zone and should conform to the pertinent bulk regulations (e.g. setbacks, height) of the zone.
- b. Supportive housing for seniors should, in general, be compatible in density, scale, architectural character and site layout with the surrounding neighbourhood. Supportive housing should be designed to look and function as a residential use. An institutional character should be avoided.

##### ii. Location Suitability for Seniors

Supportive housing should be located in areas in which seniors can safely and independently access needed services, facilities and activities off the site. Such areas should have:

- good access to public transit, shopping, community services and cultural facilities; and
- a comfortable walking environment, (e.g. sidewalks in good condition, crosswalks, walkways clearly marked and separated from vehicle traffic).

Areas with a steep slope should be avoided.

##### iii. Access

- a. Parking for persons with disabilities should be provided near an entrance. When provided at grade, there should be a covered drop-off area.
- b. Pedestrian access to the development should be safe, well lit, and designed to accommodate people with disabilities.
- c. Security lighting should be provided outside the building to illuminate pathways and access to the street.

B) INTERIOR LAYOUT

It is recommended that supportive housing proposals conform to the Homes B.C. *Supportive Seniors Housing Draft Design Guidelines* (available through the Planning & Building Department). The following highlights the essential principals to be achieved in supportive housing developments in Burnaby.

i. **Suitability for Aging in Place**

Residential unit size and design should provide for aging in place. All interior and exterior common areas must be accessible to persons with disabilities. All units shall be either wheelchair adaptable or wheelchair accessible.

ii. **Common Areas**

Common areas should be designed to foster the social interaction and activities that are key to successful supportive housing for seniors. They should be of sufficient size to allow residents to move around comfortably and engage in social activities. They should also have sufficient space to accommodate guests and visitors.

Dining Room and Kitchen

- a. To accommodate residents with mobility aids, and visitors, the minimum size of the dining room should be 2m<sup>2</sup> (21.5 sq.ft.) for each unit in the development. Requests for variation in this guideline should be accompanied by an operating plan, and access/circulation should be demonstrated.
- b. Fully wheelchair accessible washrooms should be located close to the dining room.
- c. The project should have an on-site kitchen which could be shared in cases where supportive housing for seniors is part of a larger complex.

Common Lounges or Rooms

The project should provide a minimum of 1.5m<sup>2</sup> (16 sq.ft.) per unit of common space on the main floor. One space to accommodate large gatherings is desirable; smaller common areas and single purpose rooms, like a library or billiard room, meeting room, television room, recreation room, chapel, are also encouraged.



# *HOMES BC*

*Building Homes for Healthy Communities —  
providing choices and creating jobs*

## **SUPPORTIVE SENIORS HOUSING DRAFT DESIGN GUIDELINES**

*(JULY 1999)*

TABLE OF CONTENT

1.	Location And Site .....	1
2.	Building Form.....	1
3.	Unit Mix.....	1
4.	Parking .....	2
5.	Approach To Building .....	2
6.	Public Entrance, Vestibule And Lobby .....	3
7.	Common Amenity Space / Garden .....	3
8.	Public Circulation .....	3
9.	Stairs, Elevators And Lifts .....	4
10.	Exits, Refuge Areas, And Emergency Alarms.....	4
11.	Laundry .....	5
12.	Garbage Disposal .....	5
13.	Unit Entry.....	5
14.	Living Room .....	6
15.	Unit Or Shared Kitchen .....	6
16.	Bedroom.....	7
17.	Bathroom.....	7
18.	Storage .....	8
19.	Interior Doors.....	8
20.	Windows .....	8
21.	Controls And Outlets .....	8
22.	Security And Alarms.....	9
23.	Heating And Cooling Systems.....	9
24.	Miscellaneous (Consider - Typical).....	9
25.	References.....	9

- It is anticipated that supportive housing units will have a range of accessible features. The *HOMES BC Standards* adaptable/accessible features, as well as other factors such as unit area, will be used as a reference to determine the percentage of the MUP increase, within the 6 - 12% range.

#### 4. Parking

- Adequate number of spaces for staff, visitor and residents
- Some stalls designed and designated for people with disabilities
- Some stalls designed for side load vans
- All parking to be adequately signed
- Designated disabled stalls in close proximity to main entrance
- Accessible, visible and secure path, free of obstacles from parking to main entrance
- In interior parking facilities, electrical outlet above the door of the elevator vestibule for the installation of an automatic door-opening device, if required
- Allow clearance for handicap or modified van access to covered drop off area at building entry (included in "Approach to Building" page 2)
- Garage door and ceiling height to allow vans (consider)
- Provide a vehicle drop off point complete with a weather protected access route to the building (consider).
- All handicapped surface parking spaces should be covered, with continuous weather protection to the building entrance (apartments) or unit entrance (row housing) (consider).
- See also: page 19 - 20 of *HOMES BC Standards*.

#### 5. Approach to Building

- Allow clearance for Handidart or modified van access to covered drop off area at building entry.
- Easy to read building identification
- Wide, level or minimal slope pathway to municipal road system, clearly separated from vehicle traffic
- Stairs and ramps to be easily usable by people with reduced leg strength, stamina or vision
- Handrails on ramps and steps (see *Building Access Handbook*)
- Hard (compact, stable) walking surface
- Visual pathway cues and tactile information for people with reduced vision
- Covered drop-off area at front door - minimum 1500 mm x 1500 mm clear, level area with curb cut for access
- Lighting for safety and communication
- Outlet for scooter recharging
- See also: Sidewalk and Curbs, page 22 of *HOMES BC Standards* and page 11, *Housing for Persons with Disabilities (CMHC)*.

- Colour contrast floors and walls
- Different interior design for each elevator lobby to differentiate floors
- Lighting for safety
- Clearly marked exit doors
- Reinforced corner protection and sturdy baseboards to avoid damage from mobility aids
- Reinforcement of corridor walls for possible future handrails; installed handrails preferred
- See also: Corridors, page 23 of *HOMES BC Standards*.

