ARCHITECTURAL MANUAL
APPENDIX II

AMENITIES GUIDEBOOK

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Introduction:

This guidebook is an outline of minimum standards for site amenities required by the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and HOME funding programs and establishes a baseline for the quality of construction and financial investment in amenities. More requirements for unit amenities may be found in the Architectural Manual.

ALL AMENITIES

New construction and rehabilitation property amenities must meet accessibility requirements outlined in the DCA Accessibility Manual. For tenant safety and security, exterior amenities should be within view of at least one apartment building. Amenity lighting should be sufficient for its purpose (i.e. evening mail collection, etc.), and be directed down to diminish nuisance light. Rules posted at all amenities must be in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Amendments Act. Amenities should be usable beyond leasing office hours and on weekends.

Qualified substitutions may be submitted for approval prior to Application submission; equivalency standards will be applied to amenity substitutions.

REQUIRED AMENITIES

Community Room / Community Building

The community gathering room/building should provide a space for tenants to gather for lounging, special events, meetings, parties, classes, and workshops. The space should comfortably accommodate the tenants in the community and be designed to meet Minimum State Code requirements for occupant load and means of egress. Signage, as required by *UFAS*, shall be provided.

Equipment:

Furnishing must include, but are not limited to:

- Seating Area
- Coffee Table
- Task Lighting

Suggested furnishings include:

- Television
- Sound System
- Musical Instruments
- Game / Card Table

Additional Requirements:

Kitchen and bath facilities intended for tenant use must be accessible. See the DCA Accessibility Manual for further guidance.

Exterior Gathering Area

The exterior gathering area should provide proper shelter from the elements and is reserved exclusively for the social interaction of the tenants and their guests.

Additional Requirements:

- The gathering area must be covered by a roof;
- Porches may not be used for other purposes, such as a driveway or parking space;
- Examples of exterior areas that do not meet the requirements of this amenity:
    - Porte-cocheres
    - Carports
    - Small awnings that can shelter only one person
    - Pergolas

On-site Laundry Facility or Washers / Dryers installed in each unit

All communities must provide washer/dryer facilities and equipment on site. An onsite laundry is not required if washers and dryers are installed in units and maintained at no additional cost to tenants. Laundry facilities shall be large enough to accommodate the required number of washers and dryers.

Signage and Equipment:

- Post signage that addresses machine operation, safety guidelines, and hours of operation.
- There shall be one washer and one dryer per every 25 units.
- All washers must be Energy Star rated.

Additional Requirements:

- Free-standing laundry buildings must be within a reasonable walking distance of the residential units.
- The facility must be accessible to the disabled. Each laundry facility must include at least one accessible washer and dryer placed in required clear floor spaces.
- Access must be provided to this area beyond leasing office business hours.
- Laundry facilities, including those within units, must be vented to the exterior, controlling humidity levels to prevent the growth of bacteria, mold, mildew, and dust mite infestations.

Interior Furnished Gathering Areas (for multi-story Senior tenancy projects)

Interior gathering areas should be located throughout the complex including but not limited to areas near elevators. These areas provide a space for rest as well as small gathering spaces for conversation.

Equipment:

- table, chairs/sofa, task lighting

ADDITIONAL AMENITIES

Fenced Community Garden

A fenced community garden will provide a minimum planting area of 200 square feet. Community gardens, which for various reasons are not used, must be kempt. Community gardens that are allowed to deteriorate through management neglect will not be tolerated.

Signage and Equipment**:**

- Post rules and safety guidelines at garden entrance.
- Provide a water source nearby for watering the garden. The water source should take into consideration best practices for water conservation. Rain barrels may be used, but not as the primary source of water.

Additional Requirements:

- The soil must be properly prepared for planting.
- Gardens shall be surrounded on all sides with a minimum 4' high fence of weatherproof construction to discourage small children and animals from entering the garden. If pressurized wood is used for fencing or raised-beds, ensure the manufacturer verifies that it is safe to grow edible plants in soil surrounded by their wood product.
- The effects of all contaminants discovered in the Phase I Environmental Assessment must be considered before choosing to build the garden.
- A portion of these plots must be accessible to those with mobility impairments including an accessible route and a planting surface within the accessible reach ranges.

Equipped walking path with exercise stations or sitting areas

The walking path should at least 5 feet wide and provide a safe and accessible path for fitness and leisure. Rules and safety guidelines should be posted along entry points to the path.

