

# *Elements of Accessible Homebuilding*

## **Visitability**

"Visitability" has been a growing trend nationwide for the past ten years. Visitability is an affordable, sustainable and inclusive design approach for integrating basic accessibility features into newly built homes and housing.

**Criteria for Visitability** (as required by the Illinois Accessibility Grant Program for spec homes)

- The front, main entrance must be a no-step exterior entrance with a 36-inch-wide entrance door to allow for wheelchair access into the home. (RAMP recommends that all exterior entrances have a no-step entry)
- All interior passage doors in the home shall allow at least 32 inches of clearance in width. The 32-inch clearance is measured inside the door casing. (recommend the use of 36" doors)
- No electrical outlet in the home shall be lower than 15 inches from the finished floor and no light switch in the home shall be more than 48 inches from the finished floor. All environmental controls in the home shall be in accessible locations.
- In each bathroom or other room containing a toilet, bathtub, shower stall, or shower seat, the walls adjacent to those fixtures shall be reinforced in a manner that will allow the later installation of grab bars around those fixtures.

## **Lifetime Homes**

Lifetime Homes allow easy transitions through all life's situations because they are thoughtfully designed. The flexibility and adaptability of Lifetime Homes accommodate life events quickly, cost-effectively and without upheaval. They are homes for everyone and bring benefits to anyone who lives in them because of the individual choices that they make possible.

**Criteria (in addition to Visitability criteria) for Lifetime Homes**

- At least one bedroom on the main (accessible) level.
- At least one full bathroom on the main (accessible level) with a 30" x 48" clear floor space by each fixture. Spaces may overlap, but door swing may not protrude into clear space.
- Kitchen that provides a 30" x 48" clear floor space by each appliance or fixture. Spaces may overlap, but door swing may not protrude into clear space.

## **Universal Design**

Universal Design goes beyond the Lifetime Homes concept to include products and designs that meet the needs of people of all abilities. The universal home demonstrates how all people, those with and without disabilities, children, people as they age, can comfortably and conveniently share the same living space.

**Optional features (in addition to Visitability and Lifetime Homes criteria) for Universal Design**

- Reachable electrical panel and water main on the main (accessible) level.
- Lever type door hardware and fixture handles, rocker-type light switches.
- Curbless shower with adjustable height hand held showerhead.
- Solid surface flooring or low pile, dense carpet.
- Minimum one car garage with 8 ft of side unload space and 8' garage door height.
- Kitchen surfaces that allow a wheelchair to pull underneath. (stovetop, adjustable cabinets, pull out shelves, etc.)
- Front loading washers and dryers with front-mounted controls at a reachable level.
- In your building plan, stack closets for possible future elevator shaft.
- Closets with power operated clothing carousels or adjustable closet rods and shelves.
- Remote control window treatments

**For More Information, contact RAMP's Julie Bosma at (815) 968-7467 v/tty.**

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# SMART HOME DESIGN BEGINS WITH YOU!

*Ask your builder or realtor for a LIFETIME HOME!*

**LIFETIME**  
*easy living design for a lifetime*  
**HOMES**



## Benefits of a Lifetime Home include:

### A smooth transition into the home when:

The ability to age in place, independently and comfortably!

- pushing a baby stroller
- moving in furniture
- hauling in groceries
- living with a temporary or permanent injury
- friends/relatives with mobility limitations visit

A more marketable home if you ever sell!

## A Lifetime Home includes the following features:

- At least one no-step entrance
- Wider doorways and hallways
- A main floor bathroom with reinforced walls (should you need to install a grab bar in the future)
- Easily reachable controls including switches, thermostats and outlets.

These simple features will save you several thousands of dollars should you ever need to make similar modifications after the home is built.

## Your home should serve your needs for a lifetime!

**Ask your builder or realtor for a Lifetime Home!**

Or call Julie Bosma at RAMP, 815/968-7467 for more information on the features and benefits of a Lifetime Home.



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