## 9. Stairs, Elevators and Lifts

(See *Building Access Handbook*)

- Stairs:
  - ⇒ Tread/riser ratio constant for any given flight of stairs
  - ⇒ Tread/riser ratio not varied from one flight to another
  - ⇒ Slip resistant-flooring
  - ⇒ Colour contrast on stair nosing and handrail
  - ⇒ Handrails on both sides of stairs
  - ⇒ 900 mm minimum staircase width
- Vertical access other than stairs necessary (e.g., lifts, elevators)
- Elevators:
  - ⇒ Accessible height for elevator control and call buttons
  - ⇒ Non-slip elevator car flooring
  - ⇒ Elevator car colour contrast floor and walls
  - ⇒ Handrails in car interior
  - ⇒ Longer door-open time, slow-closing doors
  - ⇒ Raised, colour contrasted numbers and Braille
  - ⇒ Raised floor numbers on jamb or clear floor number identification at elevator lobby on every floor (consider)
- See also pages 24, 41 of *HOMES BC Standards*.

## 10. Exits, Refuge Areas, and Emergency Alarms

- Accessible exits that are well signed
- User functions of fire alarms and extinguisher cabinet not more than 1 100 mm above finished floor
- Provision to connect visual alarms in dwellings to alarm system
- Refuge areas on each floor (consider - in consultation with building and fire departments)
- Visual alarms in public areas (consider) (check re: safety value and code implications)

- See also: page 25 of *HOMES BC Standards* and page 22 of *Housing for Persons with Disabilities (CMHC)*

#### 14. Living Room

- Room size to allow for overnight stay of visitor or attendant
- Locate light switch at living room entry points (connected to an outlet with three way switches)
- Consideration for outlets with three-way switches
- Consideration should be given to additional sound insulation to address requirements of tenants who may be hearing impaired (hearing impaired may talk and operate television, audio at higher volume and will require effective sound insulation)
- See also page 126 of *HOMES BC Standards*.
- See also page 40, *Gypsum Wallboard, HOMES BC Standards* for acoustic standards

#### 15. Unit or Shared Kitchen

- There are a range of possible kitchen sizes from bachelor to full size. The unit kitchen size, layout and appliances will depend upon the meal arrangements and amenities provided through the management.
- Maneuvering space for people using mobility aids and access to all features
- Non slip flooring (e.g., non-slip sheet vinyl. Note: abrasive safety floor not recommended)
- Task lighting
- Lever faucets
- Water temperature regulator
- Electrical switches and outlets within easy reach
- Counter heights to accommodate people both seated and standing, for example different fixed heights *or* counter sections easily adjusted to different heights (consider - for designated units)
- Counter beside stove or cook top
- Counter beside refrigerator
- Cabinets designed to accommodate reduced upper and lower reach, for example: full height pantry with adjustable shallow shelves or pull out drawers and lazy Susan
- 'D' latches or easily graspable drawer and door pulls
- Provision for creating knee space under cook top and sink, with insulated pipes (for designated units)
- Toe space to accommodate feet and wheels of mobility aids
- Stove with front controls
- Provision for installing microwave oven or convection oven
- Consideration for stove with cook-top and wall oven
- Consideration for fridge with adaptable left/right opening door
- Recommended points for consultation:
- Size and configuration of kitchen (e.g., walk-through, L-shaped, U-shaped)

## 18. Storage

- Storage within apartment unit
- Adjustable height rod and shelf
- Electrical outlet and light
- Consideration for mobility aid and scooter storage and recharging
- Review building code requirement for recharging stations at the schematic design stage with the municipality. Common storage with ventilation may be required.
- Space to store brooms and linens
- See also pages 32 - 36 of *HOMES BC Non-Profit Standards*.

## 19. Interior Doors

- 900 mm door width (minimum)
- Level threshold
- Lever handle
- Doors not too heavy, door closers not set too tightly
- Consideration for sturdy pocket doors (preferable). Pocket doors should have “D” or easily graspable handles, durable tracks and sliding mechanisms designed for people with reduced strength.
- See also page 34 of *HOMES Standards*.

## 20. Windows

- Easy to use opening mechanism (e.g., casement, awning windows preferred)
- Easy to use locking mechanism
- Low sill height for seated viewing
- Bay window with plant shelf (preferable)
- See also pages 35 and 39 of *HOMES BC Standards*.

## 21. Controls and Outlets

- Located within easy use for people with reduced reach
- Easy to reach breaker panel
- Rocker light switches
- Height of electrical outlets to avoid low bending
- Telephone and electrical outlet in close proximity
- Telephone jack in each room
- Three way switches (preferable)
- Provision for capacity for Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (preferable)
- See also page 45, 216 - 225 *HOMES BC Standards*. Note: air conditioning requirements, page 216
- See also, page 37, *HOMES BC Standards* for Electrical Items.

### Insuite Laundry

In each unit, provide a laundry area to accommodate a side-by-side installation of standard size washing machine and dryer. The laundry area should be separate from the bathroom. The laundry area shall include the required plumbing and electrical connections. Provide a sleeve for a future dryer vent through an exterior wall. Sleeves shall have a temporary cap inside the unit and a hooded vent with a flap on the exterior.

### Patios and Balconies

Provide a balcony for all units without direct grade access. Balconies and patios shall have a minimum area of 5 m<sup>2</sup> (54 sq. ft.) and a minimum depth of 1370 mm. (4 ft.-6 in.)

Balconies and patios for wheelchair accessible/adaptable units shall have a minimum depth of 1.8 m. (6 ft.)

### Interior Stairs

Stairways should allow for the passage of queen-size beds and furniture without damage to walls. Provide a minimum width of 900 mm. (36 in.).

### Ceiling Heights and Profiles

Generally, ceiling heights are to be consistent throughout and not less than 2440 mm. (8 ft.), except in very small areas where they may be reduced to 2300 mm. (7 ft. 6 in.)

Do not incorporate coffered, vaulted and other multi-planned ceilings in units or common areas.

