

Transportation and Housing Alliance Toolkit – Second Edition

Accessibility Guidelines

How is the term accessibility used in the THA Toolkit?

The Toolkit generally uses the term accessibility to refer to access by people with disabilities. The full range of disabilities is broad, including physical conditions affecting mobility, stamina, sight, hearing and speech to conditions such as emotional illness and learning disorders. In some questions in the Toolkit checklist, the word “accessibility” is also used to refer to access by public transportation. In those instances, the word is used as part of a phrase to clarify its application.

What does the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) require?

The ADA covers state and local governments as well as many private businesses. It is a civil rights law with broad applications. Title I addresses access to the workplace, Title II addresses state and local government services, and Title III addresses places of public accommodation and commercial facilities. ADA requires accommodations to provide access to physical facilities and programmatic services. ADA prohibits segregating people with disabilities, unless the requirements are “necessary” for the operation of the public accommodation. A public accommodation may choose among various alternatives as long as the result is effective access to goods and services.

Are there specific requirements for physical access?

The ADA requires the removal of physical barriers to existing facilities of public accommodations, when it is “readily achievable” to do so. Modifications that would be readily achievable in most cases include the ramping of a few steps. However, all construction of new building facilities and alterations of existing facilities in public accommodations, as well as in commercial facilities such as office buildings, must comply with the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) so they are accessible to people with disabilities. New privately owned buildings are not required to install elevators if they are less than three stories high or have less than 3,000 square feet per story, unless the building is a shopping center, mall, or a professional office of a health care provider. The ADAAG manual was revised and issued by the Access Board on July 23, 2004. The ADAAG Manual is available on-line at <http://www.access-board.gov/adaag/about/index.htm>. Technical Assistance is available by phone weekdays from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. EST by calling (800) 872-2253 or by e-mail at ta@access-board.gov.

Is transportation covered under the ADA?

Yes. Title II seeks to ensure that people with disabilities have access to existing public transportation services. All new buses must be accessible. Transit authorities must provide supplementary paratransit services or other special transportation services for individuals with disabilities who cannot use fixed-route bus services, unless this would present an undue burden. Title III on Public Accommodations also addresses transportation provided by private entities.

Are there specific requirements for housing?

All housing constructed or altered by or on behalf of state or local governments is required to be accessible under the ADA. For the private sector, ADA’s coverage of public accommodations includes some facilities used on a transient basis, such as dormitories and hotels. In general, other residential units (e.g. apartments) are not subject to the ADA except for places of public

accommodations within them (e.g. rental offices). Access to housing is required by the Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988.

What does the Fair Housing Act require?

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental, financing and advertising of housing because of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, familial status and elderliness. The Fair Housing Act also provides for reasonable accommodations and modifications for persons with disabilities. In addition, multifamily housing built for first occupancy after March 13, 1991 must include seven basic physical accessibility features:

1. accessible entrance on an accessible route
2. accessible public and common use areas
3. usable doors
4. accessible routes into and through the dwelling
5. accessible light switches, electrical outlets, and environmental controls
6. reinforced walls in bathroom
7. usable kitchens and bathrooms

Are there any accessibility requirements for single-family homes?

There are no national or state standards for accessibility in private single-family homes, but there is a growing trend nationwide for “visitability.” The term refers to single-family housing designed in such a way that it can be lived in or visited by people with disabilities. Although there is no legal requirement, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development "encourages" visitability features in single-family housing built with federal dollars. Concrete Change promotes the concept through its website at <http://concretechange.home.mindspring.com> and worked with the city of Atlanta to pass the nation’s first visitability law, which required that all public housing be accessible. At least one state and several cities have passed ordinances that mandated visitability features in single-family housing paid for with public money. A house is visitable when it meets three basic requirements:

- at least one no-step entrance
- doors and hallways wide enough to navigate through
- a bathroom on the first floor big enough to get into in a wheelchair, and close the door.

Universal Design Definition and Principles

Definition

The design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

1: Principle One: Equitable Use

The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities



GUIDELINES

- Provide the same means of use for all users: identical whenever possible; equivalent when not.
- Avoid segregating or stigmatizing any users.
- Provisions for privacy, security, and safety should be equally available to all users.
- Make the design appealing to all users.

2: Principle Two: Flexibility in Use

The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

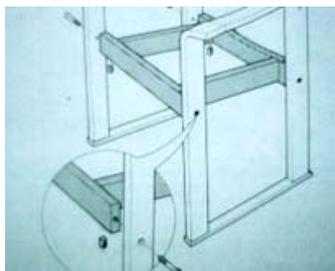


GUIDELINES

- Provide choice in methods of use.
- Accommodate right- or left-handed access and use.
- Facilitate the user's accuracy and precision.
- Provide adaptability to the user's pace.

3: Principle Three: simple and intuitive

Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.



GUIDELINES

- Eliminate unnecessary complexity.
- Be consistent with user expectations and intuition.
- Accommodate a wide range of literacy and language skills.
- Arrange information consistent with its importance.
- Provide effective prompting and feedback during and after task completion.

