



2026 DCA Architectural Manual

Georgia Housing Credit Program

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I. Architectural Standards

In accordance with federal requirements established by 24 CFR 92.25 (HOME), IRC Section 42 (LIHTC), and the 1989 Georgia General Assembly Housing Trust Fund (HTF) for the Homeless, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has established these Architectural Standards. All projects receiving DCA resources for the construction of new and/or rehabilitation of existing rental housing, including HOME, CDBG-DR, NHTF, TCAP, ERA2, SLRF 9% LIHTC, 4% LIHTC/Bonds, and/or Housing Trust Fund (HTF) must meet these Architectural Standards. It is the Project Team's responsibility to ensure 100% compliance with this Manual (and approved DCA Architectural Waivers).

All properties funded with a DCA Georgia Housing and Finance Authority (GHFA) loan and/or grant must meet all the requirements in this manual unless DCA grants a waiver. Funding sources include but are not limited to HOME, NHTF, CDBG-DR, ERA2, SLRF and TCAP.

The Qualified Allocation Plan ("QAP" or "Plan") requires that projects funded under the Plan meet applicable Federal, State, and DCA codes, acts, and regulations. These architectural standards are not meant to replace Federal, State, or local codes. These standards shall be in addition to the following which apply to all properties funded in the program:

- Georgia State Minimum Standard Codes (with Georgia Amendments)
 - International Building Code
 - International Energy Conservation Code
 - International Fire Code
 - International Fuel Gas Code
 - International Mechanical Code
 - International Plumbing Code
 - International Residential Code
 - National Electrical Code
- HUD Housing Quality Standards (HQS)
- HUD Minimum Property Standards (MPS)
- HUD Uniform Physical Condition Standards (UPCS)

The QAP requires that projects funded under the Plan meet all applicable federal and state accessibility standards as well as DCA accessibility requirements. For further information on accessibility laws and requirements that are applicable to projects funded under the Plan, refer to the DCA Accessibility Manual.

All new and rehabilitation construction work scopes must consider the property marketability and residential quality of life, including, but not limited to, upgraded building exteriors and unit interiors, and improved site conditions and amenities. These upgrades should be reflected in the Threshold and Scoring portions of the DCA Application. Both new construction and rehabilitation projects must meet the Threshold requirements (longevity, per unit cost limitations, financial feasibility, economic viability, including construction standards for potential disaster mitigation, etc.), as published in the Qualified Allocation Plan. These Architectural Standards, as well as the

QAP and Rehabilitation Standards, should be read in their entirety for further information regarding materials longevity and components replacement for completed properties.

New and rehabilitation construction costs are subject to DCA regulations, and per unit cost limits must reflect the reasonable and necessary costs required to develop a project in the State of Georgia. DCA may determine that projects that exceed customary and reasonable construction costs, even if they are within published per-unit cost limits, represent a poor utilization of resources, and may fail Threshold. The final determination of compliance with the Architectural Standards rests solely with the mortgage lender, the credit enhancement provider, and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

DCA may grant an architectural waiver to projects that will not meet the above requirements ONLY if there is an overriding public policy or historic preservation need and the physical needs assessment clearly documents that the existing property does not require a comprehensive rehabilitation.

Applicants must submit ALL "waivers" at the pre-application stage (refer to the 2026 DCA Rehabilitation Guide for further guidance). The Applicant must demonstrate that efforts were taken to meet the minimum design criteria.

Waiver requests for accessibility-related items should be accompanied by a legal opinion from the applicant/developer, a letter of support from the Accessibility Consultant, and information (i.e., feasibility analysis, site conditions, etc.) to justify DCA's consideration of waiving the requirement as outlined in DCA QAP and all related manuals. Refer to the 2026 DCA Accessibility Manual for further guidance. DCA will only waive items related to DCA's accessibility mandates. DCA will not approve accessibility waiver requests for projects utilizing GHFA-administered funds (i.e., HOME, NHTF, CDBG-DR, ERA2, SLRF and TCAP funds).

DCA Hard Costs identified as "Contractor Services" are costs associated with work performed by the primary General Contractor. This Contractor work scope would be further defined in the Uses of Funds tab of the Owner's Core application, DCA Rehabilitation Work Scope form, DCA Schedule of Values form, and the executed agreement between the Owner and Contractor. The project oversight of the Contractor's work scope, including DCA QAP requirements, must be defined in the executed agreement between the Owner and the Architect. In addition, the Contractor work scope would be subject to the QAP Identity of Interest limitations, Front-End Cost Review, and Contractor Cost Certification requirements.

DCA Hard Costs identified as "Other Construction Hard Costs" are costs associated with work managed directly by the Ownership. This Hard Cost category is intended for limited use and would be a small percentage of the overall Hard Cost Budget. Past DCA approved uses for this category have been for owner installed window blinds, and owner contracted power company parking lot lighting. The "Other Construction Hard Costs" work scope must be identified and approved by DCA both at application and prior to construction commencement. Documents certifying the actual cost must be maintained by the ownership and submitted to DCA with the appropriate Construction Services submissions.

For any project utilizing Georgia Housing and Finance Authority (GHFA) administered funds (i.e., HOME, NHTF, CDBG-DR, ERA2, SLRF & TCAP funds), a **Pre-construction Conference** must occur prior to the commencement of construction to review federal compliance requirements and draw request procedures.

Design Submittals and Construction Monitoring

Drawings and Specifications:

Construction documents, including architectural drawings and specifications, are required for both new construction and rehabilitation projects. To minimize construction problems, unnecessary change orders, discrepancies in documentation, and cost overruns, architectural drawings and specifications must meet industry standards, being clear and consistent while faithfully depicting the design, location, and dimensions of project elements. Refer to the Architectural Submission Requirements for document format and submittal requirements.

Building Permits:

Building permits are required for all work to be funded under DCA programs. Proof of inspections and approvals by local officials, including Certificates of Occupancy, are required for the final allocation of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC). See Architectural Submission Requirements and contact DCA LIHTC and HOME underwriters for specific information.

Soils and Materials Testing:

All new soils and structural concrete must be tested to ensure compliance with engineered specifications. Additional materials should be tested as dictated by industry standards. A licensed and state accredited testing lab, using standardized testing procedures, must conduct the tests.

Construction Monitoring and Compliance:

Construction work must adhere to the standards and requirements contained in the Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP), the respective DCA Architectural program manuals, the Application, Land Use Restrictive Covenant or Land Use Restriction Agreement, and all manufacturers recommended installation procedures and guidelines for all materials used during the construction of the project.

For ALL "non-GHFA" funded projects (i.e., 4% LIHTC/Bond and 9% LIHTC funded projects), DCA will assign approved construction inspection compliance companies to perform quarterly inspections and complete reports in accordance with the DCA inspection report form.

Reports must address any concerns about construction quality, safety, and progress. Reports for rehabilitation projects must also address any concerns about resident safety and treatment of resident belongings.

The Owner's "Construction Compliance Inspector" must approve all draw requests.

The Owner's "Construction Compliance Inspector" must return to the site in the below timeframes to confirm issue resolution:

- Issues identified in a monthly inspection report related to site safety, resident safety, and treatment of resident belongings must be resolved within 48 hours.
- Issues identified in a monthly inspection report related to construction quality must be resolved within 3 months.

NOTE: See Section XVIII "Monitoring and Compliance" of the Qualified Allocation Plan – Core for additional information.

For "GHFA" funded projects (i.e., HOME, NHTF, CDBG-DR, TCAP, ERA2 & SLRF), DCA will assign approved construction inspection compliance companies to perform monthly inspections and complete reports in accordance with the DCA inspection report form. Completed reports shall be submitted to DCA during the GHFA draw submission process.

DCA reserves the right to inspect all properties throughout the construction process and before issuance of Final LIHTC Allocation. Non-compliance with building codes, accessibility codes, and/or DCA requirements must be corrected before issuance of Final LIHTC Allocation and may require additional third-party DCA inspections at the Owners expense. DCA may perform additional unannounced site visits to ensure compliance with DCA requirements. All inspection costs are the responsibility of the Owner.

DCA will monitor construction through inspection reports and other sources to ensure quality standards and completion dates are met. DCA may require owners to periodically submit additional reports and project documents generated by inspectors, construction managers, architects, and/or engineers as necessary.

If during the construction monitoring period, DCA determines that unsafe project site conditions exist, DCA reserves the right to issue a stop work order to the Owner.

Refer to the QAP for further DCA and IRS requirements.

Site Development Standards

Environmental Conditions:

Surrounding environmental conditions must be carefully evaluated. Negative environmental conditions (i.e., ditches, canals, railroad tracks, expressways, noise sources, flood prone areas, etc.) must be corrected or alleviated through approved mitigation measures. Refer to the Environmental Phase I Site Assessment standards published in the DCA Environmental Manual for the environmental documentation and review process. All applications are required to submit a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment and a Phase II investigation if recommended in the Phase I report.

Parking

Parking spaces shall meet local zoning requirements. In the absence of any other requirements, there shall be no less than "1.5 spaces per unit for family tenancy projects" and "1 space per unit for senior tenancy projects."

NOTE: An Architectural Waiver will NOT be needed if the local jurisdiction parking requirements are less than noted above

Parking areas shall be concrete, asphalt paving or pervious pavement (porous asphalt, plastic grids, permeable interlocking concrete pavers, permeable clay brick pavers, resin-bound paving, bound recycled glass porous pavement) and have curbs (*NOTE: See handicapped parking exceptions*).

All handicapped parking spaces must meet federal and state accessibility requirements. All “newly” constructed handicapped parking spaces shall be “concrete paving,” and all “accessible routes” that incorporate the parking areas should be clearly delineated along the pavement surface (i.e., striping,). Please refer to the DCA Accessibility Manual for more information.

Vehicular Circulation

For tenants, guests, and emergency services providers, vehicle circulation routes should be designed to provide safe ingress and egress to and from all buildings and amenities. Roads shall be either concrete, asphalt paving, or pervious pavement (porous asphalt, plastic grids, permeable interlocking concrete pavers, permeable clay brick pavers, resin-bound paving, bound recycled glass porous pavement) and have curbs and sidewalks.

Pedestrian Circulation

Pedestrian circulation should provide paved accessible routes to parking, buildings, and amenities. Streets (except crossing routes), grass and gravel/sand surfaces are not acceptable pedestrian circulation routes. Accessible ramps and no-step access must be provided as applicable.

Open Spaces

Open landscaped spaces or green belts should be included in the overall site design.