## ACCESSIBLE AND ADAPTABLE DWELLING UNIT DESIGN

### General

Each project should be designed to include units modified for wheelchair accessibility equal to 5% of the total units. Depending on location, this ratio may be increased or decreased based on site attributes and community need. Unit areas may be increased to accommodate wheelchair accessibility.

Units designed to comply with the wheelchair accessible criteria noted below and in the referenced publications, may qualify for an increase in the maximum unit price (MUP). For units to qualify, all common areas within a project must also be designed to be fully wheelchair accessible.

- For wheelchair *accessible* units, a maximum 12% increase in the MUP may be considered.

Provide latch side clearance for building entry, suite entry and suite interior doors:

- 600 mm. - door swings towards
- 300 mm. - door swings away

Rough in wiring at building entry and garage lobby for automatic door opener. Note future automatic door button locations on plan.

### **Windows**

Windows should be designed so that the sill is no more than 750 mm. above the floor. Provide a clear floor area not less than 750 mm. wide along the full length of the window. Provide a railing or muntin at a height of +/- 1265 mm. above the floor.

Ensure that operable portions of windows are not more than 1200 mm. above the floor.

### **Kitchen**

Provide L-shaped configurations. (Galley kitchen configurations are considered a hazard and therefore are not permitted.)

### **Cabinets**

Provide a counter height of 840 mm. Counter length to comply with requirements for family suites including a 900 mm. wide x 685 mm. high open space below cabinets for accessible work space. Provide a 150 mm. deep by 200 mm. high continuous toe space.

Provide a 760 mm. long by 550 mm. wide pull-out work surface with hardwood or plastic laminate top below counter and an additional pull-out shelf below oven.

Provide a heat resistant surface on the counter adjacent to the cook top.

Provide full-extension pull-out shelves with minimum 40 mm. raised edges or drawers on free-rolling mechanical slides rather than fixed shelving in cabinets.

Hardware to be easily grasped lever or loop configuration.

### **Kitchen Sink**

Double bowl stainless steel, 150 mm. deep, complete with insulated hot water supply, off-set drain, and single lever faucet.



## Electrical Items

Mount light switches and thermostats 840 to 1050 mm. above finished floor.

Locate convenience outlets at a minimum of 530 mm. above finished floor.

Locate electrical panel board at 850 mm. to underside, in an accessible location.

Provide convenience outlets, light, and fan controls at locations accessible from work positions.

In bedrooms, in addition to the switched ceiling mounted fixture, provide a three-way switched wall outlet near the bed; one switch at the door to the room, and one at the bed.

Use wall mounted thermostats for heaters.

Light fixtures must contain two or more bulbs.

Built-in thermostats are not permitted on heating appliances.

Provide a ground fault current interrupter (GFCI) electrical outlet at the bathroom vanity, in a location accessible from a seated position.

Provide heat lamps in the bathrooms.

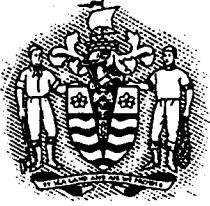
## Wheelchair Adaptable Units

Wheelchair adaptable units should be designed to be convertible to Wheelchair Accessible units in the future. This is achieved by providing the spatial configuration and some of the fixed elements of the fully accessible units.

Wheelchair adaptable units shall be designed to conform to the following Wheelchair Accessible Unit criteria:

- Enhance weather protection at the primary entrance.
- Turning radii at all locations as specified for wheelchair accessible units
- All doors leaf widths shall be 900 mm.
- All window sill heights shall be 750 mm.
- Provide glue down carpet.
- Provide roll-over thresholds at all doors, including balcony doors.
- Avoid galley kitchen configuration. All other kitchen requirements including cabinets and equipment should comply with standard unit requirements.
- Kitchen counter length should accommodate conversion to a cook top and wall oven arrangement and installation of a dishwasher.

**APPENDIX C – CITY OF VANCOUVER CONGREGATE HOUSING FOR SENIORS**



**City of Vancouver** *Land Use and Development Policies and Guidelines*  
Community Services, 453 W. 12th Ave Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4 ☎ 604.873.7344 fax 873.7060  
planning@city.vancouver.bc.ca

# **CONGREGATE HOUSING FOR SENIORS GUIDELINES**

*Adopted by City Council February 19, 2002*

# CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Application and Intent</b> ..... 1
<b>2</b>	<b>General Design Considerations</b> ..... 1
2.1	Neighbourhood Compatibility ..... 1
2.2	Site Selection ..... 2
2.3	Building Characteristics ..... 2
2.4	Access ..... 2
<b>3</b>	<b>Internal Design and Facilities</b> ..... 2
3.1	Unit Size and Design ..... 2
3.2	Common Areas ..... 3
3.2.1	Common Dining Room and Kitchen ..... 3
3.2.2	Common Lounges/Rooms ..... 3
3.2.3	Laundry ..... 3
3.2.4	Reception/Administration ..... 4
<b>4</b>	<b>Bulk Storage Areas</b> ..... 4
<b>5</b>	<b>Circulation</b> ..... 4
<b>6</b>	<b>Safety Features</b> ..... 4
<b>7</b>	<b>Open Space</b> ..... 5
<b>8</b>	<b>Parking and Loading</b> ..... 5

**Note:** These guidelines are organized under standard headings. As a consequence, there are gaps in the numbering sequence where no guidelines apply.

## 1 Application and Intent

Congregate housing for seniors is housing in which there are individual residential units (which could be sleeping, housekeeping or dwelling units) and large common areas, including a large communal dining room and common areas for activities and socializing. It is designed to meet the needs of an elderly population, and to accommodate aging in place. It features a package of non-medical services, typically including meals, house-keeping, laundry and activities. It does not include medical care. The City recognizes that congregate housing is an important component of the continuum of housing choice for seniors, one which allows seniors to maintain and maximize their independence.

These guidelines are intended only for congregate housing for seniors projects. Where projects fall under the Community Care Facilities Licensing Act, these guidelines will not apply.