4: Principle Four: Perceptible Information

The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.



GUIDELINES

- Use different modes (pictorial, verbal, tactile) for redundant presentation of essential information.
- Provide adequate contrast between essential information and its surroundings.
- Maximize "legibility" of essential information.
- Differentiate elements in ways that can be described (i.e., make it easy to give instructions or directions).
- Provide compatibility with a variety of techniques or devices used by people with sensory limitations.

5: Principle Five: Tolerance for Error

The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.



GUIDELINES

- Arrange elements to minimize hazards and errors: most used elements, most accessible; hazardous elements eliminated, isolated, or shielded.
- Provide warnings of hazards and errors.
- Provide fail safe features.
- Discourage unconscious action in tasks that require vigilance.

6: Principle Six: Low Physical Effort

The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.



GUIDELINES

- Allow user to maintain a neutral body position.
- Use reasonable operating forces.
- Minimize repetitive actions.
- Minimize sustained physical effort

7: Principle Seven: Size and Space for Approach and Use

Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.



GUIDELINES

- Provide a clear line of sight to important elements for any seated or standing user.
- Make reach to all components comfortable for any seated or standing user.
- Accommodate variations in hand and grip size.
- Provide adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistance.



Livable for a Lifetime

*Applying Universal Design
in homes & communities*

Applying Universal Design In Homes

What is Universal Design?

Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people regardless of their ability or age, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

The intent of universal design is to simplify life for everyone by making products, communications, and the built environment more usable by as many people as possible at little or no extra cost. Universal design benefits people of all ages and abilities.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN:
The design of products and environments to be useable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without adaptation or specialized design.

The Need for Universal Design

Over the next 25 years, our region will experience a dramatic increase in its senior population. For the period 2000 to 2010, the total population is expected to increase by 16%, compared to 24% for those 65 and older and 40% for those 85 and over. By 2020 those ages 65 to 84 and those 85 and older will grow by 77% compared to 32% for the total population. By 2025, the population in the region is expected to grow by 41% but those 65 to 84 will grow by 109% and those 85 and older by 99%. Thus, from 2000 to 2025 the population of residents 65+ will double.

As our population ages, the number of seniors with disabilities also increases. For example, for the population over 65 with a disability, 69% have a physical disability. However, for the population ages 16 to 64 with a disability, only 34% have a physical disability. Regardless of age, those with a disability constitute more than 15% of the population.

The growing senior population, those with disabilities, and all of us can benefit from Universal Design.

Housing for the Future

Most people, seniors in particular, want to grow old in their own home: the concept of "Aging in Place." Universal Design helps to achieve this goal. Building new homes and retrofitting older homes with Universal Design construction techniques help benefit persons of all ages and abilities. Some of the key Universal Design construction techniques include:



- No step entrances and door openings wide enough to accommodate a wheel chair.
- At least one bedroom and an accessible bathroom on the first floor
- An open floor plan for good interior circulation
- Bathrooms with adequate maneuvering space and an accessible toilet and sink
- Kitchens with clear knee space under the sink, countertops and cook tops, thereby making them accessible for persons in wheelchairs
- Hardware such as lever door handles, push plates, and loop handles (instead of knobs) on drawers and cabinet doors.

A First Step: Visitability



Visitability, a more relaxed standard of accessibility, uses three key Universal Design techniques to allow friends and family with permanent or temporary disabilities to visit. Visitability also makes the home more livable and usable for everyone. The three Universal Design elements of visitability are:

- No step entrances
- Adequate doorways
- A usable bathroom

Achieving Universal Design in our Community

The first step is education for consumers on the benefits and basic techniques of Universal Design. This education will naturally result in the consumer asking for Universal Design features. This market demand can influence builders, architects, engineers, and local elected officials. In addition to consumer education, builders and developers need to understand the specifics of Universal Design. Policy makers – local elected officials – also need to understand the benefits of Universal Design and promote it through voluntary standards, plan review, and possibly by adopting a visitability ordinance. A solid understanding of Universal Design by practitioners, including planners and building inspectors, will lead to cost-effective implementation by reducing the need for modifications as the abilities of the homeowner change. Universal Design lends itself to design innovation. Architects, architecture students, and designers can help by incorporating Universal Design features into creative, aesthetically pleasing homes, apartments, and public spaces.



For more information, please contact Bill Wanner at the Thomas Jefferson Planning District, wwanner@tjpd.org or (434) 979-7310. Please visit our website at www.tjpd.org

An essential website: North Carolina State University, Center for Universal Design: www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/



Livable for a Lifetime

*Applying Universal Design
in homes & communities*

Applying Universal Design In Communities

Livable for a Lifetime

A community is livable for a lifetime when it has a diversity of affordable housing types, supportive community features and services, and reasonable mobility options, which together foster personal independence and residents engaged in civic and social life.