Landscaping

Landscaping should be appropriate for the climate zone, appealing, and convey a residential image. Low maintenance plant materials are preferred. For appropriate landscape options, please refer to *Landscape Plants for Georgia*, published by the Cooperative Extension Service, The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

Site Lighting

One foot-candle is the general standard for site lighting. All parking, building, amenity, and site lighting should be sufficient for its purpose (i.e., evening mail collection, etc.), and be directed down to diminish nuisance light. Additionally, units should have exterior entry and porch door lights controlled from within the unit.

Site Amenities

Required Standard Amenities and Additional Amenities selected must meet applicable federal, state, and DCA accessibility requirements, provide seating appropriate to the amenity, and if

proper, should be protected from the elements. Amenities such as the playground should be centrally located in visual proximity to the buildings, while other noise-prone amenities may be appropriately sited on the property.

Standard and Additional selected site amenities identified in the application submission must be in the final construction documents and budget. DCA reserves the right to determine the adequacy of amenities and whether they meet DCA requirements.

NOTE: Minimum standards for Site Amenities are outlined in the "Amenities Guide" and the "Accessibility Manual".

Trash Collection

Trash collection sites must be screened from residential and community areas and placed at a distance from the tenant dwelling units and amenities to eliminate objectionable sights and odors. The collection areas must be accessible to disabled persons while convenient to tenants and service vehicles. Dumpsters must be placed on concrete slabs with concrete approach aprons at least 10'-0" depth.

Signage and Fixtures

Building signage should meet the requirements of local 911 service providers. Illumination for the property entrance signage must be provided.

Site Grading and Drainage

Site grading should allow stormwater to drain positively away from buildings and site amenities while eliminating pooling, puddling, etc. All on-property retention and detention areas must be fenced, and for maintenance and safety purposes, a properly securable gate may be provided.

Inlet or outlet drainage ways must be designed to prevent resident entry. On-property retention ponds must be well maintained. Foundation walls should prevent the entrance of water, insects, and rodents into the basement or crawl space areas. Access and ventilation of basement and crawl spaces must meet code requirements and must be secured from the exterior as appropriate.

Security

Security measures should be incorporated into the architectural design. As necessary, fencing, lighting, and other security features must mitigate poorly lighted parking areas, blind corners and recesses, inappropriate landscaping, and steep grades. The Owner may wish to include security cameras, HVAC cages, and other site security features. Entry doors to units shall be equipped with a viewer and bell or buzzer. Exterior doors and windows must be equipped with locks to prevent access from the outside. All doors shall be provided with hardware that complies with ANSI/BHMA Standards.

Site Utilities

All utility distribution systems should be underground where possible. **All projects must have requisite access and connectivity to the existing public utilities.** For further information, refer to the Qualified Allocation Plan, Appendix I, Threshold Criteria.

Building Exterior Design Standards

Building exteriors should create a residential image appropriate to the market. DCA encourages using materials that provide low maintenance and longevity for the property's life span. All materials are to be installed using standard construction methods and means, resulting in manufacturers' issuance of guarantees.

Roofing:

Anti-fungal dimensional (architectural) shingles with a minimum 30-year warranty are required for all shingle roof applications. Flat roofs are not encouraged, but a minimum 30-year warranty is required for all flat roof applications. All edges of the roof must have an aluminum drip edge that extends a minimum of 3" under the shingles, 2" onto the fascia, and have a minimum ½" 45-degree kick out at the bottom end of the fascia extension.

Gutters and Downspouts:

Seamless gutters and downspouts are mandatory for all construction and on all buildings.

Exterior Cladding:

- a. Brick: See Appendix I, Threshold Criteria, Architectural Design & Quality Standards, Qualified Allocation Plan
- b. Insulated vinyl siding must be impact-resistant commercial grade with a minimum thickness of .046" and a minimum 30-year warranty to be provided by the manufacturer and must meet or exceed ASTM D3679 & ASTM D7856 standards.
- c. Fiber Cement/Cementitious Siding must be 5/16" nominal thickness with a 30-year warranty to be provided by the manufacturer.
- d. Natural or manufactured stone.
- e. Other materials: The use of synthetic stucco (EIFS: Exterior Insulation and Finish Systems) and cement stucco must be pre-approved by DCA before application submission. Wood siding is not permitted. All exterior trim, including fascia and soffits, window and door trim, gable vents, etc. must be commercial grade with a minimum thickness of .046" and a minimum 30-year warranty to be provided by the manufacturer. Wood fascia must be covered completely with prefinished aluminum with a minimum thickness of .024".

Where exterior brick does not extend to an eave line, aluminum flashing shall be installed that extends a minimum of 2" under/behind the above exterior wall surface material and over the outer edge of the brick to prevent water penetration.

Exterior Doors and Windows:

Exterior doors must be 1 ¾" high durability, insulated (such as steel or fiberglass), and meet the requirements of the *Georgia State Minimum Standard Codes (with Georgia Amendments)*.

- a. All primary entries must either be within a breezeway or have a minimum roof covering 3 feet deep by 5 feet wide, including a corresponding porch or concrete pad.
- b. Exterior doors for fully accessible units must include spring hinges.
- c. Windows and door glazing must meet the requirements of the *Georgia State Minimum Standard Codes (with Georgia Amendments)*.
- d. Wood windows must not be located within a shower surrounded area or over shower units.
- e. Install continuous bead of silicone caulk behind all nail fins before installing new windows per the manufacturer's specifications.
- f. Skylights, windows and locations, sizes, and operable panels must meet the requirements of the *Georgia State Minimum Standard Codes (with Georgia Amendments)*.

Exterior Stairs:

All exterior stairs are to be covered and protected from the elements for new construction and the rehabilitation of existing buildings.

Building Interior Design Standards

Room Configuration:

Room configuration should be functional while providing economic use of space:

- a. The primary bedroom must be designed as close to a rectangular shape as possible, and sizes should be consistent with industry standards.
- b. The primary bathroom shall be accessible from a common area such as a hall. Exceptions may be considered for the rehabilitation of one-bedroom units.
- c. The kitchen should be accessible from the entry.
- d. Bathrooms must not open from food preparation areas or be used as a sole passageway to a habitable room, hall, basement, or exterior.
- e. No habitable rooms are permitted in the basement or cellar spaces unless egress is provided according to applicable fire codes.
- f. All windows in bedroom units must comply with all local and state life safety requirements. No windowless bedrooms will be allowed unless an architectural standards pre-application waiver is submitted with documentation evidencing such approval by the local code official and/or State Fire Marshal.

Unit Sizes:

The following criteria are the minimum requirements. DCA may consider submissions that appear to violate the spirit and intent of these minimums as a poor use of resources.

Rentable (Leasable) Square Footage:

This is DCA's method for calculating "Residential Unit Square Footage" in the Architectural Manual, construction forms, documents, and the Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP). It is calculated for each dwelling type.

The unit's net rentable area is measured from the inside face of each unit's perimeter wall.

- a. Net area included air-conditioned space only.

- b. Measure from the inside (paint) face of all unit perimeter walls.
- c. Do not include any patio, balcony, or breezeway areas.
- d. Do not include any outside storage closets.
- e. Do not deduct any interior walls.
- f. Include non-revenue units in the total net rentable living area (Total Residential Unit Square Footage)

Minimum Unit Sizes

(waiver may not be requested for new construction)

DWELLING TYPE	MINIMUM SQUARE FOOTAGE	KITCHEN	BATHROOM
Studio	375	Cooking area	1
Efficiency	450	Full kitchen	1
1 Bedroom (<i>Atlanta Metro only</i>)	500	Full kitchen	1
1 Bedroom	650	Full kitchen	1
2 Bedrooms	850	Full kitchen	1
3 Bedroom	1,100	Full kitchen	2

Closets

- a. According to market demand, a suitable number of closets should be provided for each dwelling unit.
- b. All closets designed to contain clothes must be a minimum of 2'-0" deep.
- c. Closets and defined storage areas must not be included in the room area square footage computations.
- d. Closets and storage spaces in accessible units must meet applicable reach range requirements.
- e. All closets must have doors.

Kitchen Requirements

(waiver may not be requested for new construction)

UNIT TYPE	MINIMUM CLEAR COUNTERTOP FRONTAGE	MINIMUM LINEAR FOOTAGE OF CABINETS (including base & wall cabinets, combined)
1 Bedroom (<i>Atlanta Metro only</i>)	5'-9"	14
1 Bedroom	6'-9"	16
2 Bedrooms	7'-9"	18
3 Bedrooms	8'-9"	20

Ceiling Heights

- a. Flat ceilings must be a minimum of 8'-0" above the finished floor.
- b. Sloped ceilings must not be less than 5'-0" for the purposes of computing floor areas.

- c. Ceiling heights must meet minimum requirements established by the *Life Safety Code* and the Georgia State Fire Marshal's Office.

Floor Finishes:

Floor finishes are to be suitable for market conditions and appropriate to the space considered.

- a. Living Areas and Bedrooms: Carpet or LVT
- b. Bathrooms, Mechanical Closets, Laundry Areas, Kitchen, and other high moisture areas: Sheet Vinyl, VCT, LVT, or Ceramic Tile.

DCA will evaluate kitchen and living room flooring materials for appropriate marketability, durability, sound transmission, and tenant comfort.

All materials are to be installed to the manufacturer's specifications using standard methods resulting in the issuance of a manufacturer's guarantee. DCA may approve material upgrades with improved maintenance qualities, durability, safety, and/or indoor air quality for the tenants. Manufacturer's warranties must be submitted to the Owner.

Additional Flooring Requirements:

- Unit carpeting may have a level loop, textured loop, level cut pile, or level cut/uncut pile texture. DCA may approve alternate carpeting materials and installation methods in units intended for the elderly or disabled. Carpeting shall comply with HUD's Use of Materials Bulletin No. 44d.
- Carpet pad must be installed under all carpeting for which it is intended and should comply with HUD's *Use of Materials Bulletin No. 72a*.
- Sheet vinyl must be a minimum of 0.095 in. thickness and provide a 20-year residential warranty.
- Ceramic floor tile shall be a minimum 12" x 12" and installed over poured concrete slab or cementitious backing material.
- VCT must be at minimum 0.080 in. thickness.
- Luxury Vinyl Tile (LVT) must have a 12mil wear layer and provide a 15-year residential warranty. LVT installed in kitchens, bathrooms, laundry areas, and mechanical closets must be 100% waterproof.