These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with a district schedule of the Zoning and Development By-law, and official development plan by-laws for development permit applications for congregate housing for seniors. They are intended to provide direction primarily related to the livability and usability of congregate housing for seniors. The guidelines address the issues of project location and siting, unit design and features, common space design, and safety features, to allow for aging in place. In zoning districts where design guidelines exist, these too should be consulted.

The guidelines are to assist applicants in their planning and design, and City staff in their evaluation. All applications should be accompanied by an operating plan, which should include, but may not be limited to information on details such as the following:

- (a) anticipated resident profile (target market);
- (b) proposed tenure of the units, i.e., rental, strata-title, or mix;
- (c) meals service;
- (d) other services provided on site;
- (e) how the common spaces will be used and programmed; and
- (f) staffing, in particular, how 24 hour on-site emergency response will be achieved.

While there is room for variety and creativity in the design of the components of congregate housing for seniors, the total package should:

- (a) support the dignity and independence of seniors, while providing the physical environment and services which maintain the quality of life for the senior, and allow for aging in place;
- (b) promote a sense of community within the development; and
- (c) be compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood.

The City, at its discretion, may consider exemptions in the application of guidelines when a Housing Agreement is entered into between the owner and the City where at least a portion of the units are restricted to occupancy by residents of low and modest incomes. Further, where at least a portion of the units are restricted to occupancy by residents 65 years of age or older, a parking relaxation may be considered.

## 2 General Design Considerations

### 2.1 Neighbourhood Compatibility

**Objective:** Congregate housing for seniors should be compatible in density, scale, architectural character and operation with the surrounding neighbourhood.

- (a) Congregate housing projects should contribute to the objectives outlined in approved area plans and policies, and should enhance the overall character of the neighbourhood; and
- (b) Traffic impacts, parking demands, and servicing requirements should not adversely affect the surrounding neighbourhood.

## 2.2 Site Selection

**Objective:** Congregate housing should be located so that seniors can safely and independently access needed services, facilities and activities outside the project.

- (a) Sites selected for congregate housing for seniors should have good access to public transit, shopping, and community services; and
- (b) The area surrounding the site should have a comfortable walking environment, e.g., sidewalks in good condition, crosswalks, walkways clearly marked and separated from vehicle traffic; areas with a steep slope should be avoided.

## 2.3 Building Characteristics

**Objective:** Congregate housing should be designed to look, feel and function as a residential use for seniors of varying ages and abilities. The design should support aging in place without being institutional in appearance.

- (a) Aging in place design features should be incorporated throughout, such as wider doorways, wider hallways, handrails, appropriate door handles, lower window sills (to allow viewing when seated), lower light switches, raised electrical sockets, and appropriate washroom fixtures;
- (b) Natural light is important to the creation of suitable residential space; the project should be oriented to take advantage of direct sunlight;
- (c) Weather protection should be provided at all entrances;
- (d) The site and building design should take into consideration the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED); and
- (e) Site planning and building construction techniques should aim to ensure noise levels acceptable for a residential use.

## 2.4 Access

**Objective:** Congregate housing should be designed to provide safe and easy access to its residents and visitors.

- (a) Parking for persons with disabilities should be provided near the main entrance. When provided at grade, there should be a covered drop-off area;
- (b) Pedestrian access to the project should be safe, well lit, and designed to accommodate people with disabilities; and
- (c) Security lighting should be provided outside the building to illuminate pathways and access to the street.

# 3 Internal Design and Facilities

## 3.1 Unit Size and Design

**Objective:** Residential unit size and design should provide for aging in place. Suitability for people using wheelchairs, walkers and other mobility aids should be demonstrated.

**Note:** Residential units of at least 28 m<sup>2</sup> (300 sq. ft.) are preferred but smaller units may be considered if they are functionally useable. Units must not be so tightly programmed that they can only be used in very restricted ways. Sleeping or housekeeping units may be provided if they include a three piece bathroom. Units which include cooking facilities must be of a suitable size to accommodate these facilities and an eating area.

- (a) The unit size and design should accommodate, as a minimum: a bed (not a Murphy bed or a sofa bed), a dresser, two chairs, desk, and space for personal furnishings;
- (b) The unit design should include closet space of adequate size to store clothing, including outerwear and seasonal wear, and miscellaneous household effects. Hanger rods and shelves should be adjustable. Adequate circulation space should be provided at the doors to permit

- access and manoeuvring. Bulk storage space within the unit is desirable (see Section 4 Bulk Storage Areas for details and FSR exclusions);
- (c) The unit should be of adequate size and design to allow for a support provider to enter the unit and carry out their work while the resident is in the unit;
  - (d) The bathroom should be designed to accommodate mobility aids, and enable a support provider to assist the resident. Walls should be reinforced to allow for easy installation of grab bars;
  - (e) Services should include jacks for TV cable, telephone, and emergency call system; and
  - (f) Thermostats in individual rooms are encouraged.

### 3.2 Common Areas

**Objective:** Common areas should be designed to foster the social interaction and activities that are key to successful congregate housing for seniors. They should be adequately sized to allow residents to move around comfortably, engage in activities, and provide space for guests and visitors.

- Note:**
- (1) The operating plan submitted with the congregate housing proposal should include a plan for the use and function of all common areas, with attention to ease of access for residents.
  - (2) Common space of 4.0 m<sup>2</sup> (43 sq. ft.) per *unit* is not excludable from FSR calculations; common space provided in excess of that amount is excludable to a maximum of total of 10 percent of the total building floor area.

#### 3.2.1 Common Dining Room and Kitchen

- (a) To accommodate one sitting of residents with mobility aids, and visitors, the size of the dining room should be 2 m<sup>2</sup> (21.5 sq. ft.) per unit. Requests for variation in this guideline should be accompanied by an operating plan, outlining the proposed meal services and demonstrating seating, access and circulation;
- (b) An area for the temporary storage/parking of walkers and other mobility aids should be provided in or near the dining room;
- (c) Fully wheelchair accessible washrooms should be located close to the dining room; and
- (d) The project should have an on-site kitchen, which could be shared in cases where congregate housing for seniors is part of a larger complex. The kitchen size and design should be in accordance with the Vancouver Health By-law.