Universal Design

Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people regardless of their ability or age, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

In our neighborhoods and communities, universal design can simplify life for everyone by making the built environment more usable by as many people as possible at little or no extra cost. Universal design benefits people of all ages and abilities.

UNIVERSAL DESIGN:
The design of products and environments to be useable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without adaptation or specialized design.

The Need for Universal Design and Livable for a Lifetime Communities

Over the next 25 years, our region will experience a dramatic increase in its senior population. During the period 2000 to 2010, the total population is expected to increase by 16%, compared to 24% for those 65 and older and 40% for those 85 and over. By 2020 those ages 65 and older will grow by 77% compared to 32% for the total population. By 2025, those 65 to 84 will grow by 109% and those 85 and older by 99%. **From 2000 to 2025 the population of residents 65+ will double.**



All people benefit from an easily accessible sidewalk

As our population ages, the number of seniors with disabilities also increases. For example, for the population over 65 with a disability, 69% have a physical disability. However, for the population ages 16 to 64 with a disability, only 34% have a physical disability. **Regardless of age, those with a disability constitute more than 15% of the population.**

Universal Design principles help make Livable for a Lifetime

communities meet the needs of seniors, people with disabilities and people of all ages and ability.

The Principles of Livable for a Lifetime Communities

In order to achieve Livable for a Lifetime communities, we must

- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
- Create walkable neighborhoods
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration
- Foster communities with a strong sense of place
- Provide a variety of transportation choices
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
- Encourage compact building design in neighborhoods, villages and cities

Achieving Livable for a Lifetime Communities

The physical characteristics of a community play a major role in achieving the principles of Livable for a Lifetime. A Livable for a Lifetime community has:

- Single family homes, apartments, townhouses and other housing types constructed or retrofitted with universal design features
- Neighborhoods that are traversable by all persons regardless of age or ability
- A mix of land uses – residential, commercial, civic, and employment – available to community members regardless of age or ability
- Community members, particularly the elderly and people with disabilities, participating in the community planning process
- Identifiable neighborhoods that benefit all people, particularly if the neighborhood includes a mix of uses
- Transportation choices, particularly public transit, are both provided and accessible to people regardless of age or ability
- The elderly and people with disabilities people benefiting from the ability to live within a their current neighborhoods. The concept “aging in place” is made easier in Livable for a Lifetime communities
- Compact building design helps preserve open space and makes moving from building to building easier and more realistic for people of all ages and abilities



For more information, please contact Bill Wanner at the Thomas Jefferson Planning District, wwanner@tjpd.org or (434) 979-7310. Please visit our website at www.tjpd.org



Send comments on use of these concepts in Virginia to info@tjpc.org

Walking -- Levels of Quality

Created by:
Walkable Communities
www.walkable.org

A

B

C

D

E

F

Sidewalks

Exemplary

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

Hall of Shame

Walkability increases with added width, buffers to the street, many eyes on the walk, attractive edges. Five-foot minimum widths are needed. Conditions improve as numbers of driveways are reduced, or set back. Non-mountable curbing is important.



Main Streets

Main Street walks should be wide, attractive, with many shops and residential units watching over the street. Many activities are needed to keep sidewalks in use many hours a day. Good lighting and street furniture are essential. Maintenance is key.



Local Streets

Local streets should be narrow, well landscaped, with on-street parking to act as sidewalk buffers. Driving speeds of 15-20 mph are best, 20-25 are acceptable. Homes should be proximate to the street.



Avenue/Boulevard

Avenues and boulevard sidewalks should be 5-6 feet wide in most applications. Planter strips and bike lanes create essential separation from motorists. Trees, other landscaping, medians help slow motorists. Lanes can be as narrow as 10 feet.



Crossings

Crossings should be well marked, accentuated by curb extensions. On multi-lane boulevards it is essential to have exceptionally well marked crossings. In some cases signals are warranted.





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Bicycling -- Levels of Quality

Created by:
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A

B

C

D

E

F

Wide Curb Lanes

Exemplary

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

Hall of Shame

Wide curb lanes increase comfort between motorists and bicyclists. Motorists desire to separate themselves 6.0 feet from bicyclists. Wide curb lanes give buses more space, and allow greater turning radii. Low speeds create greater comfort.



Bike Lanes

Bike lanes define and identify bicycling locations. Widths up to 6.0 feet are most comfortable. Colorization can help. Narrow widths next to parking are least comfortable. Speeds between 25-35 mph are most comfortable.



Paved Shoulders

Paved shoulders that are smooth and wide are most comfortable. Surfaces should be clean and smooth, with few driveways and other interruptions. Narrow shoulders can help, but are less comfortable.



Multi-Use Trails

Multi-use trails work well in paralleling high speed roads in access controlled environments. Trails can offer more scenic, quiet, and direct routes of travel. Widths can vary, but must be designed to accommodate many users and user types.



Crossings

Crossings with low volume streets, where there are frequent gaps, good sight distances, good lighting, and medians or refuge islands are best. In some cases signals are essential or other controls are essential.





