

Universal Design

WHAT'S YOUR ROLE:

Builders

- Notify buyers of their options.

Architects, Designers, Planners:

- Plan ahead, do what's right, make a difference.

Prospective Home Owners

- Determine if any Universal Design features are desired and contact your builder for cost estimates on incorporating these into your future home.

The City of Fremont's Universal Design Ordinance requires builders to offer certain accessibility features to consumers as an upgrade option. This ordinance gives consumers the option of purchasing homes that are more visitable, usable, and safer for all persons.

Imagine...

a home where people of all abilities can enjoy living

a home where you and your loved ones can age in place

a home where all of your friends and family can visit

"Adding universal design features as part of the initial home construction is significantly less expensive than a later attempt to retrofit a home"

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

The Universal Design Ordinance can be found in Chapter 15.67 of the Fremont Municipal Code available online at: www.codepublishing.com/ca/fremont

Resources:

Universal Design Alliance
www.universaldesign.org

Universal Design Institute
www.udinstitute.org

Fremont Municipal Code
www.codepublishing.com/ca/fremont

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal_Design



**For questions about the Universal Design Ordinance, contact:
City of Fremont Community Development
Phone: 510-494-4460
www.fremont.gov/373/Plans-and-Permits**

What is Universal Design?

Universal Design incorporates features that increase the usability of the home by people of all ages, sizes, and abilities. A universally designed home enhances the ability of all residents to live independently in their own homes as long as possible. Universal Design homes allow the house to adapt to a lifetime of changing needs.

Why Universal Design?

Most owner-occupied single family homes in the United States have features that limit basic access, such as raised porches, steps at thresholds, and narrow bathroom doors. Retrofitting these features in a home is costly. Sometimes the home cannot be adapted sufficiently for the resident to remain in the home. Universal Design can change that, and **incorporating these features at the building stage adds minimal cost to a new home.**

What Do Examples of Universal Design Features Include?

- No-step entry
- Wider interior doors and hallways
- Audio & visual doorbell
- At least one bathroom or powder room on the primary entry level
- Hand-held adjustable shower head
- Kitchen on an accessible route of entry
- Electrical outlets and switches at accessible heights
- Lever door handles

What are the seven Principles and Guidelines of Universal Design?

As defined by the Center of Universal Design:

- Equitable Use
- Flexibility in Use
- Simple and Intuitive Use
- Perceptible Information
- Tolerance for Error
- Low Physical Effort
- Size & Space Approach and Use

What are the Benefits?

Universal Design makes a home friendly and easy to navigate for everyone. Steps at the front door can be equally challenging for strollers and wheelchairs. Families are able to welcome relatives and friends with disabilities. Residents who develop disabilities are more likely to be able to remain in their homes rather than having to move or remodel. ***The resale of the home is enhanced because home buyers are attracted to homes that welcome their aging parents and provide easy use for themselves.***

When building or remodeling, it's more cost-effective to add many Universal Design features during the planning stage. There are a number of design features that can be built for little or no cost. Their addition at the beginning saves the need for future retrofits.

Universal Design Options

PRIMARY ENTRY *Fremont Municipal Code § 15.67.060*

Accessible Route to Primary Entry

- A step free walkway allows easy access for everyone

Low Door Threshold

- Great for strollers, wheelchairs, and rolling luggage

Wide Entry Area

- Creates maneuvering space and the ability to stand next to the door while opening

Wide Entry Door

- Allows accessibility and ease for moving large furniture

Second Wide Exterior Door

- A second wide exterior door is great for flexibility in moving large items, accessibility and emergency exit

Lower Peephole

- Provides added safety and security for children

Lower Doorbell

- Great for children and universal access

INTERIOR / EXTERIOR ROUTES *FMC § 15.67.070*

Wide Accessible Routes

(to bathroom, common use area, kitchen and bedroom. Additional access may include laundry room, storage area, and yard/patio.)

- Provides easy access to common spaces
- Additional options include handrail installation and/or reinforcement for future installation

Level Floor Height (in bathrooms, kitchen and common rooms, or on accessible routes)

- Increases usable space and helps to safeguard against trips and falls

BATHROOM *Fremont Municipal Code § 15.67.080*

Accessible First Floor Bathroom

- Great for guests, children, and convenient access

Ample Clear Space

- Allows shared use and wheelchair access

Support Bars (option to have installed or have reinforcement added for future installation)

- Provides added stability and injury support

Lever-Style Faucets

- Creates ease of use and aesthetic appeal

Accessible Sink and Water Closet

- Great for wheelchair access

Lowered Mirror and Towel Bars

- Great for children, universal access and convenience

KITCHEN *Fremont Municipal Code § 15.67.090*

Clear Space at Stove and Sink

- Great for universal access and busy kitchens

Lower Work Surface

- Allows flexible use for everyone

Lever-Style Faucets

- Creates ease of use and aesthetic appeal

Removable Under-Sink Cabinets

- Allows seated use and wheelchair access

Hood Controls at Switch Level

- Easier access and reduces reaching

BEDROOMS *Fremont Municipal Code § 15.67.110*

Bedroom on the First Floor

- Creates space for guests, multipurpose use and accessibility

GENERAL *Fremont Municipal Code § 15.67.130*

Rocker-Style Light Switches

- Easy use

Wide Doors and Clear Space

- Easy access and great for moving large items

Hand Activated Doors

- Allows easy access

Low-Pile Carpeting

- Offers durability, easy maintenance and wheelchair access

Raised Outlets

- Reduces bending and allows easy access

Lowered Switches

- Great for children and easy reach

Conduit for Future Wiring

- Future integration of technology without major retrofit expense

Additional Outlets in Staircase

- Great for future chair lift installation, convenient vacuuming, and plug-in lighting