Design Guidelines

What they are, how they work
and where to get started

Enterprise®

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

This document draws on the firsthand experience of the authors, two former Enterprise Rose Architectural Fellows, in writing their own set of guidelines for affordable housing developers:

Brita Carlson, a former fellow with A Community of Friends in Los Angeles, worked to bring deep sustainability and inclusive design practices to her organization's development process.

Alexis Smith, a former fellow with Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly in Boston, was devoted to creating environments where residents can age and thrive in community.

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intro

Design guidelines have become a popular tool to help affordable housing developers achieve desired outcomes. But what are they? And how do you know if they're right for your organization?

in this section...

A what are design guidelines, anyway?

B overview of the process   **C** before you get started

A what are design guidelines, anyway?

> *Design guidelines convey to your team what you expect from the design of your buildings, and offer recommendations for how your buildings can best meet your needs and the needs of your residents.*

In practice, guidelines can take many different forms, from a simple excel spreadsheet to an extensively illustrated document. Whatever form they take, most guidelines have one thing in common: they provide project teams specific guidance on how design can be used to best accomplish an organization's goals. We will get into some options for format and content in Section 2 of this resource, but first, let's look at what design guidelines can and cannot accomplish:

WHAT CAN THEY DO?
- Clearly communicate preferences to your team
- Streamline the design process
- Set clear goals and priorities
- Improve design consistency

WHAT *CAN'T* THEY DO?
- Make decisions for you
- Guarantee green building certification
- Eliminate the need for an architect
- Solve organizational issues

So are design guidelines right for you? If you think they are, or if you're unsure, this resource will lead you through the process of creating your own guidelines and selecting content you might want to include. Read on to learn about other organizations' experiences and how you can get started.
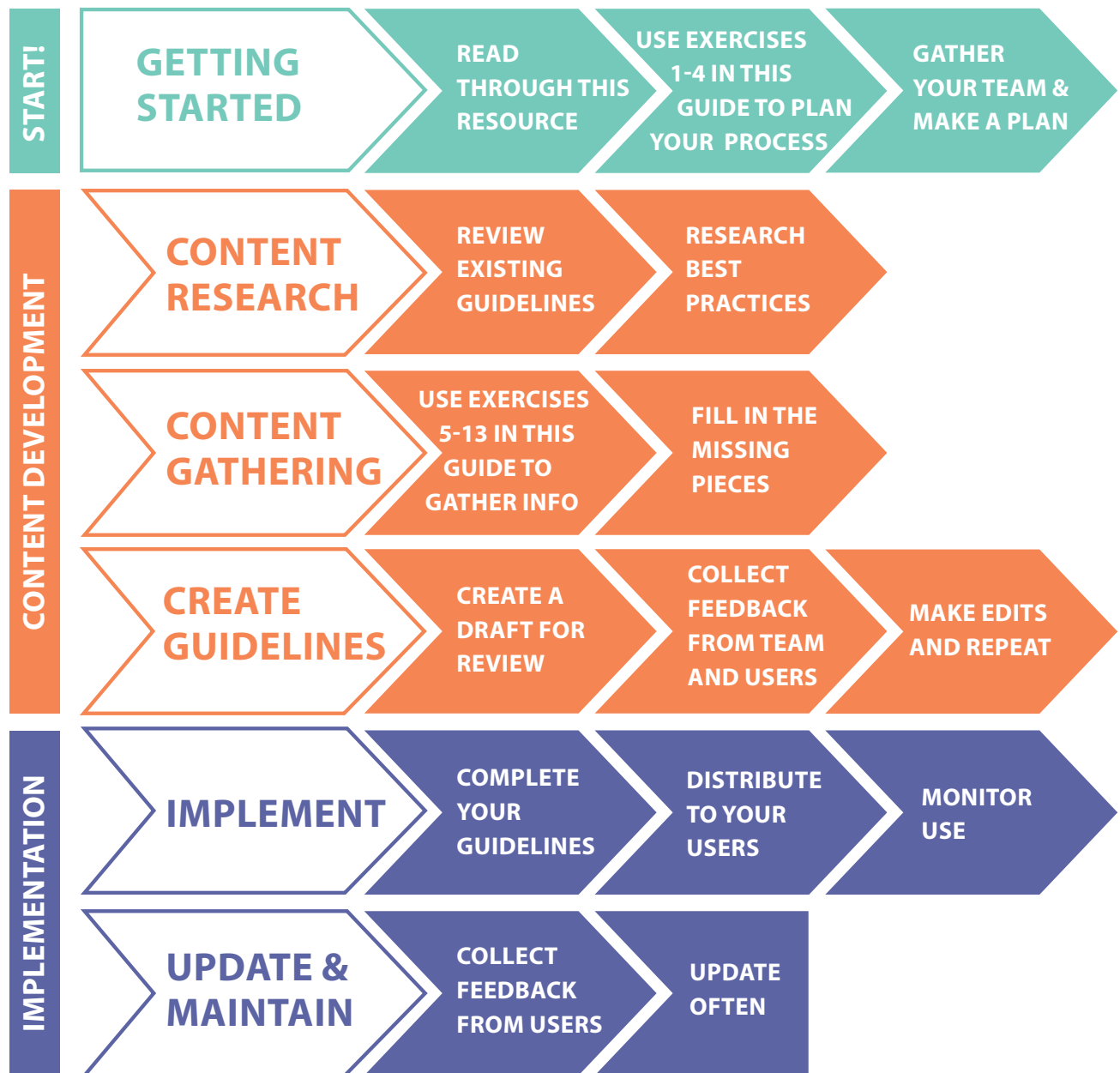
Exercises Page 39

As you make your way through this resource, these arrows will direct you to exercises in the workbook that can help you start thinking about how to create your own guidelines.

B overview of the process

ROADMAP TO CREATING DESIGN GUIDELINES

Every organization's process for creating design guidelines will look a little bit different. Section 1d: Planning Your Process will take you through the steps of planning a process tailored to your needs. The roadmap below outlines a typical process for creating design guidelines, and highlights where this resource may be helpful to you.

| START! | GETTING STARTED | READ THROUGH THIS RESOURCE | USE EXERCISES 1-4 IN THIS GUIDE TO PLAN YOUR PROCESS | GATHER YOUR TEAM & MAKE A PLAN |

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT	CONTENT RESEARCH	REVIEW EXISTING GUIDELINES	RESEARCH BEST PRACTICES	
	CONTENT GATHERING	USE EXERCISES 5-13 IN THIS GUIDE TO GATHER INFO	FILL IN THE MISSING PIECES	
	CREATE GUIDELINES	CREATE A DRAFT FOR REVIEW	COLLECT FEEDBACK FROM TEAM AND USERS	MAKE EDITS AND REPEAT

| IMPLEMENTATION | IMPLEMENT | COMPLETE YOUR GUIDELINES | DISTRIBUTE TO YOUR USERS | MONITOR USE |
| | UPDATE & MAINTAIN | COLLECT FEEDBACK FROM USERS | UPDATE OFTEN | |

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This resource will walk you through the process of creating your own design guidelines and will give you ideas about what to include. Each section provides a general overview of the topic at hand and is paired with an exercise in the workbook designed to get you thinking more deeply about that piece of the guidelines picture:

SECTION 1: GETTING STARTED

Get guidance on *HOW* to go about developing your own set of design guidelines.

A: **Understanding your 'why'** [p 9] ·············· **Exercise 1** [p 39]

B: **Identifying your audience** [p 10-11] ·········· **Exercise 2** [p 40]

C: **Forming your team** [p 12-13] ·············· **Exercise 3** [p 41]

D: **Planning your process** [p 14] ·············· **Exercise 4** [p 42-43]

SECTION 2: CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

Get guidance on *WHAT* to include in your own guidelines to make them work for your organization.

A: **Where should you begin?** [p 19] ·············· **Exercise 5** [p 45]

B: **Organizational information** [p 20-21] ·········· **Exercises 6** [p 46]

C: **Design principles** [p 22-23] ·············· **Exercise 7** [p 47]

D: **Design preferences** [p 24-28] ·············· **Exercises 8-11** [p 48-51]

E: **Standard specification** [p 29-32] ·············· **Exercise 12** [p 52]

F: **Reference documents** [p 33] ·············· **Exercise 13** [p 53]

SECTION 3: WORKBOOK EXERCISES

C before you get started

Creating design guidelines for your organization can seem like a daunting task, but don't let that overwhelm you! Here are our top tips to keep in mind when creating design guidelines:

TOP TIPS FOR DESIGN GUIDELINES:

1 **IT'S AN ITERATIVE PROCESS:** Creating a full set of design guidelines takes time, and will require input form a number of people. The first version won't be your final - so get started.

2 **START SMALL:** You don't have to try to do everything at once. Start with one exercise in this book, or focus on one section for your guidelines. Your guidelines can grow over time.

3 **KNOW YOUR CAPACITY**: Creating an extensive set of guidelines can take a long time. Set realistic expectations and don't over-commit yourself.

4 **DON'T GO IT ALONE:** Bringing others within your organization on-board early in your process is the best way to ensure success. Your guidelines will benefit from a greater variety of expertise, and others will be far more invested in the outcomes.

5 **KEEP IT SIMPLE:** While it is tempting to include every detailed preference your team has, overwhelming your reader with too many requirements will make it harder to keep them engaged. Start with the most important considerations and build from there.

6 **FOCUS ON IMPACT:** Don't overprescribe. Getting too prescriptive will prevent your team from bringing new, creative ideas to the table. Allow room for innovation by focusing your guidelines only on the things that are most important to you.

NOTES:

1

getting started

Creating your organization's own set of design guidelines can be a daunting task - but it doesn't have to be. Early planning will help you and your team start out on the right foot and make the process that much easier.

in this section...

A understanding your 'why'

B identifying your audience

C forming your team

D planning your process

(A) understanding your 'why'

Why does your organization want design guidelines? This is one of the most important questions for you and your team to consider. The answer will define your goals for the document and will help you focus your efforts on the content and format that best suit your particular needs. Here are a few common goals:

MEMORIALIZE INSTITUTIONAL KNOWLEDGE:
Capture your team's knowledge about what does and does not work for your residents and staff. This enables you to replicate successes and avoid repeating mistakes.

PROCESS EFFICIENCY:
Build consensus around specific design elements and get your full development team on the same page before project development even begins. With a set of standard recommendations, you can streamline the design process, allowing your team to focus on project-specific issues.

OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY:
Clear documentation of preferences or a set of standard materials and products can help streamline replacement, repair, and unit turnovers.

ADVANCE MISSION-BASED GOALS:
Many organizations have goals beyond simply the creation of affordable housing, such as advancing health, sustainability, or aging in place. Articulating how these goals are translated into building design gives your readers a clearer picture of what you are ultimately trying to accomplish.

There will likely be more than one reason why you want guidelines, and your reasons don't need to be limited to those listed here. To focus your time, try to identify your most pressing need and begin there. Remember, you can always revisit additional goals as your document evolves.

*Do any of these reasons resonate with you? If not, that's okay! Jump to **Exercise 1: Finding your 'why'** [page 39] to help you think further about developing your organization's goals for your own set of guidelines.*

(B) identifying your audience

WHO WILL USE YOUR GUIDELINES?

Your design guidelines will need to reach a specific audience depending on your organization's structure and goals. By determining who will be using your guidelines, you can focus your efforts on providing information that will be most useful to them. Of course, your guidelines can always grow to address other groups' needs as well. To get you started, we've highlighted some of the most common audiences for guidelines on the following page.