Cabinets and Countertops

- Bathrooms must have adequate storage. If adequate cabinet space is not available, bathrooms must have medicine cabinets. Medicine cabinets should not be placed in party walls unless fire separation is continuous behind and around the cabinet installation.
- Plastic laminate material must be installed to the full width and depth on the bottom shelf of vanity sink cabinets and kitchen sink cabinets and must be sealed/caulked around the full perimeter to all cabinet sides to prevent moisture/water penetration.
- Kitchen countertops must be constructed of a 3/4" plywood base with laminate top or solid surface material. No particle board press board or fiber board will be allowed. All open voids above and below upper and lower kitchen cabinets shall be sealed with caulk or cabinet matching material/finish and all cabinets shall be caulked where the cabinet meets a wall surface to prevent pest infestation. No open voids will be allowed. All open voids/holes in cabinet backs must be sealed with matching cabinet material, caulk or expandable foam and all pipe penetrations must be covered with an escutcheon.

- Kitchen cabinets must be provided above and below countertops. The cabinet shall be constructed with solid wood or plywood boxes. If using 2 or more hanging rails in solid wood or plywood at the back of the box, then a minimum of ¼" Engineered wood or plywood back cover panel is allowed.
- Stiles and rails for doors and drawer fronts must be constructed using solid wood or plywood. The center panel can be laminated over engineered wood. Slab doors and drawer fronts using stain or paint must be made of solid wood or plywood.
- Stiles, rails, and center panels for doors and drawer fronts must use PVC/PP wrap on Engineered wood. Any exposed wood must be sealed with PVC/PP/ABS material at a minimum thickness of 1 mm. No paper wrap is allowed on stiles, rails, and center panels. The center panel can be laminated over engineered wood.
- Rigid Thermofoil (RTF) doors and drawer fronts are not allowed.
- All cabinets will conform to the performance and fabrication requirements of **ANSI/KCMA A161.1, Performance & Construction Standard for Kitchen and Vanity Cabinets, or an equivalent certification. All Cabinets must bear the Certification Seal.** Other than as stated above, no particle board pressboard or fiberboard will be allowed in the cabinet box.

Additional Requirements

- Blinds: All windows should have neutral color horizontal mini blinds. All glass doors should have either horizontal mini-blinds or vertical slat blinds.
- Cable outlets must be provided in the main living area and in all bedrooms.
- All interior finishes, especially interior paint, must be low in Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) as defined in the EarthCraft Multifamily program (<https://earthcraft.org/programs/earthcraft-multifamily/>).
- In new construction and adaptive re-use projects, all water heater tanks must be placed in an overflow pan piped to the exterior of the building, regardless of location and floor level, unless a primed p-trap is installed. The temperature and relief valve must also be piped to the exterior. Water heaters must be placed in closets to allow for their removal and inspection by or through the closet door. Water heaters may not be installed over the clothes washer or dryer space.
- Bathroom shower walls shall be either ceramic tile, solid surface material (i.e., three-piece acrylic wall panels), fiberglass tub/shower enclosure/surround, or fiberglass shower enclosure/surround.
- For new construction only, all dwelling units shall have washer and dryer "hookups."

For multi-piece molded fiberglass tub/shower units, enclosure/surround shall have applied acrylic surface. Core material fiber glassed in appropriate locations for grab bar reinforcement. Corners shall be seamless with overlapping panel edges.

Ceramic wall tile shall be installed over cementitious backing material (including existing residential units).

Appliances:

Appliances must include:

- Microwaves
- Refrigerators
- Ranges
- Dishwashers (Note: Dishwashers NOT required in "senior" USDA properties or HUD properties)

Minimum refrigerator sizes for one- and two-bedroom units – “14 cu. ft.”; three-bedroom units – “16 cu. ft.” All refrigerators shall have a built-in “ice maker.”

Other kitchen appliance sizes must be appropriate for the unit and the number of tenants. Appropriate appliances listed in US EPA’s Energy Star program must be provided. Further information is available at <http://energystar.gov>.

Minimum standards for Unit Amenities and Laundry Amenities are outlined in the “Amenities Guide” and the “Accessibility Manual.”

Mechanical:

Mechanical system equipment must meet the requirements of the Georgia State Minimum Standard Codes (with Georgia Amendments).

Sustainability Standards:

The minimum energy efficiency and sustainable building practices for this section are located in the *QAP, Threshold Criteria, Building Sustainability*. In addition, the intent in this section is to ensure the same level of quality testing in all multi-family units. Further guidance on compliance pathways through the definition of building type, the procedure for testing, and applicable exemptions are instructed below.

Compliance Pathways for Low-Rise Residential Construction:

Residential Building Definition: For this code includes detached one- and two-family dwellings and multiple single-family dwellings (townhouses) as well as Group R-2 (“Low- rise R-2 multifamily dwellings”), R-3, R-4 buildings three stories or less in height above grade plane.

Compliance Pathways for Commercial and High-Rise Residential Construction:

Commercial Building Definition: For this code, all buildings that are not included in the definition of “Residential Building” (i.e., multifamily four stories or more in height above grade plane).

Duct Leakage:

Low-Rise Residential Construction

The total leakage of the ducts, where measured by one of the following methods in accordance with Section R403 SYSTEMS of the Georgia Energy Code shall be as follows:

- Rough-in test: The total leakage shall be less than or equal to 6 cubic feet per minute (113.3 L/min) per 100 square feet (9.29 m²) of conditioned floor area where the air handler is installed at the time of the test.
- Post-construction test: Total leakage shall be less than or equal to 6 cubic feet per minute (113.3 L/min) per 100 sq. feet (9.29 m²) of conditioned floor area.

Mid and High-Rise Residential Construction

In addition to the minimum Georgia Energy Code requirements, DCA QAP multi-family developments that are four stories or more in height above grade plane shall comply with the same requirements described above for “Low-Rise Residential Construction” Duct Leakage. Projects that plan to utilize Packaged Terminal Heat Pumps and/or Air Conditioners (PTACs) or ductless mini splits for all units are exempt from the duct leakage requirement for all non-ducted systems.

Dwelling Unit Air Infiltration:

Low-Rise Residential Construction

The total dwelling unit air infiltration rate, where measured in accordance with Section R402 BUILDING THERMAL ENVELOPE of the Georgia Energy Code shall be as follows:

All “one- and two-family dwelling units” shall be tested and verified to less than five air changes per hour at 50 Pascals (ACH50) for Climate Zones 2, 3, and 4.

“Low-rise R-2 multi-family dwellings” (three stories or less in height above grade plane) shall be tested to less than 7 air changes per hour at 50 Pascals (ACH50).

As an alternative to ACH50, compliance for Low-rise R-2 dwellings may be attained by achieving an “Envelope Leakage Ratio” at 50 Pascals (ELR50) of less than 0.35 ($ELR50 < 0.35$, where $ELR50 = CFM50 / \text{Envelope Shell Area}$, in square feet).

Mid and High-Rise Residential Construction

In addition to the minimum Georgia Energy Code requirements, DCA QAP multi-family developments that are four stories or more in height above grade plane shall comply with the same requirements described above for “Low-Rise Residential Construction” Dwelling Unit Air Infiltration.

Electrical

Electrical distribution system minimum panel size is 100 amps, or per code. Electrical switches, outlets, thermostats, phone and television jacks, and other controls are to be installed per Fair Housing Act Design Manual requirements in qualified units and per appropriate accessibility law in accessible units. All penetrations of smoke partitions and rated assemblies must comply with fire codes as administered by the local authorities.

Dwelling Unit Acoustical Isolation

All developments must meet DCA requirements for interior and exterior noise limits. The DCA and HUD Noise Limitations are 45 decibels (dB) for interior locations and 65 dB for exterior amenities. For HUD funded projects submitted to DCA, all new construction and rehabilitation projects must also meet the requirements set forth in the HUD noise regulations, 24 C.F.R. 51b. Applications for rehabilitation may request a waiver from HUD Noise Limitations.

Dwelling Unit Acoustical Isolation requires a minimum STC (Sound Transmission Class) rating of “52” between units. Acoustical Isolation between dwelling units surpassing the required minimums will increase unit quality.

The following minimum design standards apply for Dwelling Unit Acoustical Isolation:

- Between units: 1 hr. rated UL assembly with one-layer 5/8” GWB on each side (minimum or per local fire requirements if greater) with two sets of staggered 2x4 studs (or metal stud

equivalent), sound-insulated with blanket material to STC rating of 52. All wall edges must be caulked.

- Within unit: one-layer ½" GWB on each side 2x4 studs (or metal stud equivalent)
- Floor to floor: 1 hr. rated UL assembly with a minimum STC rating 52. A minimum of 1" lightweight concrete or ¾" gypcrete topping over wood sub floor (optional floor construction may be considered for the rehabilitation of existing residential units.

In addition to the "Dwelling Unit Acoustical Isolation" requirements as outlined in Architectural Manual, the DCA Environmental Manual determines the environmental "Noise" limitations. Per the DCA Environmental Manual, Non-ASTM Issues for Phase I Reports, issue #4 "Noise" states the following:

"All developments must meet DCA requirements for interior and exterior noise limits. The DCA and HUD Noise Limitations are 45 decibels (dB) for interior locations and 65 dB for exterior amenities. For HUD funded projects submitted to DCA, all new construction and rehabilitation projects must also meet the requirements set forth in the HUD noise regulations, 24 C.F.R. 51b. Applications for rehabilitation may request a waiver from HUD Noise Limitations. Any such waiver would have to justify and document compliance with the requirements of 24 CFR 51.101(a)(5), and may also be subject to the Executive Order on Environmental Justice."

Refer to the DCA Environmental Manual for all requirements and procedures regarding environmental interior (building perimeter exterior walls) and exterior Noise limitations.

Thermal Insulation:

Thermal insulation must meet minimum standards as defined in Georgia State Minimum Standard Energy Code (International Energy Conservation Code). To prevent freezing of supply lines, all plumbing in exterior walls must be insulated on the cold side of the wall.

Radon:

All new construction must be built in accordance with current EPA requirements for radon-resistant construction techniques. Both new construction and rehabilitated buildings must be tested upon completion of the construction work scope and prior to tenant occupancy for compliance with EPA's established limits for radon levels.

Fire and Life Safety

Through strict code compliance, the property design shall provide a safe environment for all tenants. Adherence to the most recently adopted editions of the Georgia State Minimum Standard Codes (with Georgia Amendments) is required. This includes but is not limited to:

- Smoke detectors must be hard-wired and located per code for all construction, either rehabilitation or new. Carbon Monoxide Detectors shall be in accordance with NFPA 101 Life Safety Code and NFPA 720. (*note: DCA will not waive this requirement for rehabilitation proposals*)
- Fire alarms and sprinklers must meet fire department, state, and local code requirements.