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Traffic Calming -- Intersection Tools

Created by:
Walkable Communities
www.walkable.org

Tool Description

Added Benefits

Cost / Other

Plan View

Curb Extensions

Curb extensions are great tools for slowing speeds at intersections and midblock locations. They are often used in combination with other tools, such as refuge islands, or part of a modified intersection. They are very helpful to inset parking, meet ADA requirements and reduce pedestrian crossing times and distances.

Main Street



Helps protect and preserve sight lines, eliminates illegal parking, helps assure emergency responder access to critical streets. Can be used for emergency responder operations area. Use to create chokers, chicanes, neckdowns.

Neighborhood



Costs range from \$5-30,000 per corner. Costs are reduced if drainage is left open. This can increase maintenance costs, so these details must be worked out by a city/county team.



Refuge Islands

Refuge islands slow traffic in three ways. They visually tighten the road, slow turning speeds, and help create narrow channels. They separate conflicts, create 10' wide driving lane channels (when used with curb extensions), minimize pedestrian crossing conflict speeds.



Minimum preferred width 8.0 feet. Best when landscaping is used to help motorists see treatment in advance. Keep ADA ramps at grade or with light crown for drainage. Use full width ADA ramps, and create 45 degree bend, if midblock.



One of the most affordable tools. Does not affect drainage. Can be landscaped at added cost with or without irrigation. Used effectively in high pedestrian areas, such as schools, parks, stores.



Modified Intersections

Modified intersections take back unwarranted asphalt, returning it as green space. Often motorists turn too fast when curb radii were made too wide for safety. Some intersections can be turned into small parks, greatly increasing safety, beauty and a gateway appearance.



Vastly improves sight distances. Helps many motorists get into difficult or unsafe intersections. Can serve as a small neighborhood park or gathering place, thus increasing association and security of the neighborhood.



Very popular as a gateway to a neighborhood, or any place where excessive asphalt exists. Very high return on investment, especially where pedestrian crossings are risky. Avoid ugly temporary treatments.



Raised Intersections

Raised intersections provide a colorful vertical intersection effect. They slow traffic in three ways. First they create an attractive, distinct shape. Second, they create a vertical deflection forcing a low speed approach. Third, they highlight the area as a pedestrian space.



Can be used with very tight and narrow intersections. Used where roundabouts cannot fit. Highly attractive. Requires good coordination with engineering, landscaping and architectural specialists.



Very popular as a gateway to a neighborhood, or any place where excessive asphalt exists. Very high return on investment, especially where pedestrian crossings are risky.



Roundabouts, Mini- Roundabouts

Roundabouts and mini-roundabouts are the most effective and popular traffic calming feature. These horizontal deflection tools lower speeds to 15-20 mph, shorten pedestrian crossings to 12-14 feet at a time, decrease injury crashes about 90%, reduce noise and pollution, and increase area property values.



Roundabouts are excellent for entrances, intersections near schools, parks, gateways to downtowns, and many other locations. Always consider any time a signalized intersection is being funded.



Great range in costs. Mini-roundabouts can be \$10-50,000, while roundabouts can be \$50-500,000 for many sizes. Greatest safety benefit of all traffic calming tools.





Send comments on use of these concepts in Virginia to info@tpdc.org

Traffic Calming -- Mid Block Tools

Created by:
Walkable Communities
www.walkable.org

Tool Description

Speed Tables (Flat Top Tables)

Speed Tables slow traffic through vertical deflection. They are a best tool for pedestrian and bicyclist crossings. Although they are not desired where volumes are high (above 10,000), on bus routes or prime emergency response routes, they have great utility. Their most common placements are at schools, parks, many local streets, and on some moderate volume roads.



Major Street

Speed tables are highly effective on narrow streets where parking must be maximized, and where other tools take away valuable land or parking. They can be colorized, enhanced with advance markings and made of asphalt or concrete.

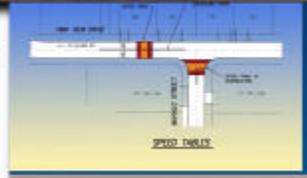


Neighborhood

Cost / Other

Costs range from \$4-15,000. Costs are reduced if drainage is left open. This can increase maintenance costs, so these details must be worked out by a city/county team. They can be stamped or patterned for added attractiveness.

Plan View



Chokers

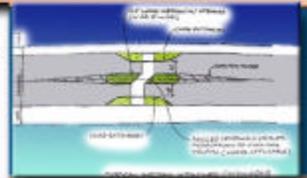
Chokers reduce speeding by narrowing passageways at appropriate points. They are highly effective when set at 10' width. Sometimes additional visual narrowing is applied. Chokers demand landscaping, so that they can be seen from a distance. Low, slow growth ground cover and tall trees are useful.



Chokers take up only moderate space, keeping parking toward a maximum. Chokers require low ground cover and tall trees for maximum safety and benefit. They are very attractive enhancements to neighborhoods, and quite popular.