#### 3.2.2 Common Lounges/Rooms

- (a) The project should provide at least 2 m<sup>2</sup> (21.5 sq. ft.) of common space per unit. One large space should be provided to accommodate large gatherings; it should be located on the same floor as the dining room. Smaller common areas and single purpose rooms should also be provided, such as a library or a billiards room, a computer room, a meeting room, a television room, a recreation room, and a chapel. Wherever possible, opportunities of linking indoor amenity areas with adjacent outdoor open space should be pursued;
- (b) Fully wheelchair accessible washrooms should be located near the activity areas. They may be shared with the dining area if located nearby;
- (c) Lounges should be provided on residential floors in projects with small units, or many units per floor. Lounges are best located near central circulation elements. They become more usable when they include a small kitchen, and built in storage space for games and crafts;
- (d) Where the residential floor includes sleeping units, the lounge space on that floor should be increased and common kitchen/eating areas should be provided; and
- (e) Lounges should have natural light.

#### 3.2.3 Laundry

- (a) Laundry facilities should be provided for the use of the residents. They can be either ensuite or in common laundry rooms;

- (b) Provision of lounge space adjacent to laundry facilities is desirable, as is locating at several locations in the building rather than at one central location; and
- (c) There should be manoeuvring space for people with mobility aids in front of washers and dryers, and a work surface to accommodate people both sitting and standing.

#### 3.2.4 Reception/Administration

- (a) A waiting/rest area, with seating, should be provided near the main entrance. In larger projects, a reception function should also be located here;
- (b) Project design should include adequate space for staff providing 24 hour emergency response assistance; and
- (c) Consideration should be given to providing space for a health office, where residents can be seen by visiting health professionals.

## 4 Bulk Storage Areas

**Objective:** To provide usable and accessible storage for large personal items.

**Note:** Residential bulk storage space can be excluded in the computation of the floor space ratio, as outlined in the District Schedules of the Zoning and Development By-law.

- (a) All bulk storage areas should be well lit, easy to access, and have electrical outlets. They should be configured to minimize reaching, lifting and bending;
- (b) When not provided within the unit, storage for large personal items and mobility aids should be available within the building. Access and security are improved when the storage space is provided on the same floor as the suites served; and
- (c) The provision of space for scooter storage and charging is encouraged. This is best provided in the suite, but an alternative place that allows for easy access by residents may also be acceptable.

## 5 Circulation

**Objective:** The congregate housing project should be designed to accommodate movement of individuals including those with mobility, visual and hearing impairments.

- (a) Hallways should be at least 1.5 m wide (5 ft.), to comfortably accommodate two-way pedestrian traffic, allowing for residents using mobility aids. They should be well lit with clearly marked exits;
- (b) Travel distances from residential units to amenities should not be overly long, and within a comfortable walking range for an elderly person;
- (c) The project should be designed so that the circulation system is separate from activity areas. For example, direct travel routes from the main entrance to the elevator should not cut through the dining room or other common areas; and
- (d) Elevators should be designed to accommodate people with various disabilities. Floor lighting is beneficial.

## 6 Safety Features

**Objective:** The building's life safety systems should provide a safe environment for its residents, by taking into account the age of the residents and change over time in their mental and/or physical state.

Staff review will include, but may not be limited to, enhancements such as the following:

- (a) Provision of horizontal exiting by having two or more fire compartments within a floor area, to allow residents to remain on the floor in a safe compartment while awaiting evacuation assistance;
- (b) Provision of visual fire alarm signals in the units and the building, in addition to audible signals;



- (c) Provision of an emergency call system that is monitored 24 hours a day by on-site staff;
- (d) Provision of a fire safety plan that includes staff assistance to residents in case of emergency;
- (e) Provision of emergency power for a longer duration than a typical residential building;
- (f) Provision of adequate emergency lighting (100 lux); and
- (g) Provision of at least one elevator designed to fire fighters' specifications in buildings above three storeys, to assist with evacuation. **Note:** This will require installation of an emergency generator, as well as ongoing maintenance and monitoring.

## 7 Open Space

**Objective:** On-site open space should be designed and of adequate size to provide a variety of outdoor activities and experiences for congregate housing residents.

- (a) Private open space for each unit is encouraged (balconies, patios). Where provided, it should be designed to maximize light into the unit;
- (b) Common outdoor space should be provided and designed for usability and safety/security, such as smooth walking surfaces with non-glare finishes, outdoor seating and rest areas. Approximately 25 percent of this space should be protected from sun, wind and rain. Wherever possible, outdoor common space should be provided adjacent to or immediately accessible from indoor common space;
- (c) On-site gardening using raised beds or other design accessible to people with limited mobility is encouraged; and
- (d) Existing trees and significant landscape features should be retained where possible. Landscaping should contribute to resident and pedestrian interest, and to screen and provide privacy for at-grade residential units.

## 8 Parking and Loading

**Objective:** Parking should be designed to be safely and easily used by seniors. The number of parking spaces provided on-site should be adequate to serve residents and employees of the project, as well as visitors.

**Note:** Specific requirements for parking, passenger loading and bicycle parking are in the Parking By-law. In addition, the following guidelines recognize the special needs of an elderly population.

- (a) Disability parking spaces should be provided in accordance with the Parking By-law;
- (b) The parking spaces should be designed to be of a width suitable for use by elderly residents. Small car spaces should be limited to 25 percent of total spaces but have standard car width. Reductions in aisle width may be considered in connection with widening spaces beyond the standard car width;
- (c) Where a bus or van is provided for outings, then a parking space for it should be provided in addition to the other requirements;
- (d) Electrical outlets should be provided in the Bicycle room to provide for scooter recharging; and
- (e) Relaxation of the off-street parking requirement may be considered in the following circumstances:
  - (i) where a Housing Agreement is in effect restricting a portion of the residents to being 65 years of age or older, or to being low and modest income renters; or
  - (ii) where the project is located close to frequent public transit, shopping and community services.