- Attics must be constructed or rebuilt to meet all current fire and life safety codes for new construction, regardless of the requirements of the local building authority. These include draft stop walls, and rated ceiling, floor, and wall accessories.
- All through-penetrations of smoke walls, draft stops, and rated assemblies must meet current fire codes for “new” construction.
- Projects shall be in compliance with all disaster mitigation-related requirements of the latest editions of the applicable mandatory State Minimum Standards as adopted by the Department of Community Affairs, and with all local ordinances regarding disaster mitigation.

Accessibility

It is mandatory that the Property be designed to meet all applicable federal, state, local and DCA and QAP requirements for accessibility by the disabled. The accessibility characteristics are to be incorporated in the layout and design of open spaces, building locations and unit designs. Refer to the DCA Accessibility Manual for additional information. Please note that DCA requirements may be more stringent than federal or state requirements.

Newly constructed and rehabilitated single-family and multi-family housing developments receiving DCA funding are subject to statutory and regulatory accessibility requirements. It is the responsibility of the Owner, Architect, and Contractor to ensure compliance with all federal, state and local laws. DCA’s direct relationship to the Owner pertains only to the awarding of funds. The Owner bears final responsibility for compliance, regardless of fault, though he may seek legal restitution from the source of non-compliance.

Specifically, the Owner, Architect, and Contractor must ensure that the project is designed and built to meet applicable standards. Failure to meet these standards may result in federal and state noncompliance and costly repairs or corrections. Projects receiving DCA funding must meet federal, state, and local accessibility laws and meet the requirements of the DCA QAP and the DCA Accessibility Manual.

II. Submission Requirements

Overview

The Submission Requirements section of the Architectural Manual provides an overview of the documentation related to the Construction Services (CS) Department that will be submitted by each project team as both part of the application and awarded project processes.

Application for DCA Resources

As part of the DCA Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) process, the applicant must submit documentation referenced in the DCA Architectural Manual (Submission Requirements). The following describes the submission requirements.

Note: For DCA Scattered Site Projects, Site Information, and Conceptual Site Development Plan requirements must be met for each non-contiguous parcel unless DCA grants a waiver.

Note: A boundary survey may be required upon request.

Site Information and Conceptual Site Development Plan Threshold Criteria:

The CSDP, while not intended to be a final site development plan, should provide a clear insight into the proposed planned development and will be relied upon by DCA staff during the application process. The CSDP set consists of three DCA mandated sheets:

- "Cover sheet,"
- "Existing Conditions Site Plan"
- "Conceptual Site Plan" (CSP)

The CSDP set should be configured using 11x17 sheet format and the two plan sheets must incorporate a color "aerial overlay." Each sheet should contain a "title block" that includes original issue date, revision dates, and sheet title and sheet numbers.

All three DCA sheets should be combined to one single PDF file for the submission process. The CSDP set must include the following minimum sheets:

- a) Sheet 01 – Cover Sheet: The completed "2023 Georgia DCA Conceptual Site Development Plan (CSDP) Cover Sheet" form shall be used as the Cover Sheet (submit both Excel form and a PDF as part of the three-page plan set).
- b) Sheet 02 – Existing Conditions Site Plan:
 - a. The Existing Conditions Site Plan sheet should be colorized for clarity and fill the majority of the 11x17 sheet.
 - b. The sheet must incorporate a color "aerial overlay" that extends a "minimum of 100 feet" from the subject property boundary.
 - c. Clearly delineate the boundary of the proposed site using a unique color.
 - d. The Use of all adjacent properties and structures within 100' of the subject property boundary must be clearly delineated both graphically and in written form. Graphic

indication of adjacent properties will be addressed by incorporating a color “aerial overlay” with adjacent properties labeled and any off-site structures shown.

- e. All existing structures, tanks, slabs, and any other improvements existing on the property at the time of application must be clearly delineated.
 - f. Delineate all proposed demolition work (i.e., buildings, structures, utilities)
 - g. Delineate all existing public water and sewer utilities.
 - h. Delineate all existing easements (information to be compiled from public records and other appropriate sources)
- c) Sheet 03 – Conceptual Site Plan:
- a. The Conceptual Site Plan sheet should be colorized for clarity and fill the majority of the 11x17 sheet.
 - b. The sheet must incorporate a color “aerial overlay.”
 - c. Clearly delineate the boundary of the proposed site using a unique color.
 - d. All proposed easements are to be clearly defined and delineated in the plan.
 - e. Wetlands, floodplains, and state waters located with areas of disturbance calculated for the Wetlands, including required buffer zones clearly delineated to reflect how they will impact the site’s development.
 - f. Delineate all zoning setbacks and restrictions.
 - g. Delineate the location point of the “walking entrance” access to the property (intersection of site boundary/walk), which will be used for measuring XI. Desirable/Undesirable Activities.
 - h. Delineate the location point of the “driving entrance” access to the property (intersection of site boundary/drive), which will be used for measuring XI. Desirable/Undesirable Activities.
 - i. Location of all interior and exterior (Standard & Additional) site amenities indicated in the Application Form and identified on the plan Cover Sheet.
 - j. Defined areas of all tree and vegetation preservation and new landscaping.
 - k. Off-site work scope (i.e., entry roads, sewer outfalls/lift stations) identified in the Uses of Funds section of the Core app should be clearly delineated both graphically and in writing.
 - l. Delineate the proposed connection points to the existing public water and sewer utilities.

Rehabilitation Standards Threshold Criteria

- a. PHYSICAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT (See Rehabilitation Guide for additional requirements)
- b. DCA PNA Fannie Mae forms (Excel Workbook) (See Rehabilitation Guide for additional requirements)
- c. DCA REHABILITATION WORK SCOPE (See Rehabilitation Guide for additional requirements)

Awarded Projects

To ensure compliance with Georgia DCA’s Architectural Standards for safe, decent, affordable housing, DCA monitors the design and construction of all projects awarded tax credits and/or HOME, NHTF, CDBG-DR, TCAP, ERA2 & SLRF funds. As such, the project team must submit documents to DCA throughout the design and construction stages, which is accomplished through the Construction Services (CS) Department’s defined staged submission process as outlined below.

Adherence to these requirements and periodic DCA staff consultations are essential to meet deadlines and QAP commitments.

The submittal process and procedural requirements, including a list of the documents required for each submission, are further detailed in the **2026 DCA Construction Services (CS) Transmittal** Excel workbook. The workbook includes submittal instructions and a program-specific transmittal form for each program type (HOME, NHTF, CDBG-DR, TCAP, 9% Tax Credit only, and 4% Bond Tax Credit only projects). The 2026 DCA CS Transmittal workbook and applicable DCA documents will be made available on the DCA website before the DCA award letter:

Applicable DCA forms:

2026 DCA Construction Services Transmittal (CS Transmittal)

2026 DCA Construction Document Log (CD Log)

2026 DCA Schedule of Values (DCA SoV)

2026 DCA Amenities & Design Options Re-certification (ADO Recert)

GHFA Funded Projects (HOME, NHTF, CDBG-DR, TCAP, ERA2 & SLRF):

60 DAY SUBMISSION CONSTRUCTION LOAN CLOSING REVIEW SUBMISSION

Due: 45 days before DCA construction loan closing.

- a. Description: Includes items such as the ALTA Survey and Geotechnical Report, which DCA uses to ensure the project design can commence.
- b. 4
- c. Description: Includes items such as the "Review Set" of construction documents and DCA Schedule of Values, which the Construction Department uses to approve the project's Hard Cost budget for DCA Loan Committee approval purposes.
- b. CONSTRUCTION LOAN CLOSING SUBMISSION EXECUTED CONTRACT SUBMISSION
 - a. Due: **10 days** before DCA GHFA loan closing.
 - b. Description: Includes items such as the executed Owner/Contractor Agreement, **including Exhibits and DCA estimate Draw Schedule** which DA uses for the HOME loan closing.
- c. COMMENCEMENT SUBMISSION
 - a. Due: Before construction commencement.
 - b. Description: Includes items such as the Building Permit and Notice to Proceed, which DCA uses to verify commencement of construction.

9% Tax Credit Only Projects

- a. 60 DAY SUBMISSION
 - a. Due: No later than **60 days** after the announcement of awards.
 - b. Description: Includes items such as the Survey and Geotechnical Report, which DCA uses to ensure the project design can commence.
- b. COMMENCEMENT SUBMISSION
 - a. Due: **Before** construction commencement
 - b. Description: Includes items such as the Building Permit and the Notice to Proceed, which DCA uses to verify commencement of construction.

- c. DCA FINAL INSPECTION SUBMISSION
 - a. Due: within **30 days** of the final retainage draw certified pay application date.
 - b. Description: Includes items such as the Certificate of Substantial Completion and the Accessibility Clearance Letter, which DCA uses to verify that the project is ready or the DCA final inspection.
- d. CONSTRUCTION 8609 CLEARANCE SUBMISSION
 - a. Due: refer to your Carryover Letter.
 - b. Description: Includes items such as the Radon Testing Report and the Contractor Cost Certification, which DCA uses to clear the project for issuance of the 8609.

4% Bond Tax Credit Only Projects

- a. 60 DAY SUBMISSION
 - a. Due: No later than **60 days** after date of Letter of Determination.
 - b. Description: Includes items such as the Survey and Geotechnical Report, which DCA uses to ensure the project design can commence.
- b. COMMENCEMENT SUBMISSION
 - a. Due: **Before** construction commencement
 - b. Description: Includes items such as the Building Permit and the Notice to Proceed, which DCA uses to verify commencement of construction.
- c. DCA FINAL INSPECTION SUBMISSION
 - a. Due: within **30 days** of the final retainage draw certified pay application date.
 - b. Description: Includes items such as the Certificate of Substantial Completion and the Accessibility Clearance Letter, which DCA uses to verify that the project is ready or the DCA final inspection.
- d. CONSTRUCTION 8609 CLEARANCE SUBMISSION
 - a. Due: refer to your Letter of Determination.
 - b. Description: Includes items such as the Radon Testing Report and the Contractor Cost Certification, which DCA uses to clear the project for issuance of the 8609.

GHFA Construction Draws

For projects that utilize HOME, NHTF, CDBG-DR, TCAP, ERA2 & SLRF funds, the project team must submit development draws on an increment basis, based on the approved draw schedule to DCA for review and approval by the DCA stipulated due dates.

All properties funded with a DCA Georgia Housing and Finance Authority (GHFA) administered loan and/or grant must meet all the requirements in this manual for GHFA funded properties unless a waiver is granted by DCA.

There are two sets of DCA draw procedures to follow: one for the interim draws and one for the final retainage draw. The DCA **2026 GHFA Quarterly Incremental Interim Draw Process** document will guide the teams through the interim draws, and the **DCA 2026 GHFA Construction Closeout Process** document will guide the team through the Contractor's final retainage pay app and the GHFA construction closeout process.