Don't know who should be reading your guidelines? Jump to Exercise 2: Targeting your Audience [page 40] to help you think further about identifying the readers that need to be reached to meet your organization's goals.

Guidelines in Practice: A Community of Friends
Tailoring guidelines to multiple audiences

For many years, A Community of Friends (ACOF), a developer of supportive housing in Los Angeles, kept a record of design and materials preferences for their new construction projects in a long word document list. Every year, the heads of the real estate development and property and asset management teams would connect to talk about what spaces, products, and materials were working. This feedback would then be added to the list. However, a lack of common understanding and organizational buy-in limited its usefulness, and in 2017 ACOF decided that they needed a new approach.

In reimagining their design guidelines, ACOF considered many formats for organizing their content and ensuring its utility amongst various audiences. They ended on a multi-platform approach: a spreadsheet for materials and product preferences, a design resource organized by room type, and a project program worksheet for each unique project to communicate the most important design requirements to the architect. Each document has a specific purpose and is designed for a particular audience, but together they ensure design quality and knowledge are carried through to ACOF's projects.

FIND THE RIGHT AUDIENCE FOR YOUR GUIDELINES:

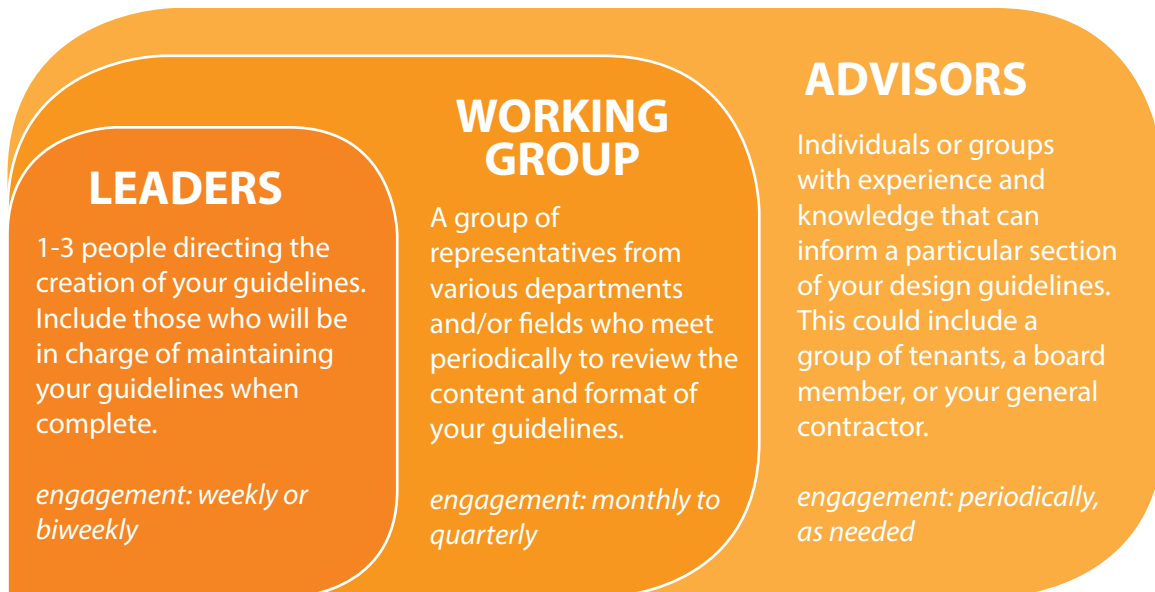| potential reader	how they would use your guidelines
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT STAFF	• Orient new team members to your organization's project standards • Guide less experienced staff as they review plans to ensure that projects are meeting your organization's goals • Ensure consistency across all projects in larger organizations where multiple project managers may each be making independent decisions regarding design and finishes
PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT	• Access information about products and materials for regular daily maintenance, unit turnovers and larger renovations • Understand reasoning behind why certain decisions were made during design and construction • Keep managers of older buildings up to date regarding new organizational standards
ARCHITECTS, CONTRACTORS, AND OTHER CONSULTANTS	• Understand your organization's goals and priorities • Use as a first stop for questions about your standards for design and construction • Reference for particular layouts or finishes that you know work for your organization and your residents

Consider This: *Do you know who is reading your guidelines? Different readers will use your guidelines in different ways. If you know your reader, you can tailor your guidelines to their particular needs. Review the chart above, to help you determine your audience.*

C forming your team

YOUR TEAM

Your guidelines will draw on the expertise of many people within your organization. While involving more people will take more time, most organizations we spoke with reported that a more inclusive process ultimately resulted in a stronger document, as well as a greater level of buy-in when it came to implementing the guidelines.

LEADERS

1-3 people directing the creation of your guidelines. Include those who will be in charge of maintaining your guidelines when complete.

engagement: weekly or biweekly

WORKING GROUP

A group of representatives from various departments and/or fields who meet periodically to review the content and format of your guidelines.

engagement: monthly to quarterly

ADVISORS

Individuals or groups with experience and knowledge that can inform a particular section of your design guidelines. This could include a group of tenants, a board member, or your general contractor.

engagement: periodically, as needed

Many organizations have found it helpful to form a working group made up of the staff who will be most closely involved. Consider the information below when thinking about who to include in your process and how often you should engage them.

Start early in connecting with your various team members and set clear expectations about what input is needed, how and when team members will be involved, and how consensus will be reached. Your process may require a different level of engagement from different people at different times.

*It may already be clear who within your organization should participate in creating your guidelines. If you'd like to give this additional thought, try **Exercise 3: Forming your team** [page 41] in the workbook.*

FIND THE RIGHT TEAM MEMBERS TO CREATE YOUR GUIDELINES:

potential team member	expertise they might contribute
BOARD OF DIRECTORS, LEADERSHIP STAFF	• Emphasize the importance of guidelines for your organization • Ensure your goals are achieved and outcomes reached • Identify your organization's priorities
REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT STAFF	• Understand your organization's current design and development standards • Can identify gaps in your current design process • Understand financial implications of design decisions
BUILDING OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE STAFF	• Know how certain design decisions impact day to day operations and maintenance • Have a practical perspective on the long-term durability of materials and use of space
ARCHITECTS, CONTRACTORS, AND OTHER CONSULTANTS	• Understand common industry best practices, as well as developing trends and technologies • Bring experience and expertise in fields beyond housing development
TENANTS	• First-hand experience with the spaces, materials, and products you use in your buildings • Direct knowledge of their own needs and priorities

Consider This: *Who might have expertise to contribute to your guidelines? For richer content, try thinking outside your traditional development team.*

(D) planning your process

Although it is tempting to immediately begin creating your guidelines, planning your process will ensure the development of your guidelines runs smoothly. In the next few pages we have highlighted the process of developers that have created guidelines of varying scales. As you read through these examples, note which tactics make sense for your organization, and consider what the following steps might look like for your own organization:

1. ASSESS YOUR CAPACITY

As you think about what your guidelines might look like, it is important to be realistic about your capacity. How much time do you have to devote? Will others in your organization be contributing? Trying to tackle too much will make it hard to accomplish anything at all. A limited timeline can work in your favor by keeping you focused.

2. OUTLINE YOUR NEEDS

As you make your way through this resource, begin to think about what your guidelines could look like, and create an outline. Make sure to note who should be involved for each section, and how long you anticipate it taking.

3. MAP YOUR PROCESS

Do you know what your process looks like? Will you have regular check-ins with key team members? When will you seek feedback from senior staff or external professionals? Although your plan may change, setting clear expectations for your team will ensure you get the right input at the right time and create confidence in the process.

4. CREATE YOUR TIMELINE

Creating a timeline will help keep yourself and your team on track. Begin to map out your timeline based on your capacity, your process, and your outline. Be sure to give yourself plenty of time for feedback and scheduling.

KEEPING YOUR GUIDELINES RELEVANT

It is important to think about how the content of your guidelines will remain relevant after their completion. Best practices in the industry are constantly changing as new products and technologies become available. Virtually every developer that we interviewed cited the ability to update the document as one of the most critical factors in its continued success. Make sure that your content is in a format that can be easily updated, and that you have a plan for how often updates will happen and who will be responsible for them.

Guidelines in Practice: New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA)
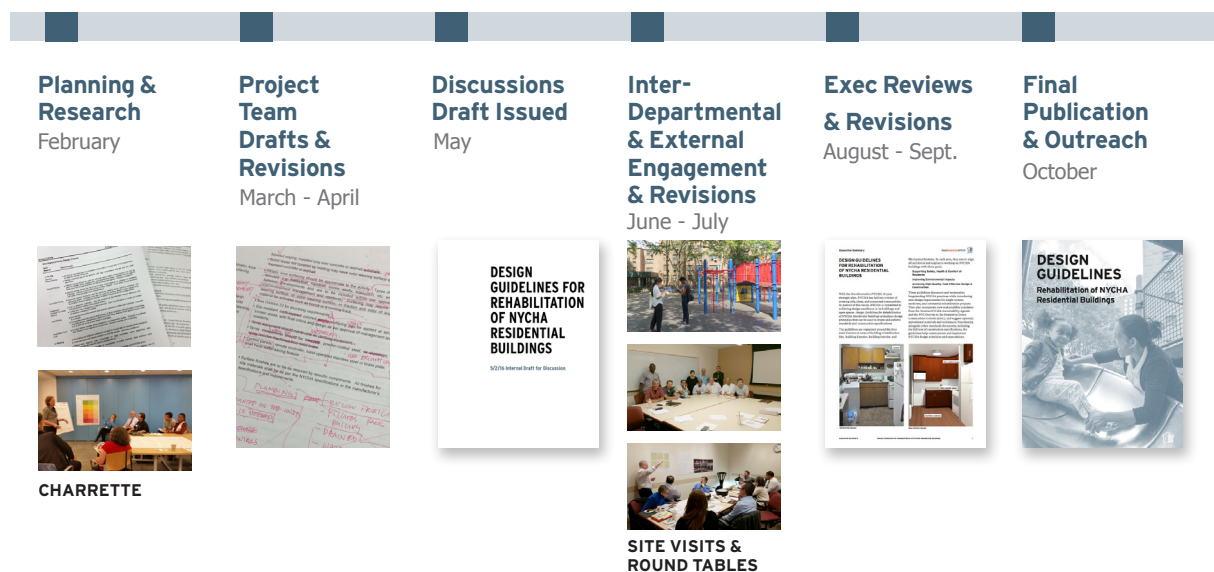## Drawing on expertise from across disciplines and organizations

In their 2015 NextGeneration NYCHA 10-year strategic plan, NYCHA laid out a vision of safe, clean, and connected communities. In pursuit of this vision, NYCHA set out to create comprehensive guidelines that would demonstrate commitment to good design, standardize best practices, and serve as a vehicle for internal and external conversations about best practices.

Internal capacity: The project lead spent about 70% of her time working on the guidelines over the course of roughly one year. The project also involved substantial participation from five team leaders from each of the different disciplines within NYCHA's design department.

Other resources: NYCHA hired an editor to integrate the input from various disciplines and provide technical review. NYCHA also engaged the city's design community through several AIA NY committees, who reviewed drafts and provided expert recommendations. NYCHA's guidelines relied heavily on an external review process with an advisory team, which was critical for increasing public buy-in, adding credibility, and incorporating new ideas.