Where a relaxation is supported, the parking required should not be less than:

- (i) 1 space per 4 units, where the unit is less than 70 m<sup>2</sup> in size; and
- (ii) 1 space per 100 m<sup>2</sup> (1,076 sq. ft.) where the unit is 70 m<sup>2</sup> (754+ sq. ft.) in size or greater.

Further relaxations may be considered where heritage preservation is a factor.

**BY-LAW NO. 8383**

**A By-law to amend  
Zoning and Development By-law No. 3575**

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER, in public meeting, enacts as follows:

1. This By-law amends the indicated sections of Zoning and Development By-law No. 3575.
2. From section 2.0, delete the definition of “Special Needs Residential Facility - Congregate Housing”, and substitute:

“A building, containing residential units designed specifically to accommodate seniors as they age, with separate common areas for dining and socializing, and where support services are provided.”

3. To section 10, add:

**“10.32 Congregate Housing for Seniors**

10.32.1 All residential units shall contain a three piece bathroom.

10.32.2 All congregate housing projects shall provide meal service and 24 hour on site emergency response assistance.

10.32.3 For the purposes of calculating FSR, common areas such as the communal dining room, and common areas on the main floor and residential floors are not excludable. Only common space provided in excess of what is required in the guidelines can be considered as an exclusion within the maximum 10 % amenity exclusion.”

4. This By-law is to come into force and take effect on the date of its enactment.

ENACTED by Council this 20th day of November, 2001.

(Signed) Philip W. Owen  
Mayor

(Signed) Marg Fudge  
Acting City Clerk

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a correct copy of a By-law passed by the Council of the City of Vancouver on the 20th day of November, 2001, and numbered 8383.

CITY CLERK

Congregate Housing  
for Seniors Parking

**BY-LAW NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A By-law to amend  
Parking By-law No. 6059**

THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VANCOUVER, in public meeting, enacts as follows:

1. This By-law amends the indicated sections of Parking By-law No. 6059.
2. Delete column 1 and column 2 of section 4.2.3.7, and substitute:

<p>Special Needs Residential Facility - Congregate Housing for Seniors</p> <p>For residential units less than 50 square metres in size</p> <p>For residential units 50 square metres - 70 square metres in size</p> <p>For residential units over 70 square metres in size</p>	<p>1 space per 100 square metres of floor area used for residential units</p> <p>1 space per 70 square metres of floor area used for residential units</p> <p>1 space per 70 square metres of floor area used for residential units except that no more than 2.2 spaces for every unit need be provided.</p>
--	--

3. From column 1 of section 5.2.3, delete "Special Needs Residential Facility - Congregate Housing".
4. After section 5.2.5, add:

5.2.6	Special Needs Residential Facility - Congregate Housing for Seniors	No requirement	A minimum of one space for a facility with less than 200 residential units, and one additional space for any portion of each additional 200 residential units.
-------	---	----------------	--

5. From column 1 of section 6.2.2.5, delete “Special Needs Residential Facility - Congregate Housing”.

6. After section 6.2.2.5, add:

6.2.2.6	Special Needs Residential Facility - Congregate Housing for Seniors		
	For residential units less than 50 square metres in size	A minimum of 0.10 space for every residential unit	No requirement
	For residential units 50 square metres in size or greater	A minimum of 0.25 spaces for every residential unit	No requirement

7. After section 7.2.2.1, add:

7.2.2.2	Special Needs Residential Facility - Congregate Housing for Seniors	A minimum of one space for any facility with 80 to 159 residential units, a minimum of two spaces for any facility with 160 to 199 residential units, and one additional space for any portion of each additional 80 residential units.	A minimum of one space for any facility with 15 to 119 residential units, and a minimum of two spaces for any facility with 120 or more residential units.	No requirement
---------	---	---	--	----------------

8. This By-law is to come into force and take effect on the date of its enactment.

ENACTED by Council this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2002

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

## **EXPLANATION**

### **Parking By-law Congregate Housing for Seniors**

On October 2, 2001, Council approved certain amendments to the Parking By-law for parking requirements for Special Needs Residential Facility - Congregate Housing for Seniors. Approval of the attached by-law will implement Council's resolution.

Director of Legal Services  
February 19, 2002

## APPENDIX D – PROFILES OF SITE VISITS

### *Southview Terrace*

*3131 East 58<sup>th</sup> Street, Vancouver*

*Operated by the Salvation Army*

Overview: Southview Terrace is a four year old, 57 unit seniors supportive housing project. It is located on a site that was redeveloped to replace an aging care facility. The current site also has a previously existing “lodge” which provides personal care to 47 seniors. The project is located in south Vancouver. Affordability was a goal during development and design.

Design: The building is a three storey wood frame structure connected to the existing lodge, which provides the commercial kitchen, common dining room for both lodge and supportive housing residents, and lounge areas. On the supportive housing side, there is a common lounge near the entrance, another lounge on the second floor, administrative offices, one central “spa” tub room, and a laundry area (which is often a social activity hub). There is a private dining room available, and a guest suite for visitors.

The units range in size from 44.5m<sup>2</sup> (480 square feet) for a small one bedroom to 76.5m<sup>2</sup> (825 square feet) for a two bedroom unit. All units have a full sized and fully equipped kitchen. All units have a full bathroom – half have standard bathtubs with shower fixtures and half have modular shower stalls with built-in seat and flexible hose showerhead.

Supports: The support services include weekly housekeeping to clean the unit, laundry service for sheets and towels, lunch and dinner daily, and activity programs including outings in the facility’s bus. The 24 hour emergency call response is monitored by nursing staff on the lodge side of the facility. Breakfast can be purchased for an additional cost; there are no other variations in the support package.