NOTE: See additional requirements indicated in the 2026 HOME Manual

Applicable DCA forms/documents:

2026 GHFA AIA form G702/703 Contractor Application for Payment
2026 GHFA Executed Change Order Log
2026 GHFA Potential Change Order Log
2026 GHFA Subcontractor/Lien Waiver Log
2026 GHFA Draw Checklist
2026 GHFA Monthly Interim Draw Process
2026 GHFA Construction Closeout Process (final retainage draw)

GHFA Change Order Approval

For GHFA funded projects, ALL changes to the approved scope of work and/or construction contract must be approved by DCA **before proceeding** with the work. The contractor shall not enter into, or permit to be effective, any change order to the Contract or any of the plans and specifications for the construction of the Project without the Lender's prior written consent. The **architect** shall not change the plans and specifications for the Project or, on the Borrower's behalf, authorize any change order relating to the construction of the Project without the Lender's prior written consent. Draw requests shall include evidence that all change orders have been approved in writing by GHFA.

Applicable DCA forms/documents:

- GHFA Work Scope Change Request form
- Construction/Permanent Loan Agreement
- Contractor's Consent and Agreement
- Architect's Consent and Agreement
- HOME Addendum to Construction Contract

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Third-Party Front-End Cost Review (FECR)

A third-party Front-End Cost Report (FECR) of the construction costs must be conducted post-award for all projects funded by programs administered through the QAP. Owners must submit a 3rd Party Cost Reviewer qualification package and report for all projects. DCA must approve the analyst's qualifications beforehand. DCA will have forty-five (45) days to respond to the analysis plus any days added for questions or clarifications.

A DCA Qualified Consultant must conduct the FECR and include a narrative report.

The report package must include the following completed form:

- Cost Certification Review Worksheet, HUD Form 92331-B (completed by the consultant)
- Project Cost Estimate, HUD Form 92326 (completed by the consultant)
- DCA Schedule of Values (completed by contractor).

For **all projects**, a "DCA Qualified Consultant" is any individual who meets the following experience requirements and qualifications:

- Consultant must be **independent** of any Project Participant and the General Contractor and have the capacity to render a high-quality report in accordance with the instructions and

requirements outlined in the **HUD MAP** (multifamily accelerated processing) program and the Submission Requirements section of the Architectural Manual.

- Consultant must have no less than **five (5) years** of experience performing Front-end Cost Analysis for affordable rental housing projects.
- The consulting firm must have completed **three (3)** or more Architecture/Engineering Reviews and Cost Estimate Reviews for lenders pursuant to the HUD MAP (multifamily accelerated processing) program for the HUD Multifamily Hub offices (Atlanta Multifamily Hub is preferred) or firms that have prepared a review for a project that has HUD funding in conjunction with Low Income Housing Tax Credits and have completed **training** in the HUD MAP program.
- Consultant **must not** be presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment or suspension, declared ineligible, or excluded from participation by any state or federal department, agency, or program.
- Consultant **must agree** to comply with all applicable laws, including, but not, limited to, federal, state, and local laws, codes, regulations, ordinances, rules, and orders, including all laws concerning fair housing and equal opportunity that protect individuals and groups against discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, disability, familial status, or sex.
- Consultants **must agree** to comply with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), D.L. 99-603, the Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance Act, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011 (O.C.G.A. §13-10- 90 et. seq.), and any other applicable state or federal immigration laws. Consultants must be registered with and using E-Verify.
- Consultant **must comply** with Drug-Free Workplace requirements:
 - If the Consultant is an individual, he or she must not engage in the unlawful manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of controlled substances or marijuana during the performance of FEER services.
 - If the Consultant is an entity other than an individual, the entity certifies that a drug-free workplace will be provided for the Consultant's employees during FEER services.

DCA may grant an exemption from one or more of the above experience requirements and qualifications if the specific requests are made by the proposed FEER consultant in the Construction Services Construction Loan Closing Review Submission and approved by DCA in advance of the cost review.

The **DCA Qualification Package** must contain, at minimum:

- A statement letter certifying that the consultant meets the minimum "DCA Qualified Consultant" experience requirements and qualifications as outlined above;
- Resumes of firm team members that will conduct the review
- Description of relevant past work conducting architecture/engineering reviews and cost estimate reviews for HUD and Low Income Housing Tax Credit projects (project list);
- A (sample) copy of a cost estimate review performed for the HUD MAP program or HUD funding in conjunction with Low Income Housing Tax Credits.

Miscellaneous

Construction Period Related Documents:

For projects with Tax Credits only, the Owner is NOT required to submit Construction Draw and Change Order documents to DCA for approval during construction. However, during the construction period, DCA reserves the right to request documentation to demonstrate that the project complies with DCA design and construction requirements.

Owner's Construction Compliance Inspector:

During construction, the Owner is responsible for providing in a timely fashion to the Owner's Construction Compliance Inspector all requested construction related documents (drawings and specifications, applications for payments, Change Orders, Architectural Supplemental Instructions (ASIs), and Architect's Field Reports.

Contractor Cost Certification:

All selected Applicants who receive a 9% Credit award or a Letter of Determination (4% Credit award) will be required to submit a Contractor Cost Certification to DCA. The cost certification shall be prepared in accordance with the standards set forth for a HOME contractor cost certification. Industry standards for Owner-provided construction services shall be used to determine reasonableness for the services.

III. Amenities Guide

This guidebook is an outline of minimum standards for site amenities required by the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) and HOME, NHTF, CDBG-DR, TCAP, ERA2 & SLRF (GHFA) funding programs and establishes a baseline for the quality of construction and financial investment in amenities. More requirements for unit amenities may be found in the Architectural Manual.

All Amenities:

- New construction and rehabilitation property amenities must meet accessibility requirements outlined in the DCA Accessibility Manual. For tenant safety and security, exterior amenities should be within view of at least one apartment building.
- Amenity lighting should be sufficient for its purpose (i.e. evening mail collection, etc.), and be directed down to diminish nuisance light.
- Rules posted at all amenities must be in accordance with the Federal Fair Housing Amendments Act.
- Amenities should be usable beyond leasing office hours and on weekends.
- Post permanently affixed signage with hours of operation. and, as applicable, safety guidelines.
- Prior to commencement of construction, the requirements for each QAP project amenity (i.e., furnishings, equipment,) must be clearly delineated (both written and graphically) on the construction drawings provided by the Project Architect (NOTE: For GHFA funded projects this would include the DCA "Review Set" of CDs).

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

Standard Site Amenities

All properties must include the following on-site amenities:

Community Room / Community Building

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

Furnishing must include, but are not limited to:

- Seating Area
- Coffee Table
- Task Lighting

****NO FOLDING FURNITURE ALLOWED****

Suggested furnishings include:

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

Additional Requirements:

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

Exterior Gathering Area

The exterior gathering area shall provide proper shelter from the elements and be reserved exclusively for the social interaction of the tenants and their guests. Porches may not be used for other purposes, such as a driveway or parking space.

Additional Requirements:

- The gathering area must be covered by a roof.
- Must be permanently attached/anchored to a concrete foundation/slab.
- Landscaping
- One bench for every 25 units. Porch/Patio chairs, couches and tables are allowed.
- Exterior Gathering Area must be separate from the Equipped Playground observation area.

Examples of exterior areas that “do not” meet the requirements of this amenity:

- Porte-cocheres
- Carport, driveways, or parking spaces
- Small awnings that can shelter only one person
- Pergolas

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

All communities must provide washer/dryer facilities and equipment on site. An onsite laundry is not required if washers and dryers are installed in units and maintained at no additional cost to tenants. Laundry facilities shall be large enough to accommodate the required number of washers and dryers. Laundry facilities must be accessible to the disabled (see the DCA Accessibility Manual for further guidance). NOTE: In addition, for new construction only, all communities must provide washer and dryer "hookups" in each unit.

Signage and Equipment:

- There shall be one washer and one dryer per every 25 units.
- All washers must be Energy Star rated
- All owner-furnished "washers" in mobility units shall be front-loading.
- Each laundry facility must include at least once "accessible" washer (front-loading) and dryer placed in required clear floor spaces.
- Post signage that addresses machine operation, safety guidelines, and hours of operation.

Additional Requirements:

- Free-standing laundry buildings must be within a reasonable walking distance of the residential units.
- The facility must be accessible to the disabled. NOTE: See the "Accessibility Manual" for additional requirements.
- Access must be provided to this area "beyond" leasing office business hours.
- Laundry facilities, including those within units, must be vented to the exterior, controlling humidity levels to prevent the growth of bacteria, mold, mildew, and dust mite infestations.
- Washers in units must be equipped with a "drain pan or floor drain" as required by the Georgia State Minimum Standard Codes (with Georgia Amendments).

Additional Site Amenities

Properties that have 125 units or fewer must include at least two (2) additional site amenities. Properties with more than 125 units must include at least four (4) additional site amenities.

Fenced Community Garden

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

Signage and Equipment:

- A water source must be located within the fenced area of the community garden. The water source should take into consideration best practices for water conservation. Rain barrels may be used, but not as the primary source of water.
- Post rules and safety guidelines at the garden entrance.

Additional Requirements:

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

Equipped walking path with exercise stations or sitting areas

The walking path should be a minimum of 500 feet long and 5 feet wide and provide a safe and accessible path for fitness and leisure. Rules and safety guidelines should be posted along entry points to the path.

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

Equipment (either benches or fitness stations):

- Benches:
 - There must be at least one bench for every 100 feet of walking path.
 - Benches must have backrests and an armrest at one end of the bench for use by the elderly and disabled.
 - A fully accessible clear floor space measuring 30"x48" minimum shall be provided at one end of each bench.
 - Benches must be secured to the ground or walking path and protected against ground subsidence.
 - Benches shall be made of a weatherproof material.
- Fitness Stations:
 - Provide one piece of equipment per every 100 feet of walking trail.

- All strength, cardiovascular, flexibility, or balance/coordination equipment must be intended for outdoor use and made of a durable and weatherproof material (see <http://www.triactiveamerica.com/>)

Equipped Playground

The design of the playground should provide a safe, accessible play area for children of different ages and shall be designed following the guidelines set forth in Publication Number 325, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) Handbook for Public Playground Safety.