Takeaways: Although NYCHA operates at a scale far beyond that of most affordable housing developers, their process offers some key lessons that are widely applicable. First, the creation of a comprehensive and polished set of guidelines takes a substantial time commitment, not only from the project lead, but from many other staff who are contributing knowledge. Secondly, incorporating input from professionals outside your organization will strengthen your content. Finally, recognize the value in the process itself: starting an intentional conversation between various departments can, itself, be a valuable tool.

NYCHA Design Guidelines Process Timeline

Planning & Research
February

Project Team Drafts & Revisions
March - April

Discussions Draft Issued
May

Inter-Departmental & External Engagement & Revisions
June - July

Exec Reviews & Revisions
August - Sept.

Final Publication & Outreach
October

CHARRETTE

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION OF NYCHA RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

5/27/16 Internal Draft for Discussion

SITE VISITS & ROUND TABLES

DESIGN GUIDELINES
Rehabilitation of NYCHA Residential Buildings

Guidelines in Practice: Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly (JCHE)
Planning an inclusive, organization-wide process

After forming their real estate department in 2014, JCHE set out to create a document that would guide their nascent development practice. They hoped to use design guidelines to articulate how design could advance JCHE's mission of Aging in Community, memorialize staff knowledge and previous design decisions for future process efficiency, and establish materials consistency across sites.

Internal capacity: The project lead spent about 50% of her time working on the guidelines over the course of one year. JCHE's guidelines benefited from regular review by a core group of team members, as well as input from staff across the entire organization.

Iterative Process: In advance of writing her organization's guidelines, the project lead attended finishes selections meetings and kept a running list of decisions made. To supplement this information, she met with dozens of staff members from every site and every department to get a sense for what worked and what didn't in their buildings. Any topic on which staff had differing opinions was brought to a standing monthly meeting for the larger group to discuss together and arrive at a consensus.

Takeaways: Even if you don't presently have the time to write your guidelines, start by keeping a running list of comments that you hear staff make or decisions that you see made. When you are able to start, you'll have a strong knowledge base already built. Incorporating staff input is critical, resulting in both more informed, higher-quality content, and a higher level of buy-in and support from across the organization.

JCHE Design Guidelines Process Timeline

Design Principles		Apartment Units				Review & Revisions		Common Areas		Review & Revisions
JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC

| Biweekly working group check in and content review

◎ Working draft sent to large group for comments

NOTES:

2

content development

Now comes the fun part: deciding what to include in your guidelines. This chapter guides you on how to pick and choose the elements that resonate most for your organization.

in this section...

Identify the best components for your guidelines:

A where should you begin?

B organizational info

C design principles

D design preferences

E standard specification

F reference documents

Ⓐ where should you begin?

Now that you've laid out your process, it's time to create the content of your guidelines. This section gives an overview of different components that are often included in design guidelines. Keep in mind that your guidelines do not need to include all of the elements described here. You should pick and choose whatever content best meets your needs. Possible sections include:

- Organizational information
- Design principles
- Program and preferences
- Standard specification
- Reference documents

Even if much of the content described here is appealing to you, we recommend focusing on one area at the outset.

WHERE SHOULD YOU BEGIN?

You may already have an idea of what sort of content will be most useful in your design guidelines. If not, think back to the topics from the first section of this document, or to your responses to Exercises 1 and 2 of this workbook (pages 36-37). What is your primary goal in developing guidelines, and what sort of content will help you best address this goal? Who do you envision will read your guidelines, and what sort of information would they find most useful?

Exercise 5
Page 45

If you are not sure where to start in developing your content, try **Exercise 5: Where should you begin?** *[page 45] to spark your thinking.*

NOTES:

B organizational information

In addition to your own development staff, most project teams will involve multiple external partners - architects, contractors, funders, service providers, local governments - who may not be familiar with your organization and its goals. Providing your core organizational information, even though it may not be directly related to building design, will ensure that your team and your partners are all starting on the same page and understand your mission and values.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

Think about what you'd want all persons engaging in one of your projects to understand about who you are and what you do. This information will establish a baseline for your design guidelines.

- What are your organization's mission and values?
- What geographic areas do you cover? What is your organization's history?
- What kinds of clients do you serve, and what are their needs?
- Does your organization provide services in addition to housing?
- Do you manage your own properties?

PROCESS

This is your organization's fundamental information. Most organizations have this content already written, making this content relatively simple to develop.

Who to talk to: Senior staff

Time/resources: Low
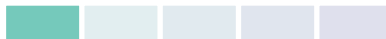
Need for updates: Low
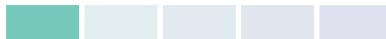
If you need help getting started, try **Exercise 6: Organizational information** *[page 46].*

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we provide wide-ranging on-site support services including individual case management, referral services, life skills classes, substance abuse recovery assistance, family support and programming, childcare assistance, transportation assistance, and employment services. With the support and encouragement of on-site case management staff, these services are provided to tenants with the aim of increasing their skills and fostering residential stability, giving them the opportunity to discover

A COMMUNITY OF FRIENDS

A Community of Friends (ACOF) is a leading nonprofit, affordable housing developer, and service provider in Southern California. Our mission is to end homelessness by providing permanent supportive housing for people who are homeless and living with mental illness. Homelessness affects nearly 55,000 people in Los Angeles County, and this number is growing rapidly. Permanent supportive housing offers a real solution to maintaining stable living situations for the thousands of homeless individuals and families living in our communities.

MISSION

Our mission is to end homelessness through the provision of quality permanent supportive housing for people with mental illness.

....

VALUES

DIGNITY All people, regardless of their circumstances, deserve to be treated with respect and to have a home.

EXCELLENCE We provide quality housing and services as a reflection of our personal and organizational commitment.

COMMUNITY Our projects and services promote sustainability and serve as a foundation for stability, health and well-being.

Since 1988, ACOF has created more than 1900 units of affordable housing for individuals, families, veterans, and seniors, and has housed over 2500 people. To assist tenants in remaining housed,

Housing Development

Supportive Services

Property and Asset

ACOF Design Guidelines I 2018   **3 I P a g e**

Example: A Community of Friends' Design Guidelines begin with an explanation of who they are, what they do, and their mission statement, pictured above.

C design principles

This is your chance to examine how your organization's values are reflected in your buildings. Perhaps you work in a drought prone area, and water conservation is a high priority or maybe you serve a senior population that requires you to focus on accessible spaces. Do you want to be a leader in using innovative technologies? Or do you have a goal to improve health outcomes for your tenants and staff? Design principles serve as the foundation for why you make certain design decisions, and establish how you aim to prioritize limited resources.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

High level intentions that will impact the design of your buildings: what is important to your organization? What do you want your team to be inspired by? What do you want to guide them in their decision making process? This section is aspirational. You are not setting specific goals here (that comes later); you are simply stating the values that are important to your organization and why.

PROCESS

While it may take some time to establish agreed-upon principles and priorities for your organization, once complete they will require minimal updating. We suggest revisiting this section on an annual basis, such as during a board retreat, all staff meeting, or strategic plan update.

Who to talk to: Senior Staff, Board of Directors, consider all staff

Time/resources: Moderate

Need for updates: Low
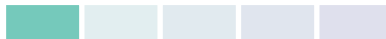
If you need help getting started, try **Exercise 7: Design principles** *[page 47].*

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Healthy Living

DDC collaborated with other city agencies and outside stakeholders on *Active Design Guidelines* which showed that design can encourage—and even make pleasurable—active lifestyles. Physical activity can reduce such prominent health problems as chronic obesity and diabetes. With Healthy Living as a Guiding Principle, DDC widens its lens, encouraging its design teams to think about aspects in the built environment that aid mental health. These include access to nature, a sense of clarity and safety in public places (which reduces anxiety), and exercise, because physically active people tend to enjoy better mental health.

Guiding Principles:

1: Support mental health and well-being

2: Strengthen social interaction and engagement

3: Reduce environmental nuisances

4: Encourage physical activity as part of everyday use

5: Promote healthy choices

Offer Empowering Choices:

Movable seating and frequent public events in Diversity Plaza in Jackson Heights allow people to adapt the environment to suit their own desires.

^ ^

Be Responsive to People's Needs:

Juvenile probation centers, such as this one located in Jamaica, Queens, need not resemble places of detention, which can instill frustration, even depression. The space encourages focus on a better future with giant word puzzles and open-ended questions.

^

Example: The New York City Department of Design and Construction (DDC) **Design and Construction Excellence 2.0 Guiding Principles** identifies overarching priority themes, explains why each is important, and then articulates how each might take shape in the built environment. Pictured above are excerpts from the section describing healthy living, one of the priority themes identified in the document.

Ⓓ program and design preferences

This section of your guidelines lets your reader know about the types and qualities of spaces that should be included in your buildings and on your sites. It can include big-picture, building-scale preferences and unit layout needs, such as which rooms should be located next to each other, or how big the kitchens should be. It could also include more detailed information such as how wide your doorways should be, or what size appliances you prefer. These are assumptions that architects will make early on in the design process, and you will want to make sure that they are starting on the right track.

This section of your guidelines is particularly important if you serve a population with unique needs that may not be common in standard residential design; even architects experienced in residential design may not be as familiar with the specific needs of your residents.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

This section should include information on the spaces that you would like to include in all, or at least most, of your buildings. This will likely be one of the more extensive sections in your document. Include anything that gives the architect a clearer picture of how you want your buildings to function (see next page for ideas).

A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Capture the 'why' of your preferences so users of your guidelines can make informed design decisions.

- Similarly, it is helpful to identify which items are preferred and which are required, to help your team prioritize in the event that there are tradeoffs.

- You may want to break this section down into smaller subcategories, such as common areas, site/exterior, offices, and units.

- Do not list detailed material specifications here (see the next section for help with those).

- Include anecdotes - for example, building managers give examples of most common reasonable accommodations requests.

- Try not to be too restrictive: the more you include, the harder it will be for your reader to focus on the most important items. Plus, you do not want to limit new advances and innovations in design or materials.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

The Basics

- What spaces are included in each of your buildings?
- What is your preferred unit mix and office count?
- Is there a look or feeling you hope to achieve?

PROGRAM

Relationships

ADJACENCIES

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

- How do spaces relate to each other? For example, should the laundry room be near the elevator?
- How should your building relate to street and the surrounding neighborhood?

General Building

- Do you have a minimum green certification, like Enterprise Green Communities, for all buildings?
- Are there preferences that apply to the whole building? For example, do you have specific accessibility requirements, or a preferred heating and cooling system?

EXTERIOR FACADE

GREEN FEATURES

SYSTEMS

Specific Spaces

UNITS

OUTDOOR SPACES

COMMON AREAS

OFFICES

What must be included in each space to make it work for you and your residents? Why? Consider the following, but make this list your own:

- Minimum size of rooms
- Preferred layout (for example, galley or 'L'-shaped kitchen in units)
- How your common areas are typically used and what needs they must meet
- Required elements for each room (for example, should the tenant lounge have wall space for a TV? Do the unit kitchens need to have dishwashers?)

FORMAT

This section can take many forms. It may be in the form of a chart, or it could be in narrative form, or even a well-organized bulleted list. It could also come in the form of a standardized unit plan. If you include plans, it is helpful to annotate the plan to explain why it works for you and your residents.

PROCESS

This section in particular will likely require several iterations. Be sure to talk with site staff about how spaces in existing buildings are working in practice.