Monthly Charges: The monthly fees range from \$1,343 to \$2,369 per month (or \$16,116 to \$28,428 per year). There is an additional charge of \$425 per month (or \$5,100 per year) for a second person in a unit. Fees include heat, light, and basic cable.

Comments: This project had reduced capital costs as the land was already owned by the Salvation Army. Operationally, the support services are efficient because they are combined with the lodge. The 24 hour emergency call response is provided by nursing staff at the lodge. It is a not for profit operation, with affordability as a goal. Demand is greatest for the smallest (and most affordable) units.



## ***Shannon Oaks***

***2526 Waverley Avenue, Vancouver***

***Baptist Housing Society***

Overview: Shannon Oaks is a seniors supportive housing project located in south Vancouver, near Champlain Heights. While the operator is a non-profit society, affordability was not a goal during project development. Market research was done on the surrounding community to determine the income and demographic data. The project targets a relatively affluent market and provides a luxurious setting. There are a total of 100 rental units in the building. The building opened in March 2001.

Design: The building is a three storey wood frame structure with a total of 100 rental units. There is a large underground area for parking, building services and amenity space. This area is large because soil conditions required excavation and it was determined that the incremental cost of construction was justified. Units include one bedroom, one bedroom with den, and two bedroom units. The units have three piece bathrooms. Each bathroom has a shower stall with a built in seat and a flexible hose showerhead. There are no bathtubs in any of the units. Unit sizes range from just under 46.5m<sup>2</sup> (500 square feet) to 70.5m<sup>2</sup> (760 square feet). Each unit has a kitchenette with a sink, counterspace, cabinetry and a small refrigerator. Space is provided for a microwave and toaster oven.

The building has on-site institutional laundry facilities, a full commercial kitchen, and a dining room that seats all residents at a single sitting. Common areas include a central lounge, library, small sitting rooms, a large auditorium, a tuck shop, billiards room, exercise room, country kitchen, private 10 seat dining room, hair salon, laundry room for personal laundry, and five “spa” tub bathing rooms. There is a large patio and landscaped garden surroundings. There are two guest suites.

Supports: There is only one comprehensive package of support services. The supports include three meals daily: breakfast is buffet style, and lunch and dinner both have menu choices and table service. Tea, coffee and snacks are available throughout the day. There are two on-site caretakers who provide 24 hour emergency call response. Other supports include weekly cleaning, and laundry service for towels and bedding. There are Activity Program staff and the facility has a bus for taking residents on outings.

Monthly Charges: The accommodation is a bundled package with rent and supports all included. Rental is month to month (no leases). Fees range from \$2,150/month to \$3,100/month (or \$25,800/year to \$37,200/year). The fee for a second person in a unit is an additional \$450/month (or \$5,400 per year). Fees include rent, supports, heat, light, and cable. Telephone is available for \$25/month and \$.10/minute for long distance.

Comments: There is not currently a waiting list, and it has taken one year from opening to reach full occupancy. The development did not include land costs, as the Society owned it with no debt.

## ***St. Margaret's of Scotland Abbeyfield Houses***

***1010 Sperling Avenue, Burnaby***

***Operated by Abbeyfield House St. Margaret of Scotland Society***

Overview: The two St. Margaret's of Scotland Abbeyfield Houses were developed as a co-operative endeavour of the Society, the Burnaby Centennial Lions Club, the Anglican Diocese of New Westminster, and St. Margaret of Scotland Anglican Church. Both houses are built on diocese property; the land was leased for \$10/year for 60 years. This first house opened in 1996 and the second in 1999. Both houses are of the same design.

The Abbeyfield concept began in England in 1956 and there are now over 1,100 houses worldwide, including 21 in British Columbia. It is characterized as "family style living for independent seniors".

Design: There are two separate ten room Abbeyfields, connected by a central lounge and outdoor patio. The houses are designed to be residential in character and scale. There is a dining room with one large dining room table, a large residential style kitchen, a living room and a wheelchair accessible bathroom with a bathtub. On the second floor are ten bedrooms with bathrooms. The bedrooms measure approximately 18.5m<sup>2</sup> (200 square feet) plus the bathroom, for a total area of 25.6m<sup>2</sup> (276 square feet). The bathrooms all have shower stalls that fit into a corner with an angled door, sink with wheelchair clearance, and toilet. On the second floor there is a sun room that is shared between the two houses and there is also a shared lift system. The third floor has storage space, a hair salon, a guest suite, and three self-contained apartments for the house co-ordinators.

Supports: Supports include 24 hour on site staff with emergency call response and three meals daily. Residents are responsible for all of their own laundry including sheets and towels (there are free laundry facilities) and for their own housekeeping. For an additional fee, they may purchase housekeeping services from the agency that cleans the common areas.

Monthly Charges: The monthly fee is \$1,350 (or \$16,200 per year) and includes all meals, laundry facilities, cable and accommodation. Affordability was a very important goal for the Society and several tenants receive SAFER subsidies.

Comments: As with the other models, this project had a capital contribution of land at no cost. The operating model is very economical with limited supports. There are no staff other than three house co-ordinators. Board members are responsible for collecting rent, preparing monthly financial statements, supervising staff, managing contracts, and addressing maintenance and other routine household and property management issues.

It is notable that there is no waiting list and that the houses are currently not fully occupied. It was also noted that the applicant profile is changing with applicants being older and the Society needing to screen more carefully for appropriate independence.

370

## ***Cavell Gardens***

***2835 Sophia Street, Vancouver***

***Operated by Cavell Gardens Ltd.***

Overview: Cavell Gardens is a 128 unit seniors congregate living project in Vancouver. It is currently under construction and is a replacement of a dated private care facility that was on the site. While it is a privately owned, for profit project, affordability was a goal during project development.

