



Juneau Commission on Aging

Senior Friendly Construction Choices

Nearly 30% of the Juneau population is over 55. Many want to “age in place” in their own homes. Unfortunately, those homes generally were not built in the past taking into consideration an owner’s future physical limitations.

New construction needs to integrate age friendly features into the design, regardless of the age of targeted buyers. Not all of these design features are currently required by CBJ code or recommended by International Building Code, but they are valuable to seniors and can be used positively in marketing to all age groups.

We ask that you voluntarily adopt these choices as construction best practices in all new homes.

When designing residences, include ...

1. Apartment & condo units that are single story within a multi-story building
2. Homes that have the master bedroom/bath + laundry on the 1st floor
3. Doorways (interior/exterior) that are at least 36” wide
4. Elevators in multi-family buildings of 3 floors or more
5. One bathroom with a walk-in shower, a built-in bench seat and grab-bars
6. Phone jacks in the master bedroom and kitchen
7. Zero step entrances/ramps into the building and zero step thresholds
8. Electrical outlets (above 18”) and light switches and thermostats (below 48”)
9. Pocket doors where practical in small spaces

When choosing features, select ...

1. Towel racks & toilet paper holders that serve a dual purpose as grab bars
2. Easy grip drawer and doorknobs
3. Lever doorknobs instead of standard ones
4. Slip resistant flooring
5. Raised or high-profile "comfort" toilets
6. Adjustable-height showerhead
7. Closet rods at two levels
8. LED lighting, including dimmers

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