If you need help getting started, try **Exercise 8: Sample plans** *and* **Exercise 11: Design preferences and requirements** *in the workbook [pages 48 & 51].*

Who to talk to: Site staff/property management, development staff, residents
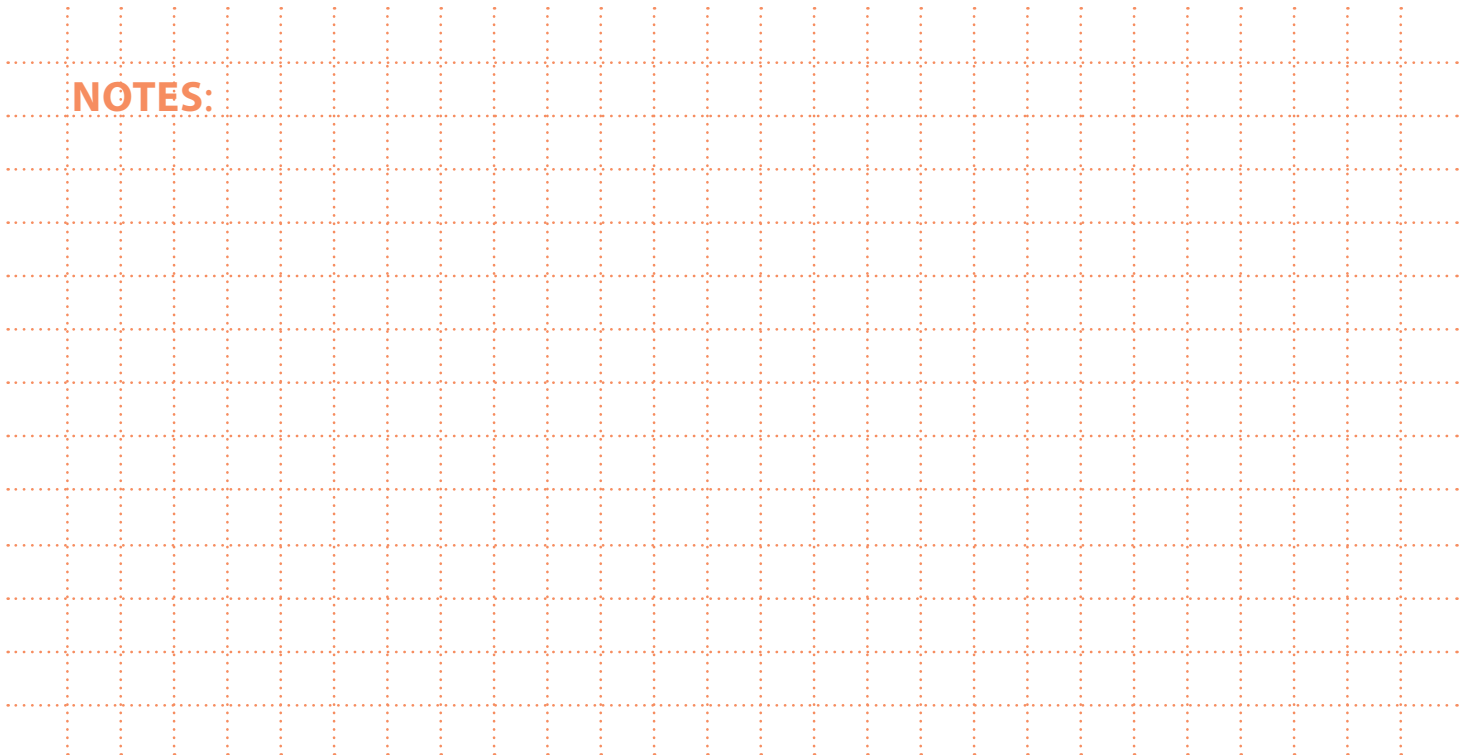
Time/resources: High

Need for updates: Moderate

If you are not sure how to solicit information from staff and residents, try **Exercise 9: Staff survey** *and* **Exercise 10: Resident focus group** *[pages 49 & 50].*

NOTES:

2.6 | VEGETATION/LANDSCA...

LANDSCAPING SURFACES/PATHW...

Landscaping materials can vary greatly...
uniform in size. **Mitigate tripping haza...**
materials, exposed tree roots, landscap...
surfaces. Larger, more visible landscap...
edging, which is difficult to see and sha...
desirable for recreational opportunities...
walking. Provide a hard path through a...
issues.

Allow residents the ability to maneuver...
types of surfaces. Walking paths throu...
and utilize more variety in materials. Pl...
be designed for mobility. Hard, even su...
are the easiest to navigate. Flagstone w...
of a trip hazard than pavers with large...
that squishes when traveled through, c...
landscape pathways, stairs and ramps...
the edges of steps or ramps with a co...
make them easier to see in day and nig...

MOBILITY OF LANDSCAPE SURFA...

POOR

Pea Gravel **Grass**

Wide sidewalks allow pedestrians to easily pass by others on the route without stepping off the path.

NAVIGATION

- A **continuous, easy to follow pathway** between home, transit and frequently used services should be available that does not require short cuts through parking lots, alleys or landscaping.
- Simple routes with unobstructed views between the building entry and nearby services will reduce incidents of residents getting lost along the route. Complex directions can be hard to remember and follow.
- Excessive driveways and alleys where vehicles may suddenly pull out across the path of travel, or the slope of the sidewalk may suddenly dip, can be a hazard. Minimize interaction between pedestrian and vehicular pathways and provide clear and unobstructed visibility where they cross. Reduce areas where a vehicle backing up crosses a pedestrian route.
- The entire route between destinations should be well lit without any dark areas that seem unsafe. At night visual cues used to navigate a route can be difficult to see. An isolated path may also feel unsafe, and response to a fall or other emergency could be delayed.
- While benches and shade are helpful along the route, sidewalks should be free of obstructions and wide enough to walk around any site furnishings or trees along the path of travel.
- Connectivity of sidewalks is critical so pedestrians do not encounter dead-ends with hazardous conditions where residents are forced to make unsafe street crossings.
- For ease of navigation **streets should be clearly marked with signage that is highly visible and easy to read**.
- A wide path of travel allows more flexibility when passing by others.
- Common sidewalk widths:
    - 3 Feet: Single user
    - 4 Feet: Two people can walk side by side
    - 5 Feet: Two wheelchairs can pass
    - 6 Feet: Two wheelchairs can travel together

2.0 SITE

2.0 SITE

Example: Enterprise's **Aging in Place Design Guidelines** are divided into sections based on site, general building topics, unit layout, and room by room considerations. Each section includes suggestions for layout and materials, and includes photos and diagrams to illustrate key points. The pages above are from the document's chapter on site preferences.

APARTMENT PLANNING 4

Design Intention

This section describes spaces within dwelling units, the relationships among these spaces, and the metrics HPD utilizes to evaluate suitable living spaces. The goal of this section is to ensure unit layouts are livable, furnishable, and handicap accessible.

HPD recommends buildings with only efficiency units for homeless and low-income individuals, and the following requirements describe such units. Proposals offering larger units will be considered and reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and any such units must comply with the *HPD Design Guidelines for New Construction*. Rehabilitation developments that do not meet the following requirements will be reviewed at the discretion of SHLP/DAE.

Types of Spaces for Efficiency Units

Each efficiency unit must contain a living space, private bathroom, kitchenette, and storage space. While there are various unit configurations that would meet code requirements, it is the intent of HPD to encourage good design. The standard floor-to-ceiling height for all residential floors must not exceed 8'-0". At a minimum, the design of each unit must clearly distinguish the areas allocated to living, sleeping and dining spaces within the 150 square foot living area required. An efficiency unit with a sleeping alcove is acceptable, however it will increase the net floor area and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

The layout must also reflect a kitchenette separate from the main living area. If the layout proposes a kitchenette within the living/sleeping space, the area of the kitchenette and the floor space up to 3'-0" in depth from the counter, while counted towards living area, must be free and clear of furniture and any obstructions, as indicated in figures 4.2 and 4.3, must be at least 2'-

0" deep by 10'-0" long and must comply with the *Fair Housing Act* and the *Building Code*. The kitchenette should consist of a refrigerator, sink, range, under-cabinet microwave oven, wall-hung cabinets, removable base cabinets, outlets for countertop appliances, and a minimum 2'-6" of linear countertop work surface. Refer to Section 7 'Scope of Work' for equipment, materials, and fixtures. The length of countertop and shelving shall be measured along the front edge of the surface area that achieves the minimum depth, and shall not include corners. Base cabinets and countertops must be 2'-0" deep. Shelving must be minimally 11½" deep, though 16" deep is preferred. Kitchen elevations must be provided.

Every dwelling unit must have at least one full, Type B - Appendix P bathroom per *Building Code*. It must contain a bathtub with a shower head, a sink, and a toilet. This bathroom must also conform to the *Fair Housing Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 504*, and the *Building Code*.

Every unit must contain a minimum 6 linear feet of storage. Separate storage spaces for clothes (2'-0" by 4'-0" wide) and linen/pantry (1'-6" deep by 2'-0" wide) is preferred.

Table 4.1 MINIMUM SIZES FOR TYPICAL EFFICIENCY UNITS

Space	Area	Minimum Dimension
Kitchenette	20 sf	10'-0"
LR/DA/SA	150 sf	10'-0"
Net Floor Area	300 sf	10'-0"

Multi-Family Units

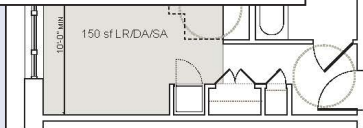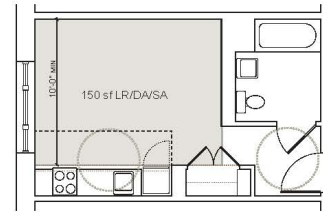For multi-family unit area and layout requirements, see the *HPD Design Guidelines for New Construction*.

HPD DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING   9

Figure 4.3 AREA CALCULATIONS

150 sf LR/DA/SA

Irregular Geometries

In irregularly-shaped spaces, any floor area narrower than 3'-0" shall be excluded from the total floor area for that space. The majority of the space must still maintain the minimum dimension of 10'-0". See figure 4.3 for an illustration.
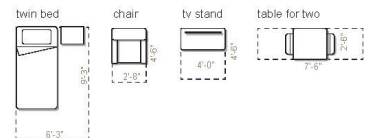
Figure 4.4 IRREGULAR GEOMETRIES
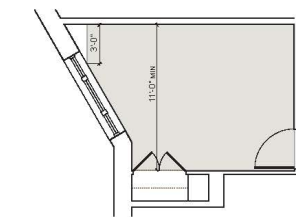
Required Furniture Capacity

Each efficiency unit must be able to accommodate the following furniture in an accessible layout:

Figure 4.5 REQUIRED FURNITURE CAPACITY

twin bed   chair   tv stand   table for two

150 sf LR/DA/SA

10   HPD DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Example: The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development's **Design Guidelines for Supportive Housing** are divided into sections by scale, from urban design down to building systems. It is primarily narrative, but also relies on charts and sample plans to illustrate goals. Above, pages from the document's apartment planning chapter describe preferences for unit layout.

E standard specification

The standard specifications section of your guidelines will describe the type or quality of materials and products that should be used in your buildings. They give your organization the potential to standardize your building materials, ensure the inclusion of high quality, durable products, or identify products that meet your sustainability goals.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

Specifications can either be performance-based (e.g. toilets should be 1.2 gpf) or can identify specific products as a basis for design (e.g. Niagara N7711). If you specify a particular product, be sure to explain why you like it. Is it the durability? Color? Cost? Health impact? This will help your team make knowledgeable substitutions if that product is no longer available or becomes too costly.