Costs range from \$4-15,000. Costs are reduced if drainage is left open. This can increase maintenance costs, so these details must be worked out by a city/county team. They can be stamped or patterned for added attractiveness.



Chicanes

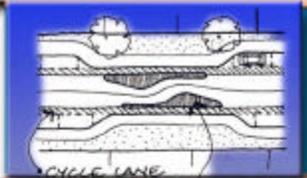
Chicanes divert traffic from its intended course. Deflection speeds are held to 15-20 mph. These tools are highly effective and can be made very attractive. These tools work for all size vehicles. On low volume streets no treatments are needed for bicycles, but on higher volume Avenues it may be appropriate to channel bikes along their own independent course.



Chicanes take up longer sections of roads than most tools and must be carefully set between driveways. Meanwhile, they are very popular since they can create attractive mini-parks. Landscaping greatly enhances their performance.



Costs range from \$12-35,000. Costs are reduced if drainage is left open. This can increase maintenance costs, so these details must be worked out by a city/county team. They can be stamped or patterned for added attractiveness.



Medians

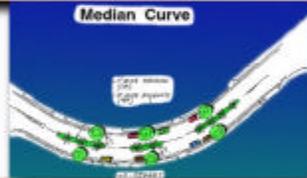
Raised medians are especially useful around curves and on any overly wide street. Medians are the most attractive and least intrusive treatment. Their benefit to pedestrians is noteworthy. Medians can have openings for driveways, and so fit in many tight locations. Use care to keep medians in plain view, especially around curves and on hills.



Medians may restrict parking, especially on narrower roads. Medians can add significant beauty to neighborhoods. A variety of materials can be used. Concrete curbs are essential to their success.



Costs range from \$4-15,000. Costs are low, since they do not impact drainage. Using xeriscaping or other alternative landscaping materials can keep maintenance costs low. Light crowning aids detection and beauty.



Short Medians

Short medians are best described as a pregnant median, or a mis-located roundabout. They are highly effective tools, slowing traffic to about 15-20 mph. Short medians are very attractive. However, they remove parking, and often appear to take land away from adjacent properties. Best for local streets.



Short medians can be neighborhood focal points or mini-parks. When parking, driveway placement and other land issues are not an issue they are exceptionally well liked by the entire neighborhood. Tall trees should be planted.



Costs range from \$10-25,000. They are often free if added as part of normal street construction. They rarely have impact on drainage. Often short medians are used to preserve a historic tree, cactus, boulder or other feature.





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Transit Station Links, Connections -- Visual Features

Created by:

Walkable Communities

www.walkable.org

Local - Low Volume

Residential streets are to have low speeds, well distributed volumes. Walking and bicycling are to be well supported. Streets are to be green and comfortable. Many people will use these streets to get to stores, parks and transit.



Lanes

Sidewalks



Parking



Intersections



Landscaping



Crossings



Local - Higher Volume

Streets will support moderate speeds (25 mph). Emphasis is on quiet, courteous behaviors and actions of drivers. Parking is important to this street. Wider walkways, trees, other landscaping, easy crossings make walking enjoyable.



Avenues

Speeds are still moderate (30 mph). Even greater sidewalk width is enjoyed, along with bike lanes, enhanced green and on-street parking. Intersections are well designed, making crossings convenient.



Commercial

Commercial streets are full of people enjoying newly created public space. There are many eyes on the street from mixed use buildings. Parking is convenient. Speeds are low, making bicycling and walking inviting.



Trails

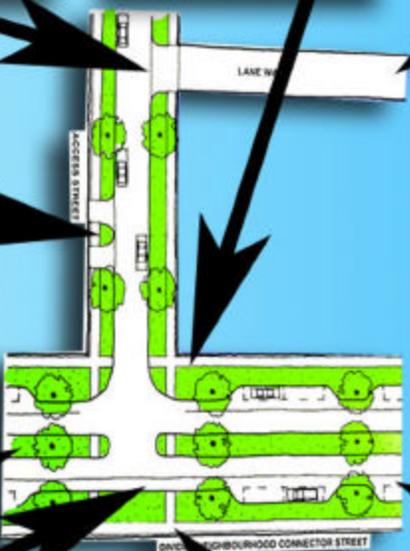
Trails form important links to neighborhoods and light rail, and form long pathways along the corridors. Direct links to nearby neighborhoods are supported. Convenient bike parking includes convenience parking and commuter storage.



Links, Walkways, Lanes, Streets, Avenues Refuge, Median and Channel Islands



Walking systems have two integral parts. Sidewalks, paths and links connect places and separate people from cars. Median, Channel and refuge islands provide refuge, simplify crossings, reduce crossing distances, and slow motor vehicles to safer speeds. All of these tools can be retrofitted into most neighborhood environments.



Send comments on applications
of these concepts in Virginia
to info@tpdc.org



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Street Crossing Details

Created by:
Walkable Communities
www.walkable.org



People seek frequent crossing points. Most people will walk 150 feet to get to locations rewarding their arrival. The best shopping districts arrange crossings each 300 - 400 feet.