<https://www.cpsc.gov/s3fs-public/325.pdf>

Signage and Equipment:

- Provide four or more stand-alone pieces of equipment.
- Include equipment for children ages 2-12. Equipment intended for younger children (ages 2-5) must be separated by a buffer zone and have signage.
- A connected multi-piece jungle gym can be used in lieu of the stand-alone pieces if it will provide 7 or more pieces of equipment and must accommodate ages 2-12.
- A minimum of two benches for adult supervision is required. An accessible route is required within the playground area from the accessible entrance to the bench. An accessible space next to the bench is also required.
- Post rules and safety guidelines that include guidance as to the age appropriateness of the equipment.

Additional Requirements:

- In playgrounds intended to serve children of all ages, the layout of pathways and the landscaping of the playground should show the distinct areas for the different age groups.
- Groundcover must be provided as specified in Publication Number 325, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's (CPSC) Handbook for Public Playground Safety.
- Equipment intended for younger children (ages 2 -5) must be separated at least by a buffer zone, which may be an area with shrubs or benches. Short fencing is preferable.
- A portion of the playground equipment must be accessible to those with mobility impairments. The route to the playground must be paved and meet all accessibility requirements for an accessible route. See the DCA Accessibility Manual for further guidance.
- Access must be provided to this area "beyond" leasing office business hours.
- Equipped playground needs to be separate from the Exterior Gathering Area.
- Equipment may include but not limited to: seesaws, swings, monkey bars, roundabouts, teeter totters, etc.

Covered Pavilion with picnic/barbecue facilities

The pavilion encourages residents to hold community or family reunion type functions. The shelter should be a permanent structure made of weatherproof material and be permanently attached to a concrete foundation/slab.

Signage and Equipment:

- One picnic table for "every 25 units". At least one picnic table shall have an extension that allows clear knee space for handicap access. Picnic tables shall have permanent anchorage to the ground.
- The picnic tables shall be under the pavilion. For projects with over 150 units, at least four of the picnic tables must be under the pavilion. The remaining required picnic tables must be either under a separate pavilion or in close proximity to the pavilion.
- One permanent barbeque grill (gas or charcoal) for every 50 units. At least one grill shall be accessible an accessible path and have permanent anchorage to the ground.
- The pavilion area shall have a durable surface with defined edges such as concrete.
- Post rules and safety guidelines for grill use.

Furnished Arts & Craft /Activity Center

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

Signage & Equipment:

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

Additional Requirements:

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

****NO FOLDING FURNITURE ALLOWED AS PRIMARY FURNITURE****

Equipped Computer Center

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

Signage and Equipment

- One working computer for every 25 units and WiFi accessibility (replaced every 5 years)
- Computer desk or desk area (folding tables are not allowed)
- Seating: chairs specifically designed for computer use
- One printer at minimum
- One scanner, at a minimum
- High speed internet access
- Basic word processing and spreadsheet software
- Post rules and guidelines for computer use

Additional Requirements:

- Appropriate controls to restrict internet surfing must be installed.
- Access must be provided to this area beyond leasing office business hours.
- For larger developments with over 150 units, a mix of laptops and desktop computers can be furnished but there must be a minimum of 6 stationary computers.
- Laptops must be held in a safe, monitored location with check-in and check-out procedures posted.

Furnished Exercise / Fitness Center

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

Signage and Equipment:

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

Additional Requirements:

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

Additional Recommendations:

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

Wellness Center

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

Equipment:

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

Additional Requirements:

A separate private restroom adjacent to the exam room.

Unit Amenities

All dwelling units must include the following Unit Amenities:

- HVAC systems.

- Energy Star refrigerators.
- Energy Star dishwashers (Note: Dishwashers NOT required in “senior”)
- USDA properties or HUD properties).
- Stoves.
- Microwave ovens.
- Powder-based stovetop fire suppression canisters installed above the range cook top OR electronically controlled solid cover plates over stove top burners.

Additional Requirements

Minimum refrigerator sizes for:

- One- and two-bedroom units – “14 cu. ft.”
- Three-bedroom units – “16 cu. ft.”

All refrigerators shall have a built in “ice maker.”

Other kitchen appliance sizes must be appropriate for the unit and number of tenants.

Appropriate appliances listed in US EPA’s Energy Star program must be provided. Further information is available at <http://www.energystar.gov/>

Additional Senior Development Amenities

All “Senior” Developments (Elderly and Housing for Older Persons) must include the following:

Elevators

Elevators must be installed for access to all units above the ground floor.

Interior Conditioned and Furnished Gathering Areas

A gathering area shall be provided at each lobby. In addition, buildings with “multi- story” construction must have “interior conditioned and furnished gathering areas”. These gathering areas should be located throughout the complex including but not limited to areas near elevators. These areas provide a space for rest as well as small gathering spaces for conversation.

Locations

- Gathering area at each lobby
- Minimum of one (1) interior conditioned and furnished gathering area per floor shall be provided in addition to the required gathering area at each lobby.

Furnishings and Equipment

Table, chairs/sofa, task lighting

****NO FOLDING FURNITURE ALLOWED****

Additional Requirements

24-hour access must be provided to these areas

Amenities Guidebook Photos

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

Required Standard Amenities

Community Building/Room

Acceptable Community Building Exterior:



Acceptable Community Room Interior:



Not Acceptable Community Room Interior:

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



Exterior Gathering Area

Acceptable:



Not acceptable:

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



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

Acceptable:

- Note the front-loading machine at right.



Interior Furnished Gathering Areas (Senior Only)

Acceptable:



Not Acceptable:

- No table or task lighting



Additional Amenities

Attractively Fenced Community Garden

Acceptable:

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



Not Acceptable:

- No fence; overgrown with weeds.



Equipped Playground

Acceptable:



Not Acceptable:

- Equipment not constructed in compliance with CPSC guidelines for materials, ladder handrails, or ground color. There is no observation bench.



Covered pavilion with picnic/barbeque facilities

Acceptable:



Not Acceptable:

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



Furnished Children's Activity/Seniors Craft Center
Acceptable:



Not Acceptable:

- Uninviting room without decorations and use of folding furniture and table



Computer Center

Acceptable:



Not Acceptable:

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



Furnished Exercise/Fitness Center

Acceptable:

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



Not Acceptable:

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



Wellness Center

Not Acceptable:

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



IV. Rehabilitation Guide for Existing Properties

The purpose of this Rehabilitation Guide is to standardize DCA's expectations for the longevity and marketability of completed rehabilitation of existing rental property. This Guide is also intended to provide the Owner/Applicant with guidance and requirements for the DCA rehabilitation process.

The Internal Revenue Code requires that all low-income units in a project receiving Credits remain rent-restricted and income-restricted for the 15-year Compliance Period and for 15 years after the close of the Compliance Period for tax credit projects. Projects that propose rehabilitation must present a scope of work that will position the property to meet the entire extent of its statutory obligations. The Fannie Mae Expected Useful Life Tables should be used as guide to determine the

components and systems that need to be replaced in order to meet the duration of all tax credit program obligations.

It is expected that all work scopes will propose:

1. A minimum "dwelling unit" per unit hard cost budget of \$35,000.
 - a. NOTE: Hard costs eligible for this minimum "dwelling unit" per unit hard cost minimum requirement shall be limited to interior dwelling unit improvements and dwelling unit envelope work items that directly impact the quality of life of the resident (i.e., windows, entry doors, unit insulation, balconies, and patios only). Exterior wall cladding and roofs of residential structures, site improvements, common building systems, community building improvements, new community buildings, maintenance facilities, other common use structures, interior amenities, exterior amenities and other similar items **ARE NOT** eligible to count towards the \$35,000 "dwelling unit" per unit hard cost minimum.
2. The replacement of any component of the building or site with a Remaining Useful Life, according to Fannie Mae Expected Useful Life Table, of less than 15 years.
 - a. NOTE: Any component of the building or site with an "Expected" Remaining Useful Life of less than 15 years that is "proposed" to remain in place due to the PNA consultant certifying an "Effective" Remaining Useful Life of 15 years or more in the "DCA Systems and Conditions Remaining Life" form **MUST** be pre-approved by DCA during the pre-application Architectural Waiver process.
3. The replacement of existing exterior stairs, breezeways, and handrails that have no roof cover with covered vertical circulation.
4. Corrective actions for all deficiencies noted in the Physical Needs Assessment.
5. Compliance with the Georgia State Minimum Standard Codes and Life Safety Code for new construction regarding stairs, handrails, guardrails, smoke detectors, fire alarms, and unit fire separation (attic draft stops, fire separation, rated party walls and floor/ceiling components, and caulking of all penetrations in the fire assemblies).
6. Substantially the same scope of work in all units.
7. Compliance with the Architectural Manual upon completion of work.
8. Compliance with all current building codes upon completion of work.
9. Compliance with all DCA accessibility requirements upon completion of work. DCA does not distinguish between new construction and rehabilitation in its accessibility requirements.
10. Compliance with UPCS upon completion of work.

NOTE: ANY variance from these requirements will require the submission and approval of a DCA Architectural Waiver Request.

DCA will review the type of construction and associated hard construction costs. Applications for the rehabilitation of a substandard property will not be funded if, in the opinion of DCA, the rehabilitation will not result in improved, safe and decent long-term housing, the proposed rehabilitation does not meet DCA standards, or if new construction would be more appropriate.

DCA reserves the right, to perform its own Physical Needs Assessment (PNA) or decline any application for rehabilitation if it is determined that the Rehabilitation Work Scope:

- is inadequate or excessive
- does not address the issues of the Physical Needs Assessment
- does not address major structural issues, building codes, health, safety, marketing or any other conditions observed on the site
- will not result in safe, decent housing

A **certification from the architect** and, where applicable, the appropriately licensed project engineer (civil, structural, mechanical, plumbing, electrical) must also be provided documenting that the proposed work scope is sufficient to ensure that the completed project will be viable and meet the DCA useful life requirements.

Note: The architect will be required to reconfirm this certification at construction completion prior to issuance of 8609's.

All provisions in the Architectural Standards, Architectural Submission Requirements, Accessibility Manual, and Amenities Guide along with the Core and Threshold sections of the QAP apply to rehabilitation properties. However, DCA may grant an "Architectural Waiver" to projects that will not meet the above requirements

ONLY if there is an overriding public policy or historic preservation need and the physical needs assessment clearly documents that the existing property does not require a comprehensive rehabilitation.

DCA may require, as a condition of the waiver, that the financial pro forma clearly provide for the full funding of the capital replacement reserve. The capital replacement reserve must clearly schedule all component/system replacements required according to the **Fannie Mae Expected Useful Life Table**. DCA reserves the "right to deny waivers" if the completed rehabilitation will not result in safe and decent housing that is equal to comparable housing in the marketplace.

In no case will DCA waive federal, state, or local building or accessibility laws or codes, state energy conservation codes or health and safety requirements. The burden of proof is on the Owner/Applicant. All waiver requests should be accompanied by the DCA Rehabilitation Work Scope form, Physical Needs Assessment, and any other substantiating documentation.