Avoid going overboard! Not every item should be called out in this document, only the items that are important to you, or that help you achieve your goals. If you think a specific item might differ from building to building, do not include it, or think about incorporating a performance based standard instead.

FORMAT

Choose the format for this section that best suits your needs, as it will impact the effectiveness of your document. Here are two options you may want to consider:

SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT
A document formatted to the Construction Specification Institute's Master Format will allow your architects to easily fit it into the specifications for any project. This may be less intuitive for staff not already accustomed to specifications.

SPREADSHEET
An Excel spreadsheet is easily accessible and updateable by almost anyone, and it is also sortable (with well planned columns) by room or product type.

PROCESS

New materials, the discontinuation of products, and the evolution of your organization's own preferences mean that frequent updates to your specification will be needed in order to keep it relevant. Include maintenance of your specification in staff workplans to ensure that it remains up to date.

Who to talk to: Facilities, Asset and/or Property Management, Development Team, Architects, Contractors or other building professionals

Time/Resources: High

Need for updates: High

If you need help getting started, try **Exercise 12: Preferred specifications** *in the workbook [page 52].*

Guidelines in Practice: Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH)
Evolving guidelines to address changing needs

POAH is a is a national nonprofit developer, owner and operator of affordable housing. Their Basis of Design website, which provides standard specifications for all its renovation and new construction projects, began over ten years ago as a simple spreadsheet that called out preferred products. However, POAH's design team recognized the need to be more deliberate about documenting their lessons learned with regards to product durability and the standardization of products across all their buildings. Their document turned into a series of PDFs that could be downloaded by project and site managers across the organization. However, as their standards evolved, they found that property management staff were too often relying on outdated PDFs. Based on this experience, they migrated the information to a website, which is more user-friendly and easily updated.

Takeaways: Your document doesn't have to be comprehensive or polished from the start; it will evolve and grow as you learn what your organization needs. Begin with what makes the most sense given your needs and capacity, and grow it over time.

Enterprise Green Communities Universal Design Specification

Division 08: Doors & Windows
(Division 08: Doors and Windows)

08 10 00 / DOORS AND FRAMES / 08100

Integrative Design 1.2a Universal Design (New Construction Onl
Integrative Design 1.2b Universal Design (Substantial and Moder

PART 1 – GENERAL

1.1 Summary

A. Applicability:

    1. Public and common use areas: all doors forming part of

    2. Dwelling units: all doors forming part of an accessible

    3. Dwelling units: primary entry doors to Type B units and
     units.

B. Related sections:

    1. 01 81 14 Accessible Design Requirements

    2. 08 41 00 Entrances and Storefronts

    3. 08 71 00 Door Hardware

1.2 Design Requirements

A. Door opening widths: provide a clear width of 32 inches mi
    clear width, measure the clear opening between the face of th
    degrees.

B. Openings more than 24 inches deep: provide a clear width o

C. Double-leaf doors and gates: provide the required clear widt
    width may not be determined by measuring the width provid
    simultaneously.

D. Projections into the required clear widths:

    1. Projections into the clear width are prohibited at lower t

    2. Projections into the clear width between 34 inches and 8

E. Extend maneuvering clearances the full width of the doorwa
    clearance. See Section 01 81 14 for complete discussion of r

F. Thresholds: limit to ½ inches overall height. Changes in lev
    Bevel thresholds creating a change in level between ¼ inch a

G. Automatic and power-assisted entry doors: automatic entry
    However, installation of power assisted doors can improve a
    These units are particularly important at exterior doors subje
    will prohibit setting closers at 5 pounds or less. If installed,
    with ANSI/BHMA A156.10. Low-energy and power-assisted

H. Consider avoiding thresholds higher than ½ inch at all sliding glass doors.

1.3 Shop Drawings

A. Indicate location, use, type of hardware, minimum clear width, height of bottom rail, height of hardware, and maximum sill height for each door on shop drawings. Coordinate hardware type with requirements (see Section 08 71 00 Door Hardware).

B. Include detail of installation indicating installed height of threshold for each door on shop drawings, including allowance for height of sealant bed and any irregularities in concrete or other substrate.

C. Indicate items by others (e.g. power door strike connections) on shop drawings to aid in coordination.

PART 2 – PRODUCTS

2.1 Door and Gate Surfaces

A. Bottom rail at door: 10 inch minimum height. Tempered glass doors without stiles and having a bottom rail or shoe with the top leading edge tapered at 60 degrees minimum from the horizontal are not required to meet this requirement.

2.2 Hardware

A. Hardware provided with doors or door systems must be operable with one hand and must not require tight grasping, pinching, or twisting. See Section 08 71 00 Door Hardware.

B. Hardware: when sliding doors are in the fully open position, operating hardware shall be exposed and usable from both sides.

PART 3 – EXECUTION

3.1 Installation

A. Threshold: set with maximum ½ inch height. For exterior doors, coordinate installation as necessary to cover perimeter insulation at slab.

B. Interior hinged doors, gates, sliding or folding doors must be set to 5 pounds maximum opening force; 15 pounds for exterior doors.

Best Practice Recommendations:

- Door surfaces, particularly bottom rails, are subject to high abuse and impacts from a variety of sources including bikes, strollers, footrests, and other equipment. Extending the height and durability of the flat surface at the bottom of doors that will be subject to these uses will increase their overall life span.
- Consider applying opaque, graphic decals across the central area of glass doors at 60 inches above the finished floor, in order to decrease the likelihood of a user accidentally walking into the glass of the door while in a closed position.

Typical Specification Spreadsheet

Room	Product	Spec Section	Make and model	Standard	VE ability	Notes
General	Closet shelving	06 20 23	see shop drawings	yes?		These shelv
General	Closet shelving	06 20 23	see shop drawings	no	Genesis-style shelving in	These work
General	Interior doors	08 11 13	include product info?	no	hollow core doors instea	Should be p
General	Pocket door frame	08 14 00	Johnson Hardware 1!	yes		
Bath	Flooring	09 65 00	Armstrong Rejuvenat	yes	sheet vinyl	
Common area	Gym flooring	09 65 00	Johnsonite Commotic	no		In gyms only
Common area	Multipurpose room floor	09 65 00	Luxury vinyl tile,	rvard		
Kitchen	Flooring	09 65 00	Luxury Vinyl Tile, JOH	yes?		
Kitchen	Flooring	09 65 00	Luxury Vinyl Tile, Altr	no		
Living Room	Flooring	09 65 00	either same as kitche	no	carpet instead of LVT	

Examples: **Enterprise's Green Communities Universal Design Specification** (top), organized into the Construction Specification Institute's Master Format, provides a base performance specification that can be easily incorporated into construction documents. Many organizations choose to format their specification as an easily editable and sortable spreadsheet (bottom). Both are good examples of how guidelines need not be flashy to accomplish your goals.

Guidelines in Practice: East Bay Asian Local Development Corporation (EBALDC)

Identifying guidelines content that will best meet your needs

EBALDC, a nonprofit community development organization in Oakland, recently began a cross-departmental approach to the development of their new construction and major renovation projects. After the first few projects, the teams realized they were having the same conversations, and making the same decisions, over and over again. In an effort to minimize this redundancy, the organization set out to create a set of design standards that they could apply to every project.

During the process of creating their design standards, they began to recognize the additional need to capture the reasoning behind their decisions, allowing their project teams to make informed judgments when issues arise. EBALDC's awareness of what they hoped to achieve from their guidelines enabled them to focus their time on the creation of content that directly addressed these goals.

HOW 4 …is it organized?

There are three tiers of items in EBALDC's design guidelines:

- Tier 1 = Specification List
  A standard list of appliances and fixtures saves $ on ordering, training, and coordination of repairs.

- Tier 2 = Product Type
  Outlines our preferred types of products and the reasoning behind it, but with the details left up to the project team.

- Tier 3 = Performance Spec
  Describes a final result desired rather than a specified product. This leaves problem-solving up to the architect and project team. It may include design considerations like adjacencies, industry standards like Energy Start that may evolve over time, or metrics such as minimum light levels.

HOW 4 …is it organized?

The guidelines consist of a spreadsheet of standard products and appliances with links to standard drawings, product info, etc.

HOW 6 …is it maintained?

The design specs committee will convene quarterly to approve additions or revisions to this document with representatives from RED, PM, and any other department representatives who wish to join.

- Mark O
  will maintain the tier 1 list and propose updates over time for committee approval

- Annie
  will convene the design specs committee and organize updates to this document. She will collect proposed updates to tier 2+3 items from project teams for committee approval

HOW 6 …is it maintained?

- 3 weeks ahead of committee meeting
  Annie send out email reminder and call for items that need to be added or changed & compiles list for Mark

- 2 weeks ahead of committee meeting
  Mark researches list of proposed specs for items on list

- 1 week ahead of committee meeting
  Mark and Annie meet and finalize proposals and send out to committee for review.

- 1 week after meeting
  Annie updates the document with decisions made, archives, and re-issues new version on Sharepoint

Above: excerpts from EBALDC's guidelines primer.

F reference documents

If you do not have the capacity to develop an extensive set of guidelines, referencing existing resources is an excellent way to give guidance to your team. There are a large number of resources available, and identifying those that align with your own goals and priorities will establish a baseline for design preferences without spending a vast amount of time or effort.

Reference documents can provide your design team and partners more targeted information for various development situations - for example, if your project is using a particular funder, or if it is catering to a specific populations such as seniors.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

At its most basic, you can create a simple list of resources that are relevant to your organization's work. These can come from a variety of industries, with a wide range of goals, including funder's requirements, sustainability, or universal design.

To take your reference document to the next level, include annotations for each reference to explain why you have included it. Pointing to specific pieces, such as a particular chapter, or diagram or checklist that is relevant to your work, will help focus your team on what's most important.

PROCESS

Because this component primarily involves collecting information that already exists, rather than creating new content, its creation can be relatively simple.

Who to talk to: Development staff, Architects, Other developers

Time/resources: Low

Need for updates: Low

*If you need help getting started, try **Exercise 13: Reference documents** in the workbook [page 53].*

3

workbook

Still looking for inspiration? Begin working through our workbook exercises to start developing your own content.

in this section...

- **A** workbook overview
- **B** sample agendas
- **C** exercises

Ⓐ workbook overview

THE WORKBOOK

The arrows you have seen throughout this document refer to specific exercises designed to help you think about that particular topic. You can complete these exercises as you progress through the document to help you create a foundation for your own guidelines, or focus on the ones that are most relevant to your needs:

SECTION 1: GETTING STARTED

Get guidance on *HOW* to go about developing your own set of design guidelines.

A: Understanding your 'why' [p 9] · · · · · · · · · · · · · · **Exercise 1** [p 39]

B: Identifying your audience [p 10-11] · · · · · · · · · · · **Exercise 2** [p 40]

C: Forming your team [p 12-13] · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · **Exercise 3** [p 41]

D: Planning your process [p 14] · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · **Exercise 4** [p 42-43]

SECTION 3: WORKBOOK EXERCISES

SECTION 2: CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

Get guidance on *WHAT* to include in your own guidelines to make them work for your organization.