Break crossings into separate threats. Median or refuge island crossings can be angled 45 degrees. This forces people to look at motorists before stepping into their path. It adds to storage space, and prevents running across



On Multi-lane roads refuge islands are essential. Set stop bars back 40-60 feet to prevent unintended screening when a motorist yields, blocking the view of the second motorist.

Enhanced signing and imbedded flashing lights can be used selectively to special crossing locations where added attention is needed. These can be either pedestrian activated, or triggered by presence of people.



Transportation and Housing Alliance Toolkit

Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Federal law enacted in 1990. The ADA covers state and local governments as well as many private businesses. It is a civil rights law with broad applications. Title I addresses access to the workplace, Title II addresses state and local government services, and Title III addresses places of public accommodation and commercial facilities.

Affordable Housing: A subjective term. The generally accepted definition of affordability is for a household to pay no more than 30 percent of its annual income on housing. Housing costs include rent or mortgage payments, utilities, and taxes.

Area Median Income (AMI): The estimated median income, adjusted for family size, by metropolitan area (or county, in non-metropolitan areas). AMI is updated annually by HUD and used as the basis of eligibility for most housing assistance programs.

Automated Vehicle Locator (AVL): A device that makes use of the Global Positioning System (GPS) to enable a business or agency to remotely track the location of its vehicle fleet by using the Internet. AVL systems generally include a network of vehicles that are equipped with a mobile radio receiver or a Mobile Data Terminal (MDT). See also Computer-Assisted Scheduling and Dispatching system and Mobile Data Terminal.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): A bus system that is faster and more specialized than a regular bus system. The design may include special bus lanes, crossing privileges at traffic signals, and special roadways and routes just for buses. Station terminals more closely resemble a subway or train station than a bus stop. The system is designed so that as population grows, it can be converted to a light or heavy rail system using the stations and special routes already in place.

Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB): A state board appointed by the Governor of Virginia that approves funding for state transportation projects, including those funded by the federal government.

Community Action Agency (CAA): A nonprofit private or public organization established under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 to fight America's War on Poverty. Community Action Agencies help people to help themselves in achieving self-sufficiency. CAAs may also be involved in the development and management of affordable housing.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG): HUD program which provides flexible annual grants on an entitlement basis, by formula, directly to states and larger communities (population over 50,000) for activities benefiting low and moderate income people, including housing, community development, economic development, services.

Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs): Nonprofit community-based organizations, which meet certain HUD criteria and thus qualify to apply for HOME funding set-aside specifically for non-profits.

Community Services Block Grant (CSBG): Federal poverty reduction program created to provide services to encourage self-sufficiency for low-income families and individuals. CSBG provides funding to Community Action Agencies (CAAs) for a wide range of social service programs including housing assistance, childcare, youth and family development, elderly services, fuel assistance and many others.

Community Services Board (CSB): A local government agency charged with the responsibility to assure the delivery of community-based mental health, mental retardation, and substance abuse services to citizens with those disabilities. CSBs were created by the Code of Virginia in 1968, with subsequent amendments, as agencies serving an individual jurisdiction or a region. CSBs have agreements with local human services agencies, among them Departments of Social Services and local Health Departments, and agreements with public safety agencies, including Sheriffs.

Comprehensive Plan: A local plan for physical development for the jurisdiction, to promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of its inhabitants, including the elderly and persons with disabilities. The comprehensive plan is general in nature, designating the general location, character, and extent of each feature, including transportation, land use and facilities. The transportation element must designate a system of transportation infrastructure including roadways, bicycle accommodations, pedestrian accommodations, railways, bridges, waterways, airports, ports, and public transportation facilities. The plan also addresses affordable housing to meet the current and future needs of residents of all levels of income in the locality.

Computer-Assisted Scheduling and Dispatching (CASD): Computer-assisted scheduling and/or monitoring of demand-response passenger transportation. CASD is a basic system. Higher-tech systems would include Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) and/or Automated Vehicle Locator (AVL).

Congregate Housing: Multi-unit housing with support services for seniors and for adults with disabilities who do not want to live alone. It combines privacy and companionship, by offering each resident a private bedroom or apartment, and shared living space and activities. May be rental or ownership.

Consolidated Plan (ConPlan): A combination planning document and performance report required of states and communities receiving HUD block grants. The Consolidated Plan establishes local housing needs and priorities. HUD uses it to assess proposed local housing policies and funding requests. Applicants for funding under any of 17 other HUD programs must show that their application is consistent with the local Consolidated Plan. The Consolidated Plan has several components, including: housing and community development needs analyses, an annual action plan, and an annual performance report.

Cost Burdened: Households spending more than 30% of their income for housing are considered to be “cost burdened” since they may not be able to afford basic necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care.

Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD): The state’s lead agency for housing and community development programs and policy. DHCD partners with Virginia’s communities to develop their economic potential, regulates Virginia’s building and fire codes, provides training and certification for building officials, and invests more than \$100 million each year into housing and community development projects throughout the state - the majority of which are designed to help low-to-moderate income citizens.

Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services (DMHMRSAS): The state agency responsible for Virginia’s public mental health, mental retardation and substance abuse services system. The system of treatment, habilitation, and prevention services is comprised of forty community services boards (CSBs) and sixteen state facilities. The CSBs and state facilities serve children and adults who have or who are at risk of mental illness, serious emotional disturbance, mental retardation, or substance use disorders.

Disability: A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working of the individual. The definition also includes individuals with a record of such an impairment or an individual who is regarded as having such an impairment.

Disability Services Board (DSB): A partnership of consumer, local government, and business working to increase access and develop consumer-oriented, community-based services for persons with physical and sensory disabilities, created in 1992 by the General Assembly. DSBs assist localities in identifying and addressing the needs of persons with physical and sensory disabilities in their communities. The Boards advise state and local government and agencies and, through incentive grants, leverage private and public dollars to improve service delivery and public awareness. Over 500 individuals serve on Virginia's 41 Disability Services Boards, which represent every political jurisdiction in the Commonwealth.

Extremely Low-Income: Household with income below 30% of area median, as defined by HUD for its own programmatic purposes.

Fair Housing Act: Federal legislation, first enacted in 1968 and expanded by amendments in 1974 and 1988, that provides the Secretary of HUD with investigation and enforcement responsibilities for fair housing practices. The Act prohibits discrimination in housing and lending based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin, disability, or familial status. The Virginia Fair Housing Law also adds elderliness as a protected category.

Fair Market Rent (FMR): Maximum rent allowed by HUD in the Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance program. Updated and published annually, FMRs represent HUD's estimate of the actual market rent for an apartment in the conventional marketplace. HUD sets FMRs by unit size (0-bedroom, 1-bedroom, etc.) and regions within each state. The current FMRs are posted on HUD's website at <http://www.huduser.org/datasets/fmr.html>.

Geographic Information System (GIS): A computerized system that stores and links spatially defined data in a way that allows information display and processing and production of maps and models. A powerful planning and analytical tool.

Green Building: A whole-building and systems approach to design and construction that employs building techniques that minimize environmental impacts and reduce the energy consumption of buildings while contributing to the health and productivity of its occupants.

Group Home: A single residence (home) where several individuals with disabilities reside. Varying levels of service are available, and may include counselor, transportation, shopping assistance, health care services or 24-hour personal assistance.

Growth Area: An area designated in a locality's comprehensive plan allowing higher density development, with areas outside the growth areas having lower density rural development.

HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME): A federal program run by HUD which provides annual grants on an entitlement basis to states, large cities and consortia of smaller communities for affordable housing activities, including homeownership, rent subsidies, housing development and rehabilitation.

Homeless: The legal definition of the term "homeless" is established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and means a person sleeping in a place not meant for

human habitation (e.g. living on the streets or in an emergency shelter), or residing in an emergency shelter, transitional housing, or other supportive housing program.

Housing Choice Voucher Program (HCV): A major federal (HUD) program— actually a collection of programs—providing rental assistance to low-income households to help them pay for housing. Participating tenants generally pay 30% of their income for housing (rent and basic utilities) and federal subsidy pays balance of rent. Formerly known as the “Section 8” program. The program also allows rental assistance recipients to use their vouchers to qualify for a mortgage, if they meet eligibility requirements.

Housing Trust Fund: A fund established by state legislation or local ordinance that uses public funds to finance the construction or renovation of affordable housing. The fund typically has a dedicated, ongoing source of revenue. Most are administered by a public agency, but some are administered by foundations or other entities.

Intermediate Care Facility for People with Mental Retardation (ICF/MR): A facility with four or more beds for people with mental retardation, providing active treatment. The ICF/MR benefit is an optional Medicaid benefit.

Low-Income: Households with income below 80% of area median, as defined by HUD, for its own programmatic purposes. (Note: 80% of median income is still considered by many to be moderate income and 50% of median low-income. These were the standards that had been used for more than 25 years until HUD changed them in the mid-1990s.)

Mainstream Vouchers: Rental assistance through vouchers for families having a person with disabilities to lease affordable private housing of their choice. HUD funds Mainstream Program Vouchers to PHA’s through a competitive process.

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO): A planning agency or organization responsible for planning, programming and coordination of federal highway and transit investments in urbanized areas. The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1962 required a continuing, comprehensive, urban transportation planning process for urbanized areas of 50,000 or more in population as a condition attached to federal transportation financial assistance

Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA): Geographic units used for defining urban areas that are based largely on commuting patterns. Office of Management and Budget defines metropolitan areas for statistical purposes only, but many federal agencies use them for programmatic purposes, including allocating federal funds and determining program eligibility. HUD uses MSAs as its basis for setting income guidelines and fair market rents.

