

Criteria for Review of New Construction Affordable Housing Development Projects Proposed for City Funding

Developed by the Alexandria Commission on Aging (COA) Housing Committee

Approved by the COA November 9, 2017

Is this development project appropriate for COA review?

Does the proposed project benefit Alexandrians age 60 and over and those with disabilities? If so, how?

[If Yes, proceed with analysis below; if No, then stop the process.]

Is it affordable?

1. Subsidized units, i.e. Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher or other (specify)?
2. Other affordable units and at what percentage of Area Median Income (AMI)? If so, how many at each level of AMI?
3. Affordable relocation for residents displaced by this project?
4. If there are no affordable units included, is there some other reason that the Commission should support the project (i.e. fills a gap in needed services, such as the Alexandria Memory Care facility)?

Is it accessible?

1. Accessibility of Site to needed services
 - a. Access to public transportation
 - b. Access to basics: grocery; pharmacy; work; cultural, religious and community activities
2. Facility Design (all required by current code)
 - a. Compliance with federal accessibility requirements and Fair Housing Act (FHA) compliance throughout apartments.
 - b. An accessible travel path from handicapped parking to the accessible building entry.
 - c. All dwelling units must have, at a minimum: (all required by current code)
 - i. 60% of entrances must be accessible (i.e. no step into the building)
 - ii. Elevator access to all floors, with an accessible elevator of minimum 3,500 pound capacity, 42" wide door, and interior cab sized for emergency stretcher use.
 - iii. Entry Door to every apartment unit shall be 36" wide, with a 32" minimum clearance on all interior doors.
 - iv. Lever hardware on all doors.
 - v. No steps or thresholds greater than 1/4" vertical or 1/2" with beveled edge.
 - vi. Wall blocking to allow future installation of grab bars in bathroom
 - vii. Maneuvering space for wheelchairs and walkers (30"x48") (required by codes in kitchen and bathroom at appliances and fixtures)
 - viii. Audible and visible fire, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms. Interconnected combo Smoke detector/Carbon monoxide alarms, but CO detectors are required in apartments and buildings with combustion type mechanical equipment.
 - ix. Faucet (levers or automatic) and shower controls that are accessible in the established transfer location (often shower controls are at one end of the tub and the location of transfer bench is at the other end of the tub, out of reach).
 - x. Hand-held shower head (not required by current code)
 - xi. Electrical switches, controls, thermostats mounted not more than 48" AFF (above finished floor) and outlets not below 24" AFF.

The above requirements should be included in all new construction multi-family buildings. In addition to those requirements, the Commission is concerned with a range of criteria that enhance quality of life for all residents. A list of items for consideration includes the following. While these items are not a requirement, the Commission is interested in knowing which of these features the developer has considered and what will be included in the project.

External

1. Onsite open space
2. Onsite natural surroundings
3. Public entries have self-opening doors

Resident units and Shared Spaces (Shared denoted by *)

1. Features that optimize hearing
2. Features optimize ability to see
 - a. Bright lighting (maximize natural light while avoiding sources of glare)
 - b. Contrasting colors
 - c. Chair railings along walls
 - d. Contrasting strips on stair edges
3. Features counteract resident isolation, e.g., shared spaces, WIFI, Cable
4. Mobility in shared spaces (*) and individual units
 - a. Individual resident units are on single level
 - b. No irregular floor surfaces*
 - c. Handrails on both sides of stairways*
 - d. Smooth, slip resistant flooring or flat-pile carpet*
 - e. 5-foot turnaround space in smaller spaces (kitchen, bath)*
 - f. Countertops and shelving of varying heights
 - g. Heat-proof surfaces near cooking appliances*
 - h. Raised height toilets (17 to 19 inches)*
 - i. Adjustable closet rods, shelves, and countertops
 - j. Roll-out shelves or drawers in cabinets
5. Resident Safety and Security
 - a. Security cameras installed to maximize resident safety
 - b. Building access is secure for residents
 - c. Other monitoring methods