A: Where should you begin? [p 19] · · · · · · · · · · · · · · **Exercise 5** [p 45]

B: Organizational information [p 20-21] · · · · · · · · · **Exercises 6** [p 46]

C: Design principles [p 22-23] · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · **Exercise 7** [p 47]

D: Design preferences [p 24-28] · · · · · · · · · · · · · · **Exercises 8-11** [p 48-51]

E: Standard specification [p 29-32] · · · · · · · · · · · · **Exercise 12** [p 52]

F: Reference documents [p 33] · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · **Exercise 13** [p 53]

Ⓑ sample agendas

HALF-DAY CHARRETTES

You can also use these exercises as a base for formalized discussions within your own organization. This is a great way to get your organization on-board and invested in design guidelines. If you are interested in pursuing this path, we have included suggested agendas here, or you can create your own using the exercises most useful to you. The two different agendas on the following pages are designed based on which team members might be participating in the discussion:

LEADERSHIP CHARRETTE

We recommend starting with a high-level process charrette with your organization's leadership. Focus on exercises from Section 1, with a few additional Section 2 exercises. You can also do this on your own, or with your guidelines team.

ALL-STAFF OR MULTI-DISCIPLINE CHARRETTE

The all-staff half-day charrette is intended to gain design insight from your staff, drawing on their expertise on the ground in their daily jobs. Ideally there will be a mix of staff from various departments, with a variety of experience.

NOTES:

SAMPLE CHARRETTE AGENDAS

AGENDA: LEADERSHIP CHARRETTE [2 hours 40 minutes]   Date:

Before the meeting, print enough copies of Exercises 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 for all participants.

Charrette goals:
- Familiarize your team with your guidelines goals
- Share your understanding of the process required to create your own set of design guidelines
- Establish next steps with key roles and/or touchpoints for participants

---

Introductions [5 minutes]

- Introduce yourself and, if already formed, the members of your working group
- If your leadership team consists of more than 10 people, break into smaller groups of 6-8 people

Overview of the day and anticipated outcomes [10 minutes]

- Introduce design guidelines with a focus on why you think they would benefit your organization. Emphasize that you are hoping to get a sense of your organization's capacity and goals in creating guidelines. Note that you will be collecting the completed worksheets at the end of the charrette and that it is important to write down all responses.

Exercise 1: Why do we want design guideline [20 minutes]

- 5 -10 minutes - Individually fill out the worksheet
- 10 minutes - Discuss selections and as a group select the two or three most common or resonant selections

Exercise 2: Targeting your audience [15 minutes]

- 15 minutes - Complete worksheet together, selecting your primary, secondary, and additional audiences

Exercise 3: Forming your team [30 minutes]

- 10 minutes - Have each person fill out this worksheet, focusing on their departments and associates
- 10 minutes - Share with group
- 10 minutes - Identify potential working group members, as well as key people who can serve in an advisory role

BREAK [10 minutes]

Exercise 5: Where should you begin [20 minutes]

- 20 minutes - Using your answers from exercises 1 and 2, complete this exercise as a group to identify the most important or relevant sections to include in your guidelines

Exercise 6: Organizational Info [15 minutes]

- 15 minutes - Review your organization's mission, and focus on collecting additional information that a project team should know about the work that you do.

Exercise 7: Design Principles [20-30 minutes]

- 5-10 minutes - Have everyone silently brainstorm three answers to the question posed in this exercise
- 10 minutes - Write down all of the responses on a large flip-chart
- 5-10 minutes - Allow people to vote for their top answers (see voting/tallying instructions) and identify the top three

Next Steps [5 minutes]

- Close out the meeting by thanking everyone for their insights, and provide contact information for your working group.

AGENDA: ALL-STAFF CHARRETTE   [3 hours 30 minutes]   Date:

Before the meeting, print enough copies of Exercises 6, 7, 8, 9, and 12 for all participants. Remember to bring plans of a typical building or space for Exercise 8, and large poster paper and markers for taking notes.

Charrette goals:

- Familiarize your team with your guidelines goals
- Get a sense of the expertise and knowledge within your staff
- Establish next steps with key roles and/or touchpoints for participants

---

Introductions [5-10 minutes]:

- Introduce yourself and, if already formed, the members of your working group

- Each of these exercises is best done in small groups (6-8 people). Form groups with an even distribution of departments and/or expertise. If necessary, take 5 minutes for introductions within groups.

Overview of the day and anticipated outcomes [10 minutes]

- Introduce design guidelines and highlight work already done by you and your leadership team. Emphasize that you are hoping to gather various perspectives and expertise on the design of your buildings, and that all opinions, thoughts, and ideas are welcome.

- Note that you will be collecting the completed worksheets at the end of the charrette and it is important to write down responses. Assign a note-taker for each group.

Exercise 6: Organizational Info [15 minutes]

- 15 minutes - Complete this exercise in small groups (4-8 people).

- 5 minutes - Have your teams 'shout-out' their top insights

Exercise 7: Design Principles [25-35 minutes]

- 5-10 minutes - Have everyone silently brainstorm three answers to the question posed in this exercise

- 10 minutes - Within small groups, write down all of the responses (if needed use poster paper and markers)

- 5-10 minutes - Allow people to vote for their top answers (see voting/tallying instructions) and identify the top three

- 5 minutes - Have your teams 'shout-out' their top insights

Exercise 8: Design Preferences [40 minutes]

- 30 minutes - Have each small group review a zoomed-in plan of one of your buildings or a space within one of your buildings (include pictures where possible).

- 10 minutes - Have your teams 'shout-out' their top insights

BREAK [15 minutes]

   Include the following exercises if you have operations staff - building managers, property and asset managers - taking part in your charrette. Make sure that these staff members are dispersed amongst your small groups.

Exercise 9: Staff Survey [40 minutes]

- 30 minutes - Use the survey to 'interview' your operations staff in small groups. No need to dive too deep at this point; the goal is to highlight first things that come to mind.

- 10 minutes - Have your teams 'shout-out' their top insights

Exercise 12: Preferred Specifications [40 minutes]

- 30 minutes - Using the expertise of your operations staff, go through the list in this exercise and talk about what you like or don't like about each item in the buildings in which your staff is working.

- 10 minutes - Have your teams 'shout-out' their top insights

Next Steps [5 minutes]

- Close out the meeting by thanking everyone for their insights, and provide contact information for your working group.

EXERCISE 1: Finding your 'why'   [p. 9]

Take 10 minutes to brainstorm answers to the question: **WHY DO WE WANT DESIGN GUIDELINES?** Check the boxes next to the reasons most relevant to you, or write in your own answers. Remember, it is important to be honest about your reasons for wanting design guidelines to ensure you get the best guidelines for you. Have others in your organization do this too, and compile the responses.

WHY DO WE WANT DESIGN GUIDELINES?

- ☐ To capture our team's knowledge in case of employee turnover

- ☐ To ensure a higher quality of materials are used our buildings

- ☐ We have sustainability goals and want to be sure the right standards are met

- ☐ To standardize materials to reduce repair, replacement, and maintenance costs

- ☐ Tenant health is a top priority and we want to ensure only healthy materials are included in our buildings

- ☐ To reduce repetitive conversations and decision making when it comes to design

- ☐ To use the guidelines process as a tool to reach consensus on certain design/development issues

- ☐ We want our architects or contractors to understand why the housing they build for us is different from what is usually built

- ☐ To demonstrate our commitment to green building

- ☐ To reduce the need for decision-making at each different site

- ☐ To better understand how our buildings can address our residents' needs

- ☐ Reduce maintenance calls or the time staff spends preparing a unit at turnover

- ☐ We want our architects to understand what is most important to us, and make sure that it influences how they design our buildings

- ☐ To have the same materials or products across our buildings will make life easier for our maintenance staff

- ☐ Our residents should be getting the same quality and products in their apartments even across different buildings

- ☐ To use the process so that all the different participants in our design process understand their contribution to our mission

- ☐ Demonstrate that our organization has an advanced and experienced development team

- ☐ _____

  _____

  _____

- ☐ _____

  _____

  _____

- ☐ _____

  _____

  _____

GROUP EXERCISE: Have others in your organization complete the above exercise, and discuss your responses. **SELECT THE THREE [3] MOST COMMON, AGREED UPON ANSWERS.** Keep these in mind as you make your way through this workbook to see if your content is aligning with your intentions.

EXERCISE 2: Targeting your audience   [p. 10-11]

From exercise 1, write your organization's top three reasons for wanting design guidelines. Below each reason, write the groups or people that will need to see and use your guidelines in order for you to achieve that goal.

WRITE IN YOUR TOP THREE
REASONS 'WHY' FROM EXERCISE 1:

1	2	3

WHO SHOULD READ YOUR GUIDELINES TO ACCOMPLISH EACH OF THESE GOALS?

_____   _____   _____

_____   _____   _____

_____   _____   _____

If you need ideas, consider these groups who commonly rely on design guidelines:

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT STAFF   **ARCHITECTS**   **FUNDERS**
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT STAFF   **GENERAL CONTRACTORS**   **MUNICIPALITIES**
                                      OTHER CONSULTANTS

NEXT: Consider the exercise above. Based on your responses, who is the primary audience for your guidelines? How often will they use these guidelines (daily/every project/annually)? Are there additional groups that will use these guidelines?

Primary Audience _____   Frequency _____

Secondary Audience _____   Frequency _____

Other Audience(s) _____   Frequency _____

EXERCISE 3: Forming your team   [p. 12-13]

Identifying your team early on is key to setting you up for a successful guidelines process. Consider all of the partners, users, and consultants that participate in your development process. Who are they, and how might they inform your guidelines? List potential team members below [continue on additional sheets].

IDENTIFY POTENTIAL TEAM MEMBERS

PERSON Name/Title	RELATIONSHIP to your Organization	CONTRIBUTION to the guidelines	INVOLVEMENT in guidelines process
Jane Doe, Facilities Supervisor	Oversees maintenance of org.'s buildings	Understands product/material performance, wear, upkeep and replacement needs.	Input needed for preferred specification section. Potentially review spec drafts.

NEXT: Based on your answers above, who should be included in your core guidelines team? Who will you need to connect with and get approval from on a regular basis?

DESIGN GUIDELINES TEAM

TEAM LEAD(S)	WORKING GROUP	ADVISORY ROLE

EXERCISE 4: Planning your process   [p. 14]

Planning your guidelines process in advance can help make your journey smoother. Use this exercise to start thinking about your own capacity, how you want to engage your team, and the steps you want to take to move your design guidelines forward. Start by taking a preliminary guess for each of these considerations, then revisit this exercise periodically throughout your process to update your plan.

TIME AVAILABLE for leader(s)	
hrs / week	total weeks

TIME AVAILABLE for working group or key team members	
hrs / week	total weeks

GROUPS TO ENGAGE

who?	how often?	format?
• *tenants*	• *twice*	• *building survey; charrette with tenant focus group*

INFORMATION GATHERING

How are you going to gather the information needed for your design guidelines?

REVIEW PROCESS

How often will your guidelines team meet?

Who has the final say on guideline content?

How many review cycles do you want or anticipate?

KEEPER OF THE GUIDELINES

Who is responsible for maintaining your guidelines?

How often should they be updated?

TAKE IT A STEP FURTHER....

Now that you have begun to think about your process for creating guidelines, review the process timelines for NYCHA (page 15) and JCHE (page 16). Use either of these timelines as a template to create a your own design guidelines process timeline.

NOTES:

EXERCISE 5: Where should you begin? [p. 19]

From exercise 1, write your top three reasons for wanting design guidelines. Below each reason, write the content most likely to help you address that goal. Then, from exercise 2, add your primary and secondary audiences, and write the content that they would find most useful.

WRITE IN YOUR TOP THREE REASONS 'WHY' FROM EXERCISE 1:

1	2	3

WHAT CONTENT WILL BEST ADDRESS EACH OF THESE GOALS?