Miscellaneous General Notes:

- no tenant belongings shall remain in the unit during construction/renovation of the unit
- no residence move-in until 100% of the dwelling unit work scope is completed

Note: Applicant's may present a formal request for an exception for "in-place renovation" for DCA's consideration.

The application for funding shall include a comprehensive **DCA Rehabilitation Work Scope** form and a **Physical Needs Assessment** as outlined below. Rehabilitation projects selected for funding must submit all pre-construction due diligence documentation outlined in the Architectural Submittals Instructions, including a complete set of plans and specifications produced by an architect licensed in the state of Georgia. The DCA Rehabilitation Work Scope form submitted at

application may not be changed between application submission and Final Allocation without DCA's consent. All work proposed must be completed.

The DCA Rehabilitation Work Scope Form

Whereas the PNA documents, existing conditions and **immediate physical needs**, the DCA Rehabilitation Work Scope form **must include these considerations** as well as future property marketability, durability, and energy efficiency which will add to the residential quality of life. The DCA Rehabilitation Work Scope form must be compiled by the Applicant/Owner, Architect/Engineer, and Construction Contractor in DCA's required format to include work scope descriptions, percentage of materials demoed/replaced and costs. DCA must be able to determine that all major issues identified in the PNA and Environmental Reports are addressed in the DCA Rehabilitation Work Scope form.

Note: The QAP and Architectural Manual requirements may dictate a longer required product life and higher material standard which would override any existing component/system with a remaining life that meets the minimum 15-year Fannie Mae threshold.

The DCA Rehabilitation Work Scope form shall be based on:

- Requirements for the replacement of components with an **Remaining Useful Life**, according to Fannie Mae Expected Useful Life Table, of **less than 15 years**, building code and health/safety violations, and **immediate needs** from the Physical Needs Assessment
- A minimum "dwelling unit" per unit hard cost budget of \$35,000.
- Substantially the same scope of work in all units
- 100% replacement of all floor covering
- 100% painting of unit interiors
- 100% replacement of tile tub/shower surrounds
- All applicable "Threshold and Scoring" upgrades as indicated in the DCA Application including amenities construction
- All costs that will be incurred in bringing the property into compliance with federal, state, local, and DCA accessibility regulations (see the DCA "Accessibility Manual" for further guidance)
- Remediation of all issues identified in the "Phase I and II environmental report's
- Requirements for the replacement of components in order to comply with DCA's "Architectural Standards" and "Specific Systems Replacement Guidance" below

Specific Systems Replacement Guidance

Site Utilities

The DCA "Rehabilitation Work Scope" form must contain a budget line item to investigate and repair or replace all main utility lines on the property, regardless of age. If "more than 50%" of the sanitary sewer, storm sewer, water service, fire service, electrical, cable, or gas lines are identified as failed, the entire line must be replaced. Failure to adequately substantiate the condition of existing utility lines may result in DCA re-capturing credits for failure to confirm the utilities systems operational conditions. If funded, a copy of the sewer investigation must be submitted to DCA with the final inspection documentation.

Site Utilities – Special Considerations: Polybutylene Piping

In all cases where **polybutylene piping** is identified on the property, an investigation must be conducted to adequately confirm the condition and performance of the plumbing system. The Consultant must document the investigation and provide an opinion on the system and whether or not the piping should be repaired or replaced. Particular note must be made of the condition of the fittings, and in all cases the last 3'-0" of the hot water lines from the water heater must be replaced with copper piping if this is identified as polybutylene piping.

Landscaping/Storm Water Drainage/Erosion

All areas of washout, exposed dirt, dead trees and overgrown landscaping "must be corrected". Details must be provided in the DCA "Rehabilitation Work Scope" form as to how this will be accomplished. If DCA determines erosion conditions are severe, DCA may require, as a condition of funding, that a civil engineer be engaged to address the issue.

Site Improvements

Broken or un-useable amenities equipment, non-compliant site stairs and handrails, failed/deteriorated sidewalks, paving, and retaining walls must be corrected. Sidewalks and paving must meet the minimum standards set forth in **UPCS**. All deficient paving and sidewalks are expected to be altered for compliance with federal and DCA **accessibility requirements**.

Foundations

All cracking or settling of concrete foundations and masonry must be addressed. If DCA determines foundation conditions are severely deteriorated, DCA may require, as a condition of funding, that a structural engineer be engaged to address the issue.

Crawlspaces

All crawlspaces must be investigated and assessed for the presence of mold, plumbing leaks, and deteriorating structures. All crawl spaces must meet minimum energy and fire code requirements.

Rough Carpentry

Deteriorated subfloor, wall sheathing, roof sheathing, and structural framing must be addressed and allowances for the quantity of this work must be substantiated.

EIFS & Stucco

EIFS (synthetic stucco) may not be repaired but **must be replaced** by a DCA-approved material. Hard-coat stucco (cement stucco) must be **replaced if more than 25%** of the existing material has failed. DCA must approve any repair or replacement of hard-coat stucco.

Acoustical Isolation

The DCA "Rehabilitation Work Scope" form must meet the Architectural Standards for acoustical isolation wherever party and exterior wall structures and ceiling and floor construction are exposed during construction.

Drywall

The DCA "Rehabilitation Work Scope" form must indicate the approximate percentage of drywall to be removed and replaced (i.e. Is this a gut removal of all drywall or small-scale patching as required to address isolated leaks or penetrations into walls by other trades). Allowances must be substantiated.

Dwelling Unit Interiors

All dwelling units shall be rehabilitated to "as new" condition upon completion of work scope and move-in of new residents. This shall include 100% replacement of all existing floor covering, tile tub/shower surrounds and painting of unit interiors. All dwelling units are required to have substantially the same work scope and therefore the work scope must be defined prior to QAP application and award.

Replacement of ALL components of the dwelling unit with a Remaining Useful Life of less than 15 years, as determine by the "Dwelling Unit" section of the Fannie Mae Expected Useful Life Table. This includes but not limited to appliances, bath accessories/fixtures, tubs/surrounds, doors, cabinets/counters, floor covering electrical fixtures/accessories, water heaters and HVAC systems.

HVAC

Heating, ventilating, and air conditioning systems must be replaced if they do not meet the requirements of applicable building codes, do not meet **Threshold Section Building Sustainability**, or do not have the required Remaining Useful Life. The duct system must be replaced as required to meet applicable codes and DCA required life expectancy. If ductwork is not replaced, it must be cleaned and sealed in accordance with the Georgia State Minimum Standard Energy Code.

Plumbing

Plumbing components must be replaced if they do not meet the requirements of applicable building codes, do not meet **Threshold Section Building Sustainability**, do not have the required Remaining Useful Life, 50% of the plumbing system needs replacement, or if lead in water testing results from the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment exceeds regulated levels.

Electrical

The existing electrical system shall be upgraded to meet all applicable codes. If **50%** of the system needs replacement, the entire system must be replaced. This includes all wiring for the electrical system.

Building Sustainability

DCA expects that rehabilitation projects will meet the sustainability requirements outlined in the 2026 QAP regardless of local code enforcement.

Accessibility

All **DCA Rehabilitation Work Scopes** must meet applicable federal, state, local, and DCA requirements. DCA requires **5%** of the units to be fully accessible, 40% of mobility units to have roll-in showers, and an additional **2%** equipped for the hearing and sight impaired. DCA maintains the same standard for new construction and rehabilitation regarding accessibility requirements. See the **Accessibility Manual** for further guidance. The work scope should specifically address the work required to bring the property into full compliance with federal, state, local, and DCA requirements.

Fire and Life Safety

The property design shall meet or exceed all requirements to provide a safe environment for all tenants. These design aspects have been discussed in earlier sections and affect the property from overall site layout to the individual unit. Strict adherence to the **most recently adopted editions** of the Georgia State Minimum Standard Codes is required. Compliance with the **Life Safety Code for new construction** is required for the following regardless of local building authority enforcement:

- Stairs, handrails, and guardrails.
- Smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and fire alarms.
- Unit fire separation (attic draft stops, fire/smoke separations, rated party walls and floor/ceiling components, and caulking of all penetrations in the fire assemblies).

Historic Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation

Rehabilitation is defined by the Secretary of the Interior as "the process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values." As such, the standards to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects must be done so in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility. The *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* (36 CFR Part 68. should be followed to rehabilitate the property's interior and exterior features, including, but not limited to, windows, doors, siding, masonry, ceilings, walls, floors, closets, fireplaces and floor plans. DCA's environmental requirements, including the testing and abatement (encapsulation) of lead, must be completed. These exterior and interior guidelines can be found at <http://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/rehabilitation.htm>.

Summary

DCA recognizes that certain projects deemed to be historic in nature may require rehabilitation which varies from the general requirements set forth in the other sections of this Guide. Therefore, if a Preservation Professional, as defined in the Environmental Manual, determines that the proposed project has an adverse effect or is a contributing structure which is either listed in the National Register or is eligible for listing in the National Register (or a lot within such a listed or eligible district) and Georgia State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has cleared the proposed activities to proceed, then, depending upon the action approved (rehabilitation, demolition and/or new construction), the general rehabilitation standards set forth in the other sections of this Guide may

not apply. However, DCA still requires that the completed rehabilitation results in housing that will meet the duration of all tax credit program obligations.

The Applicant must submit to DCA a detailed scope of work which sets forth the proposed rehabilitation or new construction activity in accordance with recommended practices as set forth in ***The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings***.

Review the Historical Significance of the Property

If the historic building is to be rehabilitated, it is critical that the new use not require substantial alteration of distinctive spaces or removal of character defining architectural features or finishes. The construction materials, the form and style of the property, the principal elevations, the major architectural or landscape features, and the principal public spaces constitute some of the elements that should be preserved. Every effort should be made to minimize damage to the materials and features that convey a property's historical significance. Review of any record documentation on file with the National Register of Historic Places or local preservation commissions and supplemented with a physical investigation to identify which character defining features and spaces must be protected whenever any changes are anticipated.