- Walking surface should provide proper firmness, stability, and slip resistance. Asphalt paving, crushed stone or fines, packed soil, and other natural materials can provide surfaces that are firm and stable. A surface stabilizer may be needed to create a firm and stable surface. Concrete paths shall have a brushed finish.
- Base material should be laid over a geo-textile fabric to prevent vegetation growth and compacted with the correct moisture content, similar to the preparation of a roadbed.
- Maximum slope should be at least 50% of the linear footage of the path must have a slope less than 5%.
- Walking paths must be separate from the sidewalks that access parking and buildings and must not disturb more than 1/10th of an acre of wetland.

Equipment (either benches or fitness stations):

Benches:

- Benches must have backrests. Additional provision of an armrest at one end of the bench, for use by the elderly and disabled, is recommended.
- A fully accessible clear floor space shall be provided at one end of the bench.
- Benches must be secured to the ground or walking path and protected against ground subsidence.
- Benches shall be made of a weatherproof material.
- There must be at least one bench for every 100 feet of walking path.

Fitness Stations:

- Provide one piece of equipment per every 100 feet of walking trail.
- Equipment may be grouped together or spread out along the trail.
- All strength, cardiovascular, flexibility, or balance/coordination equipment must be intended for outdoor use and made of a durable and weatherproof material (see http://www.triactiveamerica.com/).

Equipped Playground

The design of the playground should provide a safe, accessible play area for children of different ages.

Signage and Equipment:

- Post rules and safety guidelines that include guidance as to the age appropriateness of the equipment.
- Provide three or more separate pieces of equipment that meet or exceed the guidelines set forth in Publication Number 325, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) Handbook for Public Playground Safety.
- Benches for adult supervision are recommended.

Additional Requirements:

- In playgrounds intended to serve children of all ages, the layout of pathways and the landscaping of the playground should show the distinct areas for the different age groups.
- Groundcover must be provided as specified in Publication Number 325, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) Handbook for Public Playground Safety.
- Equipment intended for younger children (ages 2 -5) must be separated at least by a buffer zone, which may be an area with shrubs or benches. Short fencing is preferable;
- Access must be provided to this area beyond leasing office business hours.

Covered Pavilion with picnic/barbecue facilities

The pavilion encourages residents to hold community or family reunion type functions. The shelter should be a permanent structure made of weatherproof material.

Signage and Equipment:

- Post rules and safety guidelines for grill use.

- One picnic table for every 50 units. At least one picnic table shall have an extension that allows clear knee space for handicap access. Picnic table shall have permanent anchorage to the ground.
- One permanent barbeque grill (gas or charcoal) for every 50 units. At least one grill shall be on accessible an accessible path and have permanent anchorage to the ground.
- The pavilion area shall have a durable surface with defined edges such as concrete or pebbles with edge guard.

Furnished Arts & Craft /Activity Center

The activity center will provide either children or seniors, as appropriate to tenant base, an indoor gathering space for games and craft activities. 200 square feet is the minimum room size.

Signage & Equipment:

- Handicap accessible sink
- Storage for games
- Work tables and seating.
- TV with capability to broadcast instructional videos
- One corkboard or dry-erase board

Equipped Computer Center

The computer center, of at least 150 square feet, should provide tenants high-speed access for educational or leisurely web-surfing as well as basic software applications to help facilitate personal, educational and career development.

Signage and Equipment:

- Post rules and guidelines for computer use.
- Computer desk or desk area; folding tables are not allowed
- Seating: chairs specifically designed for computer use
- One computer for every 25 units
- One printer at a minimum

- One fax machine, at a minimum
- High speed internet access
- Basic word processing and spreadsheet software

Additional Requirements:

- Appropriate controls to restrict internet surfing must be installed.
- Access must be provided to this area beyond leasing office business hours.

Furnished Exercise / Fitness Center

The exercise/fitness center, of at least 200 square feet, should provide tenants with access to equipment that will improve the fitness and well-being of residents.

Signage and Equipment:

- Post rules for operating each piece of equipment in addition to general exercise and safety guidelines.
- Provide at least one piece of equipment per 25 units.
- One wall must have mirrors covering 70% of the wall area.

Additional Requirements:

- Access must be provided to this area beyond leasing office business hours.

Additional Recommendations:

- A balance of cardio-vascular and strength equipment is optimal.
- A mix of free weights is recommended.
- A small library with information on exercise, nutrition, and exercise videos is recommended.

Wellness Center

A wellness center, of at least 150 square feet, will provide tenants with onsite access to professional medical screenings and health education.