Design: The seven storey building has 53 studio units ranging in size from 27.2m<sup>2</sup> (293 square feet) to 32.5m<sup>2</sup> (348 square feet), 53 one bedroom units ranging in size from 39.2m<sup>2</sup> (422 square feet) to 44.2m<sup>2</sup> (476 square feet), and 22 units with a shared kitchenette and entry area ranging in size from 31.5m<sup>2</sup> (339 square feet) to 34m<sup>2</sup> (368 square feet). In the bathrooms, there are shower stalls with modular seats; no units have bathtubs. Each unit has a small kitchenette with a small refrigerator, microwave, sink and counter and cupboard space. In the two room units, this kitchenette is shared between two separate units.

Common areas include a courtyard garden, solarium lounges at the end of each floor, laundry facilities, a hair salon, a wellness centre, a library, a fireside lounge, and a dining room that seats about half the tenants at one time.

Supports: The supports include 24 hour on site emergency response, three meals (including a continental breakfast), weekly housekeeping and towel and linen service. Cable, heat, electricity and parking are included in the monthly fee. Staffing will include an activity co-ordinator and a range of social and leisure programs will be provided.

Monthly Charges: The monthly fees range from \$1,470 for the smallest shared suites or studio units, to \$2,310 for the highest priced one bedroom unit (\$17,640 to \$27,720 per year). The fee for an additional occupant is \$450 per month.

Comments: Because the site was re-developed, the capital costs did not include land. The Community Amenity Contribution (CAC) fees for the project were waived in lieu of ensuring that five units have SAFER subsidies; this was formalized in a Housing Agreement with the City of Vancouver.

## ***Summerhill***

***135 West 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue, North Vancouver***

***Operated by Chartwell Care Corporation***

Overview: Summerhill is a new luxury seniors supportive housing project in the City of North Vancouver. It is a fifteen storey highrise, with 107 units ranging from studios to two bedroom units. It is a privately owned and operated project. The building is in a safe, desirable and attractive location just off Lonsdale, with good access to community amenities and transit.

Design: The units are designed to conform with the Level III accessibility guidelines of the City of North Vancouver. Relative to other projects, this is most noticeable in the bathroom where it is fully wheelchair accessible, with full size commode shower stalls, clearance the full length of the shower or tub, and clearance both in front of, and beside, the toilet. Each unit has a kitchenette with small refrigerator, microwave, sink, and counter and cupboard space. Units range in size from 38m<sup>2</sup> (410 square feet) for a studio unit to 72m<sup>2</sup> (774 square feet) for a two bedroom unit. One bedroom units are 41m<sup>2</sup> to 50m<sup>2</sup> (442 to 540 square feet).

Common areas are ample and include a dining room (which seats about two thirds of all residents at one time), large foyer lounge, private family dining room, multipurpose activity room, billiards lounge with bar, library, media room, dining/beverage lounge with residential style kitchen, exercise room, computer room with free internet access, hair salon, spa tub room, and free laundry facilities (on every second floor). Outdoor space includes two large patios on the main and second floors. There are two guest suites available.

Supports: Three meals daily, weekly housekeeping and linens, cable, heat and electricity, 24 on site emergency call response, and activity program. For an additional fee, staff will do personal laundry. Telephone service is available for \$25 per month including voice mail.

Monthly Charges: The monthly fee ranges from \$2,200 to \$3,500 per month (or \$26,400 to \$42,000 per year). It is \$500 per month for an additional occupant.

Comments: As a result of negotiations with the City during development, there was a relaxation on the parking requirements, and an agreement that the community would have access to the main floor multipurpose room 20% of the time. The development also received a density bonus for the provision of the common spaces. There is a Housing Agreement with the City that precludes stratification of the building.

The building opened last year and is not yet fully occupied. Of 107 units, 70 are currently occupied.

## ***Gilmore Gardens***

***4088 Blundell Road, Richmond***

***Operated by Diversicare Management Services***

Overview: Gilmore Gardens is a relatively new, luxury seniors supportive housing project in Richmond.

The project was developed in partnership with Gilmore United Church which owns the land: the church was rebuilt and integrated into the housing project, and the land for Gilmore Gardens was leased by the church to the private sector developer/operator.

Design: The five storey building includes the parking area which is shared by the church and the housing.

The amenity spaces, located on the main floor, include central kitchen, dining area, private family dining room, den, two lounge areas, beauty salon, country kitchen for residents' use, crafts room, guest suite and staff offices. There is outdoor garden space, laundry facilities on each floor, and scooter storage in the parking area. There are a total of 118 units on four floors. The design is an "X" form. There are studio to two bedroom units and sizes range from 410 square feet to just over 600 square feet.

Supports: Supports include dinner daily (at three seatings), weekly housekeeping and linens, 24 hour on-site emergency response, activity program (with a full-time co-ordinator), full time nurse on during the day, and a shuttle bus service for shopping and activities (shared with Courtyard Gardens).

Monthly Charges: Start at \$1,955/month for a studio, from \$2,245/month for a one bedroom, \$2,695/month for a one bedroom and den, and \$2,605/month for a two bedroom unit. There is a \$400/month charge for a second occupant.

Additional services can be purchased, including personal laundry, guest meals, medication reminder service, additional housekeeping and repairs, telephone and cablevision.

Comments: This project is fully occupied.



**RICHMOND OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN BYLAW 7100  
AMENDMENT BYLAW 7425**

The Council of the City of Richmond enacts as follows:

1. Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 7100 is amended by deleting Section 3.2 Housing Objective 1j) and substituting the following as Section 3.2 Housing Objective 1j):

“Encourage supported seniors’ housing options, such as congregate housing and “Abbeyfield” models:

- Use the Seniors’ Affordable Supportive Housing Design Guidelines, City of Richmond, June 2002, in the planning, design and evaluation of seniors’ supportive housing projects;
- Review regulations in the Zoning Bylaw to ensure that these do not unnecessarily discourage supported housing forms.

2. This Bylaw is cited as “ **Richmond Official Community Plan Bylaw 7100, Amendment Bylaw 7425**”.

FIRST READING

SECOND READING

THIRD READING

ADOPTED

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CITY OF RICHMOND
APPROVED for content by originating dept. <i>JC</i>
APPROVED for legality by Solicitor <i>[Signature]</i>

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
CITY CLERK