Mobile Data Terminal (MDT): A computerized device used in public transit vehicles, taxicabs, and other fleet vehicles to communicate with a central dispatch office. Mobile data terminals feature a screen on which to view information and a keyboard or keypad for entering information. MDTs may be simple display and keypad units, intended to be connected to a separate black-box or Automated Vehicle Locator (AVL). On the other end of the spectrum, MDTs may contain full, PC-equivalent hardware. See also Computer-Assisted Scheduling and Dispatching system.

Mortgage: Debt instrument by which the borrower (mortgagor) gives the lender (mortgagee) a lien on property as security for the repayment of a loan. The borrower has use of the property, and the lien is removed when the obligation is fully paid. A mortgage normally involves real estate and is commonly used to purchase a house.

New Urbanism: A movement to build and rebuild communities on a human scale with interconnecting streets, homes with porches, pedestrian friendly traffic patterns, shared open space and greenways, local retail businesses that are near housing and services, and construction practices that are environmentally sensitive. In suburbia, may be a new town center or in cities, may be called an urban village.

Para-transit: Supplementary transit services or other special transportation services for individuals with disabilities who cannot use fixed-route bus services.

Planning District Commission (PDC): A regional planning body established by the Virginia Area Development Act in 1969, operating on funds from the state, member localities, and public or private grants. There are 21 planning districts in Virginia.

Public Housing Agency (PHA): A public entity that operates housing programs: includes state housing agencies (including DHCD), housing finance agencies and local housing authorities. This is a HUD definition used to describe the entities which are permitted to receive funds under or administer a wide range of HUD programs, including public housing and Housing Choice Vouchers. It includes not only local housing authorities, but also state housing agencies, such as DHCD.

Section 8: See Housing Choice Voucher Program.

Smart Growth: A movement that calls for a more coordinated, environmentally sensitive approach to planning and development. A response to the problems associated with unplanned, unlimited suburban development—or sprawl—smart growth principles call for more efficient land use, compact development patterns, less dependence on the automobile, a range of housing opportunities and choices, and improved jobs/housing balance.

Tax-credit rental unit: A unit in a multi-family rental development, built under the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program. The LIHTC Program offers property owners and investors a credit or reduction in their tax liability, each year for 10 years, that is based on the costs of development and the number of qualified low income units in a newly constructed or rehabilitated development. In exchange, the owners must offer quality units to low-income tenants at fixed below market rate rents that are set at 30% of the applicable Area Median Income. Tenants must meet income eligibility requirements to qualify for residency.

Transit Oriented Development (TOD): A mixed-use residential and commercial area focused around a major transit station. It is designed to maximize access by transit, walking, and bicycling. A TOD has a center with a bus or rail station surrounded by relatively high-density development for a few blocks around each station, or along the route.

Transit-Ready Development (TRD): Development that prepares for future transit expansion with neighborhoods and road networks designed for maximum efficiency of all transportation modes. Elements of transit-ready communities include: a mix of land uses; pedestrian-friendly layout with sidewalks buffered from traffic by planting strips with street trees; appropriate locations and routes for transit incorporated into current development or factored into future plans; an “urban” street grid; public facilities designed as transit targets; and appropriate housing densities to support transit.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD): The primary federal agency for regulating housing, including fair housing and housing finance. It is also the major federal funding source for affordable housing programs.

Universal Design: The design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

Very Low-Income: Household with income below 50% of metropolitan area median, as defined by HUD, for its own programmatic purposes.

Virginia Board for People with Disabilities (VBPD): The Developmental Disabilities (DD) Planning Council for Virginia. DD Councils are in every state and territory of the United States. They work for the benefit of individuals with DD and their families to identify needs and help develop policies, programs and services that will meet these needs in a manner that respects dignity and independence.

Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT): Agency responsible for statewide transportation facility planning, construction, and maintenance.

Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT): A state agency reporting to the Secretary of Transportation. DRPT has three primary areas of activity (rail, public transportation, and commuter services) focusing on the movement of people and goods throughout Virginia. DRPT works closely with VDOT, as well as other transportation agencies responsible for aviation and ports.

Visitability: The incorporation of features into housing design so that it can be lived in or visited by people with disabilities.

Voucher: A government payment to, or on behalf of, a household, to be used solely to pay a portion of the household's housing costs.

Glossary of Acronyms

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act

AMI: Area Median Income

BRT: Bus Rapid Transit

CAA: Community Action Agency

CDBG: Community Development Block Grant

CHDO: Community Housing Development Organization

CSB: Community Services Board

CSBG: Community Services Block Grant

CTB: Commonwealth Transportation Board

DHCD: Department of Housing and Community Development

DMHMRSAS: Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services

DSB: Disability Services Board

FMR: Fair Market Rent

HCV: Housing Choice Vouchers

HUD: Department of Housing and Urban Development

GIS: Geographic Information System

ICF/MR: Intermediate Care Facility for People with Mental Retardation

MPO: Metropolitan Planning Organization

MSA: Metropolitan Statistical Area

PDC: Planning District Commission

PHA: Public Housing Authority

PWD: People with Disabilities

TOD: Transit Oriented Development

TRD: Transit Ready Development