Equipment:

- Prep sink
- Exam Table
- Task Lighting
- Library with wellness information appropriate to tenancy

Additional Recommendations:

- A separate private restroom adjacent to the exam room is highly recommended.

AMENITIES GUIDEBOOK PHOTOS

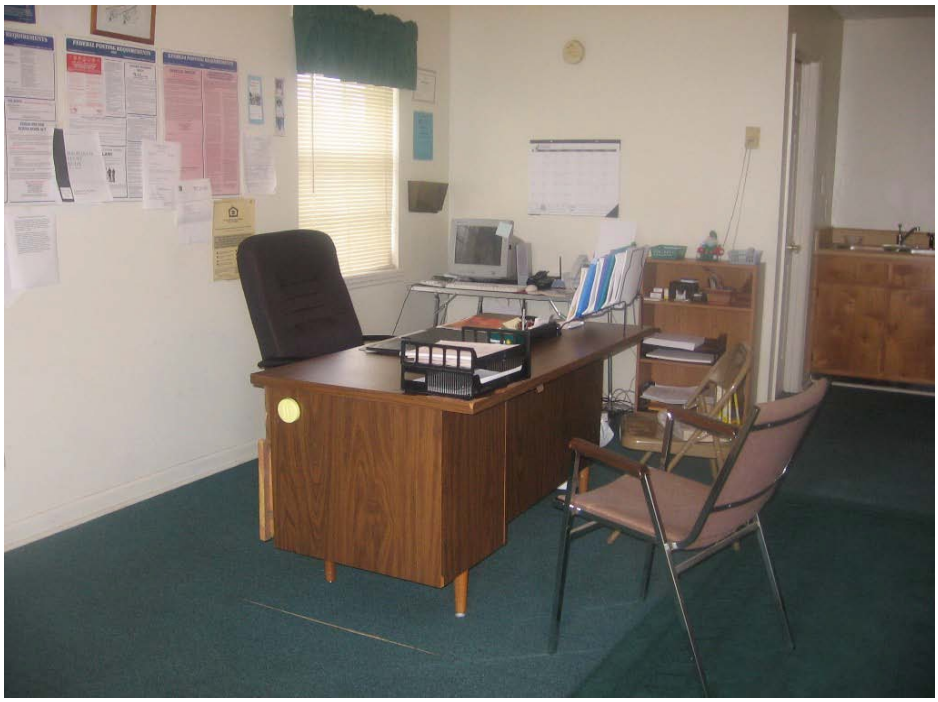
This appendix to the Amenities Guidebook provides pictures of Georgia Department of Community Affairs projects representing good and bad examples of site amenities listed in the Guidebook. Refer to the Guidebook for detailed requirements and specifications for these amenities.

REQUIRED AMENITIES

Community Building/Room

Acceptable Community Building Exterior

Acceptable Community Room Interior



Not Acceptable Community Room Interior

The property manager's office must be separate from the community room.

Exterior Gathering Area

Acceptable

Not Acceptable

The gazebo is not permanently set, has no landscaping, and no accessible path.

On-site Laundry Facility or Washers/Dryers installed in each unit

Acceptable

Note the front loading machine at right.

Interior Furnished Gathering Areas (Senior Only)

Acceptable

OPTIONAL AMENITIES

Attractively Fenced Community Garden

Acceptable

The garden beds are elevated to an accessible height, each plot has a water source, and the plots are on an accessible path.

-+

Not Acceptable

No fence; overgrown with weeds.

Equipped Playground

Acceptable

Not Acceptable

Equipment does not appear to be constructed in compliance with CPSC guidelines for materials, ladder handrails, or ground cover.

Covered pavilion with picnic/barbecue facilities

Acceptable

Not acceptable

The pavilion structure is borderline permanent, weatherproof structure. There are no grills, there are not enough picnic tables, and the absence of landscaping makes the pavilion appear uninviting.

Furnished Children's Activity/Seniors Craft Center

Acceptable

Computer Center

Acceptable

Not acceptable

Folding chairs are not acceptable. Equipment should be new; the condition of this equipment is questionable.

Furnished Exercise / Fitness Center

Acceptable

There is a variety of commercial grade equipment, cardiovascular equipment rests on slip-resistant mats, and the room is mirrored.

Not Acceptable

Equipment is used and not commercial grade. There is not enough equipment for the size of the complex.

Wellness Center

Almost Acceptable

This Wellness Suite includes a prep sink, and exam area, a library waiting area and a bathroom that services the suite. The suite requires furnishings—an exam table and furnished library with health literature—to be acceptable.