_____   _____   _____

_____   _____   _____

> If you need ideas, keep in mind the content described in Section 2:
>
> **DESIGN PRINCIPLES**   **PROGRAM AND DESIGN ELEMENTS**   **OTHER CONTENT**
>
> **STANDARD SPECIFICATION**   **REFERENCE DOCUMENTS**

NOW WRITE YOUR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY AUDIENCES FROM EXERCISE 2:

1	2

WHAT CONTENT WILL BE MOST USEFUL TO THESE USERS?

_____   _____   _____

_____   _____   _____

NEXT: Consider the exercise above. Based on your responses, what content is most important to include? You can always revisit additional content later, this is just to help you prioritize your time as you begin.

CONTENT TO INCLUDE IN YOUR GUIDELINES:

Will definitely include: _____

If time/resources allow: _____

EXERCISE 6: Organizational information   [p. 20-21]

Write your organization's mission in the box below. Regardless of your audience, including your mission in your guidelines will help ground your reader in the core function of your organization.

ORGANIZATION'S MISSION

NEXT: List any additional information that is critical for a newcomer to know about your organization. For example, do you specialize in historic renovations, have a specific tenant population, or do you exclusively develop housing for homeownership?

Hint: There is no need to get too detailed or spend too much time on this section. This is basic information about your organization. Look to places you may already have this information written: your website, publicity materials, annual reports, or past funding applications.

KEY ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

EXERCISE 7: Design principles   [p. 22-23]

As you reflect on your organization's mission, you are probably already considering the values or core tenets of your work. What is important to you as an organization? These values, or principles, help guide your organization in making decisions about how you prioritize decisions and what is important to you.

IF NOTHING ELSE, OUR BUILDINGS/WORK SHOULD BE DESIGNED TO...
(list at least 3 qualities your buildings should have/be/do)

-
-
-

Examples: incorporate energy-saving technology, maximize accessibility, improve tenant health outcomes, encourage community interaction, be durable and easily maintained

....

GROUP EXERCISE: We recommend conducting this exercise with your entire management team. Have each member of the group answer the above question on their own. Collect responses, and write the major themes below (include all themes even if only mentioned once).

▪	▪	▪
▪	▪	▪
▪	▪	▪
▪	▪	▪

Reviewing these themes with your team. Give each member 5 votes to nominate the themes most important to them. They can distribute their votes amongst the various themes, or put all five votes into one specific theme. Write the 3 themes with the most votes below.

TOP 3 THEMES:

-
-
-

How do these relate to or support your organization's mission? Are these principles important for your project teams to understand? If so, consider these your organizational principles. Are there other principles that did not get included in this list?

EXERCISE 8: Design preferences - Sample plans [p. 24-28]

GROUP EXERCISE: Quickly survey your advisory team by asking them which of your organization's buildings are their favorite. If available, print out a plan of one or two of the buildings, focusing on key spaces (common rooms, units, outdoor spaces). Have each team member call out features on the plan that they like or dislike and write why (see example below). You may have your building managers do this for their own buildings, or have team look over some of your typical units or community spaces as part of a charrette. Take it a step further and have teams mark-up drawings while they are in the spaces they are critiquing. Note: Some people find it difficult to visualize a space based solely on a set of plans, so it is often helpful to have pictures of the space.

SAMPLE PLAN WITH MARK-UPS
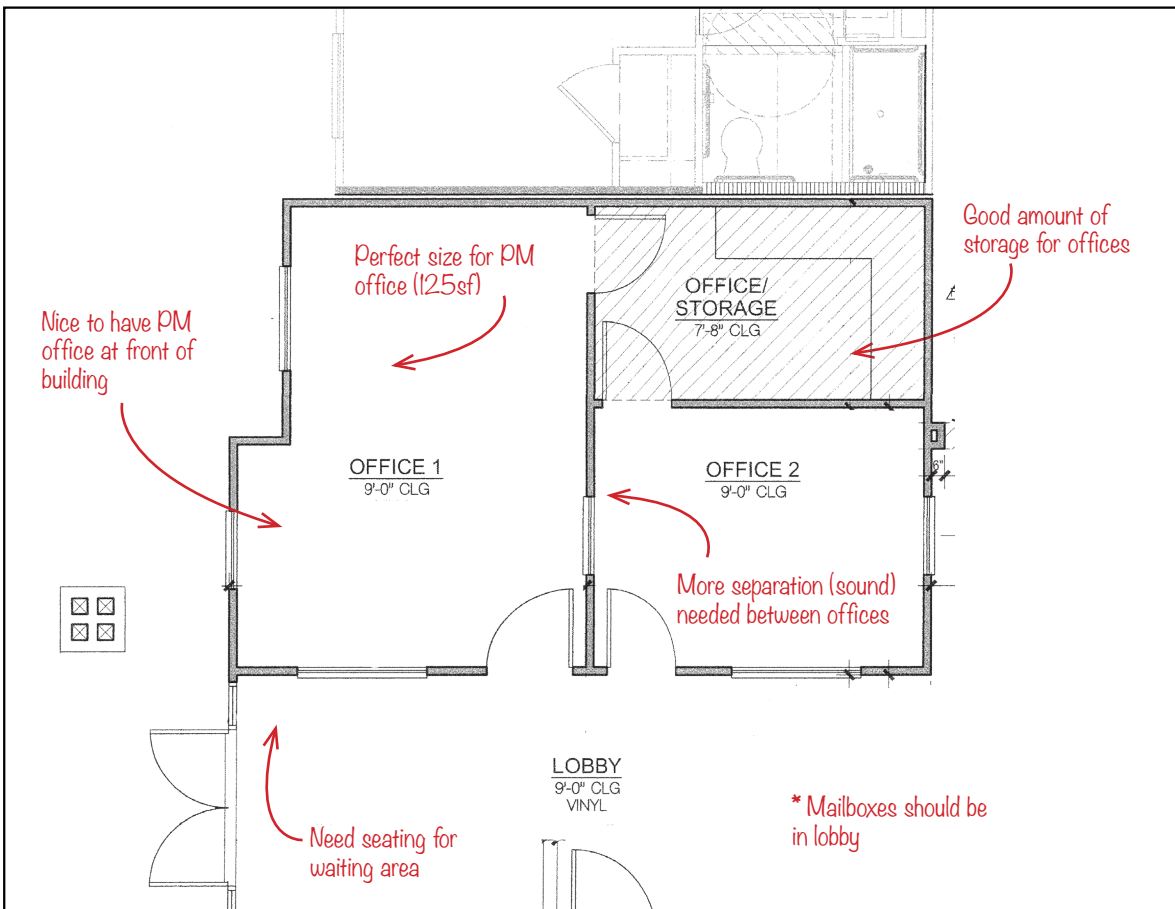
EXERCISE 9: Design preferences - Staff survey   [p. 24-28]

The goal of this exercise is to get an idea of things that are and are not working in existing buildings. Review the questions below and adjust them or add your own so that they are relevant to your buildings. Some of these questions are geared more towards maintenance personnel, and some more towards site managers or resident service staff; it is important to talk to all of these people. During the discussion, try to stay focused on things that can be addressed through building design.

SITE STAFF SURVEY

- What are the most frequent service requests that you get (clogged toilet, light bulb replacement)?

- What are the most frequently replaced items in a unit - both at turnover, and as a service request when a resident is in the unit?

- What about frequently replaced items in the common areas?

- What are the most common requests for reasonable accommodations (a legal requirement that a change be made to ensure that a resident with disabilities has equal access to their apartment unit and the building's common spaces and programs), both within units and in common areas?

- What are the most common resident self-made changes to the unit – installing light fixtures? Adding extra shelving?

- Are there any products that are uniform across all the buildings that you manage (faucets, door knobs)? If not, should there be?

- Is your building the right unit mix, or do you find people often wanting units with fewer or more bedrooms?

- Are there any things your residents seem to have a hard time using (complicated thermostat or appliances, hard-to-open windows)?

- What common spaces are most used by residents? Why do you think that is?

- Are any common spaces that are not well-used? Why do think that is?

- If the discussion is moving slowly, ask the staff what rooms they use over the course of the day, and whether those specific rooms are meeting their needs.

- Additional questions:

EXERCISE 10: Design preferences - Resident focus group   [p. 24-28]

Engaging your residents and tenants in the process of developing your design guidelines can be a valuable tool in understanding how spaces, materials, and services function. These are, after all, the end users of your projects.

As with the previous exercise, the goal here is to get an idea of things that are and are not working in existing buildings, this time from a resident's point of view. Review the questions below and adjust them or add your own so that they are relevant to your buildings. Gather a group of 5-10 residents for a discussion. During the discussion, try to stay focused on things that can be addressed through building design.

TENANT SURVEY

- What is your favorite thing about your apartment? Why?

- If you could change one thing about your apartment, what would it be?

- Why – to make the something more comfortable, easier to use, more to your taste?

- Are there any rooms that you would size differently, and what would you be willing to trade the space for (would be willing to live with a smaller kitchen in exchange for a larger living room)?

- What sorts of things do you call maintenance to help with?

- Is there anything that you have a hard time using (complicated thermostat or appliances, hard-to-open windows)?

- Do you use the building's common spaces and outdoor spaces? Why or why not? Which are your favorite?

- If the discussion is moving slowly, ask questions about specific pieces of the unit to get the conversation going. Questions should be adjusted to reflect your organization, but examples might include:

- Do you like the way your kitchen is laid out? Do you like that it is open to the living room, or would you prefer it be a separate room (or vice versa)?

- Would you trade less counter space for additional pantry storage?

- Would you rather have a smaller/larger bedroom closet in exchange for a smaller/larger bedroom?

- Additional questions:

EXERCISE 11: Design preferences and requirements   [p. 24-28]

Look through plans of past projects or walk through a few of your most typical buildings. Make a list of every room that should be included in all or most buildings, no matter how small it might seem. We've listed some spaces in the exercise below, but be sure to add spaces unique to your buildings.

Next, go through the list and note the size of the spaces. If you have architectural plans available, the square footage is usually noted on the floor plans. These numbers may not be entirely consistent across buildings, which is ok; you're just looking for rough averages.

Now think about special requirements or preferences for each space. Consider whether it's important that certain spaces be located near each other. It's helpful to make a distinction between preferences and requirements so designers can understand how to prioritize if space is constrained. You may also want to add additional information, such as a description of how the room is typically used.

LAYOUT PREFERENCES
....

ROOM	SIZE	PREFERENCES AND REQUIREMENTS	ADJACENCIES
Example: Laundry Room	*Must fit 1 washer/dryer for every 15 units*	*Require a slop sink* *Prefer space for folding table*	*Prefer near tenant lounge*
Example: Tenant lounge	*300-600 sf depending on building size*	*Include in buildings larger than ten units* *Prefer lots of natural light*	*Must be in a visible, high-traffic area*
Example: Unit kitchens	*12 l.f. of counter for small units; 16 l.f. of counter for family units*	*Prefer galley kitchen layout* *Require garbage disposal*	
Storage			
Staff offices			
Lobby			
Janitor closet			
Outdoor spaces			
Parking			
Unit kitchens			
Unit bathrooms			
Unit bedrooms			

Hint: Keep it general. Don't worry about things that may be unique to certain projects; only include information that will likely be consistent across most of your buildings.

