**™**

**BLD**

**BETTER LIVING DESIGN I N S T I T U T E™**

Age Friendly Accessory Dwelling Unit

Design Criteria

The competition’s age-friendly design guidance is derived from the Better Living Design Institute’s (BLDI or BLD) Better Living Design features, which in turn is based on the principles of Universal Design. Because the residential environment is so special and particular, it really requires a different universal design approach compared to public spaces. We created the Better Living Design Institute to apply our understandings of universal design to the residential environment. The goal of UD and BLD applied to homes is to make them safer, and to add convenience and ease of use.

The functional criteria list provided for the competition is a subset of a much longer and more detailed guidance document that includes many more features and has three tiers of possible achievement. The age-friendly competition criteria includes essential elements that need to be part of a home that is safe and allows the older adult to maintain their lifestyle. Additionally, we are making available a document that will help explain the features and offer suggestions for additional features.

# Mainstreamed Appearance

©2023 Better Living Design

The design criteria for this ADU Design Competition reveals a critical aspect of BLD (and universal design)—aesthetics, which helps to differentiate Better Living Design from design solutions that are just functional. With a BLD approach, usability characteristics are built-in and integrated into the overall scheme, and therefore mainstreamed—not separate and distinct. A BLD solution for this competition has to work well, look good and be marketable to a broad audience.

Over the course of its useful life, an age-friendly accesso- ry dwelling unit (ADU) might be occupied by individuals or couples across the age spectrum, young to old, and with varying ability levels. As such, these dwellings need to have improved functionality but need to appeal to a broad audience. While this competition is focused on the particular needs of older adults, no one wants to live in

a home that has stereotypical or stigmatizing features. A winning design will demonstrate that they don’t have to.

All features must be integrated into the overall design intent of the home. A successful ADU will have a main- streamed appearance, inside and out. Incorporating the BLD guidance into your design will insure an ADU that is usable and easily adaptable.

# Long-Term Flexibility

While featuring far more utility than a standard home, a BLD home is not expected to eliminate the need for house- holds to customize their home over time. Everyone cus- tomizes their home over time in a variety of ways, but BLD features will help to avoid the most costly and extensive

re-modeling that is the most often associated with long- term livability.

# Scale

*Age-Friendly (or Universal, or Better Living Design) is realized at both large and small scales. At the level of foundation type and grading, as well as door width. Bathroom size and fixture location matters, but so does door and window operability. Via ideation, plan callouts, and specifications, please identify the key design elements that make your project suitable for long term living by an older adult. The competition realizes that each element listed below might not be fully achieved but each item must be addressed in some form.*

*We welcome substantially equivalent solutions. If you have a creative or alternate solution that achieves the same result, don’t hesitate to contact UDI.*

2

©2023 Better Living Design

AROUND THE HOUSE

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Paths (including steps along a path) | |
|  | 1:20 max slope |
|  | Min 42” wide surface |
|  | If present: step free route to gardens, remote patios, at-grade cooking eating areas |
|  |  |
| Entrances | |
|  | One zero-step entrance with minimum 60”x72” covering |
|  | Level (2%) landing at entry |
|  | 36” wide entry door |

INSIDE THE HOUSE

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Doors/Cased openings | |
| Width | |
|  | At least 32” wide hinged door |
|  | Sliding, pocket, barn doors at least 32” wide clear opening |
|  | At least 36” wide cased openings |
| Clearances | |
|  | 18”–24” clear floor space beside door on pull side at latch jamb |
|  |  |
| Windows | |
|  | Atleast one operable window in the unit, with a 20”x24” clear opening and top of sill at </= 36” aff |
|  | 48” Maximum hardware height for window controls |
|  | Easily operable windows |
|  |  |
| Hallways/Passages/Thresholds | |
|  | 42” Wide minimum hallways (note: minimize hallways) |
|  | |
| Bathroom | |
| General | |
|  | Adequate maneuvering space provided at lavatory, toilet and bathing fixture |
| Components of Bathroom | |
|  | Clear space (36”) in front of toilet |
|  | Toilet centered 18” from any side wall, cabinet, or tub |
|  | Minimum 60” x 36” (48” preferred), curbless shower, or tub |
| Controls | |
|  | Offset controls in tubs and showers for easy reach |
|  | Controls unobstructed by other fixures and cabinetry |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Kitchen | |
| Circulation | |
|  | Kitchen layout with 42” between cabinet faces |
| Cabinets/Shelving/Drawers | |
|  | Drawer base cabinets |
|  | Cabinets with loop or touch latches |
| Appliances | |
|  | Range with front or side controls |
|  | If wall mounted oven, controls no more than 48”H |
|  | Locate microwave within easy reach range— i.e not over stove |
| Work Surfaces | |
|  | Continuous countertop between stove and sink |
|  | One lowered, 32” H, work surface with knee space (Could be eat-in kitchen table) |
|  |  |
| Laundry | |
|  | Clear floor space 36” wide across full width in front of washer and dryer and |
|  | Washer/Dryer unit(s) have controls on front </= 54” aff |
|  | Front loading washer and dryer |
|  |  |
| Living Room/Flex Space | |
|  | Allow a 24” clear passage to maneuver between couch and coffee table |
|  | Allow a min. 36” clear passage to maneuver to seating |
|  |  |
| Bedroom(s) | |
|  | Allow for 36” clear aisle on one side of the bed and between bed and furniture |
|  | Maximized storage in 18”–54” reach zone |
|  | Allow for 36” clear aisle on both sides of bed and 36” clear passage between bed and furniture |
|  |  |
| Indoor Environmental Quality (IEQ) | |
|  | Low VOC sheet products, cabinet materials, and floor and wall finishes |
|  | Thermostats at 42”-48” aff |
|  | Layered lighting |
|  | |
| Switches and Controls | |
| Lighting | |
|  | Light switches 42”–48” above floor |
|  | All light switches are easy to operate |
| Electrical Panel | |
|  | Locate 24”–54” aff with a minimum 30” x 48” clear floor space in front |
| Outlets | |
|  | Locate general purpose convenience outlets 18”–24”aff |

©2023 Better Living Design

3

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | Outlets over counters and tables are within reachable range |
|  | Added electrical outlets at beds and desks, 4-plex boxes each side |
|  | Outlet near toilet in bathroom |
|  |  |

4

©2023 Better Living Design

WHOLE HOUSE FUNCTIONALITY

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Maintenance | |
|  | Low maintenance exterior siding |
|  | If applicable, low maintenance decking |
|  |  |