EXERCISE 12: Preferred Specifications   [p. 29-32]

Review the responses to the Staff Site and Tenant Surveys in Exercises 9 and 10. What are the most common products or materials mentioned? Create the table below in your own excel document. Fill in anything that is important for you to keep consistent across your buildings, and be as detailed as you see fit. For instance, you may simply write 'solid surface' under countertops, or you might say 'caesarstone - ice white - 2 cm thickness with plywood backing.' You may also add columns such as 'property management notes,' 'upgrades,' 'product location,' 'buildings where this was used previously,' etc.

SPECIFICATION MATRIX

PRODUCT/ MATERIAL	SPECIFICATION	REASON	ALTERNATIVE SPEC
Flooring 1 - _____			
Flooring 2 - _____			
Cabinets			
Sinks			
Appliances			
Fixtures			
Paint			
Countertops			
Windows			
Doors			

EXERCISE 13: Reference documents   [p. 33]

The goal for this section is to develop a running list of documents containing advice or information that may be relevant to your organization's work. First, look through the resources listed in the previous section of this document, and check out any that sound as though they may be useful for you. Second, ask your architects and project managers if there are documents that they are already using. Third, talk to other organizations that are doing similar work to see if there are documents they'd recommend, or if they themselves have created their own guidelines. Don't forget requirement from funders or local municipalities.

Once you have your list of resources, make a few notes about what you like in each resource or why it is relevant to your work.
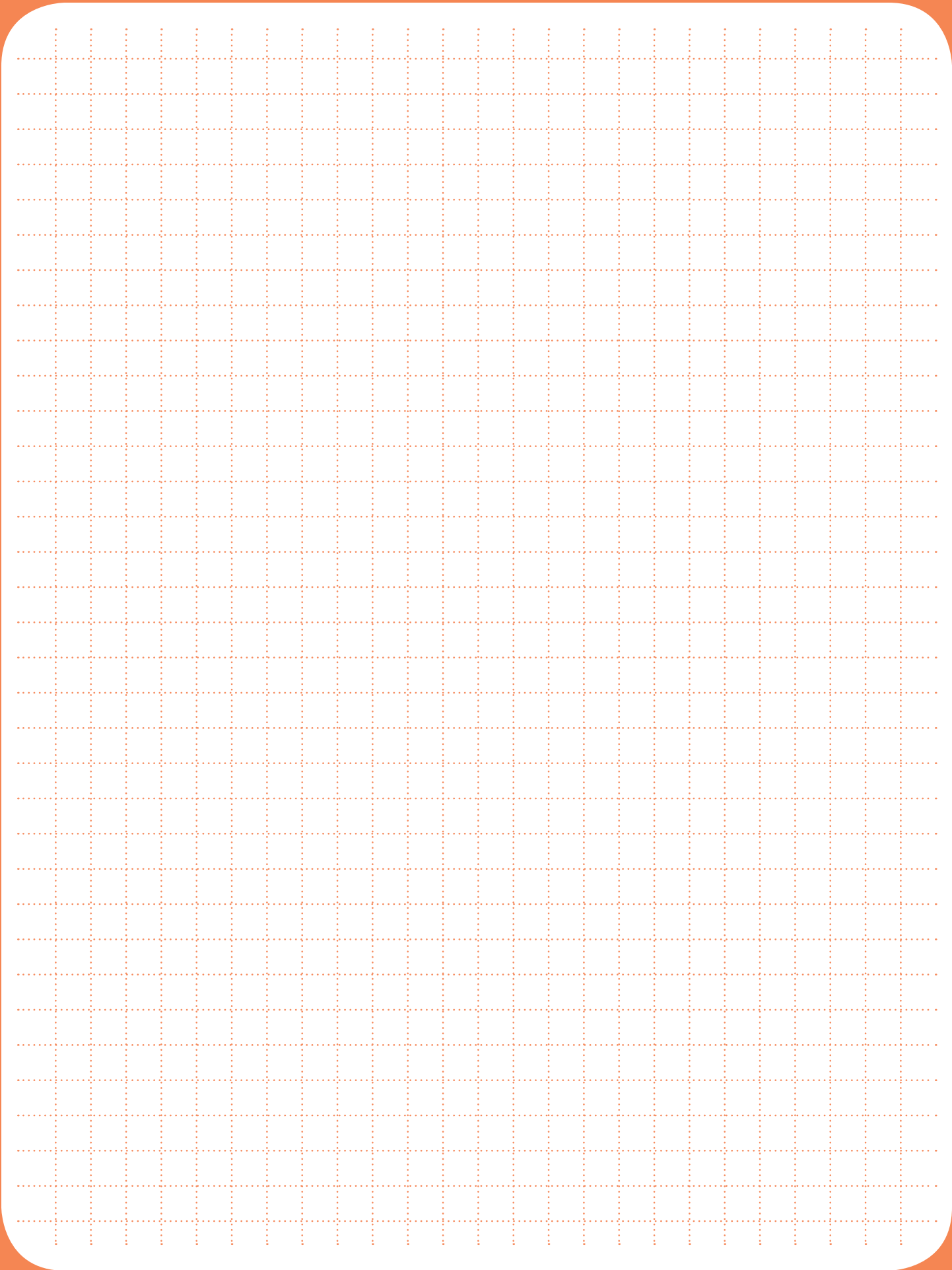
REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

RESOURCE	LINK / URL (include specific pages)	RELEVANCE/ REASON

NOTES:

4

resources

Check out some finished design guidelines for additional ideas, examples, and inspiration.

in this section...

A example guidelines

Ⓐ example guidelines

Below is a list of documents that we found helpful when creating our own design guidelines. Browse through them for ideas on format, content, or just general inspiration. If you're looking for specific examples of the topics discussed in Section 2, we've highlighted the content included in each example includes using the following key:

OI **O**rganizational **I**nformation   **OP** **O**rganizational **P**riorities   **DP** **D**esign **P**references

PS **P**referred **S**pecifications   **RD** **R**esource **D**ocuments

ACTIVE DESIGN GUIDELINES AND AFFORDABLE DESIGNS FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING, Center for Active Design

▶ https://centerforactivedesign.org/guidelines/

Organization: Non-profit agency promoting healthy design
Focus: Healthy buildings and urban spaces
Components: **OI** **OP** **DP**
Description: This guide identifies design strategies to increase and promote healthier, more active buildings. These guidelines are written in a narrative style focused heavily on supporting evidence, and incorporate case studies illustrating best practices. They also include check-lists that distill the strategies to a simple list for reviewing building plans.

AGING IN PLACE GUIDE FOR BUILDING OWNERS, New York City Department for the Aging

https://46u0j30o449zq8181dfurbcj-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/
▶ uploads/2016/10/AIP_2017_EN.pdf

Organization: Municipality
Focus: Best practices for senior housing design
Components: **OI** **DP** **RD**
Description: This guide recommends residential building upgrades to accommodate older tenants. It's presented in a simple bullet point format, and is a good example of how to integrate specific materials details into the design preferences. It also includes a robust resources section.

AGING IN PLACE GUIDELINES, Enterprise Community Partners

▶ https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/aging-place-design-guidelines-18245

Organization: National organization that funds and supports affordable housing

Focus: Best practices for senior housing design

Components: OI DP RD

Description: The Aging in Place Design Guidelines cover a broad range of recommendations for senior-specific design, from overall building layout to materials and technical details, clearly organized by room. It is written as a narrative, accompanied by a variety of thorough diagrams.

DESIGN GUIDELINES AND CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS, BC Housing

▶ https://www.bchousing.org/partner-services/asset-management-redevelopment/construction-standards

Organization: Government agency

Focus: Construction standards

Components: OP DP PS

Description: This guide provides detailed standards and technical guidelines for the design and construction under the purview of BC Housing. It provides detailed recommendations organized by room, as well as a technical narrative of preferences organized by specification section.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION EXCELLENCE 2.O GUIDING PRINCIPLES,

New York City Department of Design and Construction

https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/ddc/downloads/DDC-Guiding-Principles-2016.

▶ pdf

Organization type: Municipality

Focus: Aspirational vision for citywide construction

Components: OI OP RD

Description: Framework for approaching design in urban environments. Twenty principles - focused around healthy living, resiliency, sustainability, and equity - are illustrated through case studies and examples.

DESIGN GUIDELINES, A Community of Friends

▶ Unpublished

Organization: Affordable housing developer specializing in supportive housing

Focus: Process and operational efficiency

Components: OI OP DP PS RD

Description: ACOF's guidelines were compiled and adapted into three components: a narrative description of design preferences; a spreadsheet of preferred specifications, and a project-specific worksheet to facilitate the conversation around design early in the development process. These documents work hand in hand to promote a strong, consistent, and efficient design process.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR AGING IN COMMUNITY, Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly

▶ Unpublished

Organization: Affordable housing developer specializing in senior housing

Focus: Best practices for senior housing design, process efficiency

Components: OI OP DP PS

Description: JCHE's guidelines begin with high-level design principles, and become increasingly specific, moving through layout recommendations to preferred materials. The document is primarily narrative, organized both by room and by specification section.

DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR REHABILITATION OF NYCHA RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS, New York City Housing Authority

▶ http://www1.nyc.gov/assets/nycha/downloads/pdf/nycha-design-guidelines.pdf

Organization: Housing authority

Focus: Process and operational efficiency

Components: OI OP DP RD

Description: Guidelines for renovations of housing authority properties. The clear and succinct narrative text is supplemented with detail drawings, plans, and diagrams.

ENTERPRISE GREEN COMMUNITIES MULTIFAMILY SPECIFICATIONS,
Enterprise Community Partners
- ▶ https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/2015-criteria-multifamily-specifications-13378

Organization: National organization that funds and supports affordable housing
Focus: Sustainability, process efficiency
Components: OI PS
Description: This resource helps organizations comply with Green Communities standards. The specifications, organized in the format typically used by architects, serve as a base that can be customized to address the needs of specific projects.

ENTERPRISE GREEN COMMUNITIES UNIVERSAL DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS, Enterprise Community Partners
- ▶ https://www.enterprisecommunity.org/resources/2012-enterprise-green-communities-single-and-multifamily-13019

Organization: National organization that funds and supports affordable housing
Focus: Accessibility and universal design, process efficiency
Components: OI PS
Description: This resource helps organizations integrate universal design standards into their projects. The specifications, organized in the format typically used by architects, serve as a base that can be customized to address the needs of specific projects.

HPD DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development
- ▶ https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/hpd/downloads/pdf/developers/sro-constr-guidelines.pdf

Organization: Municipality
Focus: Best practices for supportive housing design
Components: OI DP RD
Description: Narrative description of best practices across a variety of categories including site, overall building, apartments, and sustainability. This is a good example of a guideline that doesn't need to be overly complicated to accomplish its goal.

POAH BASIS OF DESIGN WEBSITE, Preservation of Affordable Housing
  ▶ www.poahbod.org
Organization: Affordable housing developer
Focus: Product/material specifications, process and operational efficiency
Components: PS
Description: POAH's online tool standardizes materials and products across all their building sites. The online format allows for ease of use by site staff, architects, contractors alike. It is integral to the organization's specification process and is used on each and every project.

THE MATERIALS HANDBOOK: GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE AFFORDABLE HOUSING, San Francisco Mayor's Office of Housing and Asian Neighborhood Design
  ▶ http://www.andnet.org/materials-handbook/
Organization: Municipality
Focus: Sustainable materials for affordable housing
Components: OI DP PS
Description: Detailed narrative analyzes materials from a sustainability and affordability perspective.

✳ many thanks

This document benefited extensively from the many affordable housing developers and experts who were willing to share their experiences with design guidelines. In particular, we'd like to thank:

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