Reconstruction (demolition and replacement) of Historic Properties

The Applicant shall ensure that, to the greatest extent feasible, the reconstruction of any historic structure deemed infeasible for rehabilitation shall be carried out in a manner that is compatible with the architecture of the original unit and/or other buildings within the surrounding historic district in terms of set-backs, size, scale, massing, design, color, features, and materials, and is responsive to the recommended approaches for new construction set forth in the Secretary's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. Therefore, the Applicant shall consult with the Preservation Professional to develop a set of historically compatible model replacement building plans in advance of any planned reconstruction activities which shall be shared with the public during the initial public hearings held. Final construction drawings used in the bidding process, including elevations, shall be submitted to the Preservation Professional for review and comment and forwarded to SHPO for final approval prior to the award of a construction contract and the initiation of construction activities. If the Applicant determines that the proposed plans and specifications for the reconstruction do not meet the *Standards* as interpreted by the Preservation Professional, the Applicant shall notify the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and initiate consultation as set forth at 36 CFR Section 800.5 (e). The Applicant shall follow the recordation and demolition guidelines as established by the Secretary of the Interior prior to the start of any demolition activities.

Questions concerning these requirements should be directed to SHPO and DCA prior to application submission.

Any modifications of the historic rehabilitation work scope must be approved in writing by DCA in advance of the project start-up.

Physical Needs Assessments

The Physical Needs Assessment (PNA) is required at Application for all rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, and Historic Preservation properties applications presented for potential funding by programs administered through the DCA Office of Affordable Housing. The purpose of the PNA is to provide a property description, document the existing condition of the property, to identify existing building code and program violations, identify immediate physical needs and to estimate capital needs over the long term. The PNA, including an on-site investigation, narrative report, and Fannie Mae forms must be conducted by a Qualified Consultant.

A “Qualified Consultant” is any individual who meets the following experience requirements and qualifications:

- Consultant must be independent from the Applicant/Developer and have the capacity to render a high-quality report in accordance with the instructions and requirements set forth in the Rehabilitation Guide section of the Architectural Manual.
- Consultant must have no less than five (5) years of experience performing physical needs assessments for affordable rental housing projects.
- Consultant must not be presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment or suspension, declared ineligible or excluded from participation by any state or federal department, agency, or program.
- Consultant must agree to comply with all applicable laws, including, but not, limited to federal, state and local laws, codes, regulations, ordinances, rules and orders, including all laws concerning fair housing and equal opportunity that protect individuals and groups against discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, disability, familial status, or sex.
- Consultants must agree to comply with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), D.L. 99-603, the Georgia Security and Immigration Compliance Act, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011 (O.C.G.A. §13-10- 90 et. seq.), and any other applicable state or federal immigration laws. Consultant must be registered with and using E-Verify.
- Consultant must comply with Drug Free Workplace requirements:
 - If Consultant is an individual, he or she must not engage in the unlawful manufacture, sale distribution, dispensation, possession or use of controlled substance or marijuana during the performance of PNA services.
 - If Consultant is an entity other than an individual, the entity certifies that a drug-free workplace will be provided for the Consultant's employees during the performance of PNA services.

Developers must contact the Qualified Consultant directly and contract to provide the PNA services. The report must include a certification that the report was prepared by an individual who meets the above-listed experience requirements and qualifications to be considered a Qualified Consultant.

The PNA must be no more than **6 (six) months** old at the time of submission. If an Architectural waiver is submitted, then that PNA provided for supporting documents can also be used for the application as supporting documents. The report must include a signed statement from the consultant with the following language inserted in the Consultant’s signature block:

"The investigation has been completed in accordance with DCA requirements, is accurate, and can be relied upon by DCA as a true evaluation of the existing property conditions"

DCA reserves the right to verify all information contained in the report with an on-site inspection of the property conducted during the application process.

The Consultant shall inspect:

- All vacant and down units
- At least 10% of the occupied units
- One unit in each building

- One of each type of the accessible units (where they exist);
- One of each unit configuration type; and
- All other community/common areas and maintenance spaces.

The report is not expected to identify regular maintenance items that are part of the property owner's operating responsibility such as occasional window glazing replacement and/or caulking, minor plumbing repairs, annual HVAC and appliance servicing. However, the Consultant must comment on such items if they do not appear to be routinely addressed or in need of immediate repair, as well as report any observed or documented building code violations. The Physical Needs Assessment must include descriptions of the condition of the following items and identification of the Remaining Useful Life in the **Fannie Mae** forms format of the following items:

SITE SYSTEMS AND CONDITIONS

- Landscaping
- Irrigation
- Grading/storm water drainage
- Lighting - building mounted
- Lighting - pole mounted
- Parking
- Pedestrian paving (sidewalks)
- Utilities (piping & equipment such as pumps etc.) o Water
- Fire
- Gas
- Electrical
- Sanitary
- Storm water drainage structures & piping o Cable/Phone/Communications
- Mailboxes
- Property sign
- Traffic signage
- Retaining walls
- Fencing
- Exterior stairs

- Exterior railings
- Site amenities

COMMON AREAS/COMMUNITY BUILDING

- Common area amenities
- Common area doors
 - Interior
 - exterior
- Common area floors
- Common area ceilings
- Common area walls
- Common area kitchens
 - Countertop
 - Cabinets
 - Sink
 - appliances
- Common area HVAC
 - Ductwork
 - equipment
- Common area/public bathrooms
 - fixtures
 - hot water heating
 - water piping
 - waste/vent piping
 - bathroom accessories
- Sprinklers
- Electrical
 - light fixtures
 - outlets/switches
 - wiring
 - equipment (panels/breakers)
- Life safety
 - smoke alarms
 - fire alarms

BUILDING ARCHITECTURE

- Foundations
- Crawl Spaces/Basements
 - Framing
 - wall
 - floor
 - ceiling/roof
- Exterior wall sheathing
- Exterior cladding
- Roof sheathing
- Roofing

- Gutters & downspouts
- Soffits
- Windows
- Insulation
 - wall
 - floor
 - attic

DWELLING UNITS

- Cabinets
- Countertops
- Interior doors
- Exterior doors
- Floor underlayment
- Floor finishes
- Interior wall sheathing (gypsum wall board)
- Wall finishes
- Ceilings
- Bathroom vanities
- Bathtubs/showers
- Tub/shower surrounds
- HVAC
 - Ductwork
 - equipment
 - bath fans & ventilation
- Plumbing
 - fixtures (faucets, shower valves, toilets, sinks)
 - hot water heating
 - water piping
 - waste/vent piping
 - wall
 - under slab
- Appliances
- Elevators
- Sprinklers
- Electrical
 - light fixtures
 - outlets/switches wiring
 - equipment (panels/breakers)
- Life safety
 - smoke alarms
 - fire alarm system
 - Attic draft stop/fire walls

The PNA must also include a discussion of known building code and health/life safety violations.

The PNA consultant is not expected to assume liability for compliance with accessibility regulations during design of post-rehabilitation. The consultant is expected to identify potentially costly barriers to required property accessibility, i.e., changes in grade for accessible routes or parking and unit framing changes for required clearances. Through completion of the **“DCA Accessibility Checklists”**, the PNA must identify major violations of The Americans with Disabilities Act, The Fair Housing Act, and The Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) where these standards are applicable to the existing property. The Uniform Federal Accessibility Standard (UFAS) is applicable to all properties either as a federal requirement through the use of federal funds or as a DCA program specific state requirement through the use of tax credits.

The Capital Replacement Reserve study shall extend for 20 years with no capital replacements within the first five years (apart from regular maintenance and turnkey operations that are part of the operation and management of the property). The Capital Replacement Reserve shall reflect the condition of the property “As Improved”. That is, the Capital Replacement Reserve study must take into consideration the entire DCA Rehabilitation Work Scope proposed by the Owner, not just the needs identified by the Physical Needs consultant. The Capital Replacement Reserve study shall be a true and accurate representation of the needs of the property once the proposed rehabilitation is completed.

Any item that is determined to have a Remaining Useful Life of less than 15 years must be replaced as part of the work scope. Where major systems (roofing, HVAC equipment, windows, doors, etc.) have been replaced within the last 5-years, a waiver may be requested and DCA may allow for replacement in the 15-year term if the cost is clearly documented in the Capital Replacement Reserve study. Replacement Reserves must exceed the DCA QAP minimum contributions and the project underwriting shall propose full funding of the Reserve. It is recognized that the Expected Useful Life Tables represents one judgment of the expected life of the various components. The Tables provide a useful and consistent standard for all evaluators to use. The Tables avoid debate on what the appropriate expected life is and permit focus on the evaluator’s judgment of the effective remaining life of the actual component.

It is incumbent upon the project team to provide adequate documentation substantiating the differences between the Effective Remaining Useful Life as a calculated difference between Expected Useful Life and Age and the Evaluator’s opinion of the remaining useful life (Effective Remaining Useful Life).

The report should emphasize all systems/components with no Remaining Useful Life and those with Remaining Useful Life less than DCA requirements, all deferred maintenance, and repairs or replacements involving significant expense or outside contracting. The Consultant must note any suspected environmental hazards seen in the course of the inspection. Confirmation of suspected environment-related hazards, such as mold, lead-based paint, or asbestos containing materials, will be addressed in a separate environmental engineer’s report.

Appendix A – The Fannie Mae Physical Needs Assessment Guidelines

Below is a reproduction of the directions for completing the **Fannie Mae forms**.

DCA may have detailed specific guidance above which **overrides these boiler-plate directions**.

These forms are provided for guidance and are used by permission of **ON-SITE**

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The standard format forms are to help the Consultant conduct a comprehensive and accurate assessment. However, the forms should not constrain the Consultant from fully addressing other findings and may be supplemented as necessary to create a thorough record of the property's physical needs. The forms may be altered to serve the Consultants' needs if the basic format is maintained and the same information is presented.

The Physical Needs Assessment Fannie Mae Forms, including the DCA Systems and Conditions Remaining Life form, have been combined into an Excel workbook. The DCA 2026 Physical Needs Assessment Fannie Mae Forms are a requirement of the PNA submission.

Specific Guidance to the Property Evaluator

Purpose

The purpose of the Physical Needs Assessment is to identify and provide cost estimates for the following key items:

Immediate Physical Needs - repairs, replacements and significant maintenance items which should be done immediately.

Physical Needs Over the Term - repairs, replacements and significant maintenance items which will be needed over the "term of the mortgage and two years beyond". As part of the process, instances of deferred maintenance are also identified. The assessment is based on the evaluator's judgment of the actual condition of the improvements and the expected useful life of those improvements. It is understood that the conclusions presented are based upon the evaluator's professional judgment and that the actual performance of individual components may vary from a reasonably expected standard and will be affected by circumstances which occur after the date of the evaluation.

This package explains how to use the set of forms provided by Fannie Mae. It is important to recognize that the forms are intended to help the evaluator conduct a comprehensive and accurate assessment. They also present the results of that assessment in a relatively standard format which will be useful to the lender in making underwriting decisions. However, the forms should not

constrain the evaluator from fully presenting concerns and findings. The forms should be used and supplemented in ways which facilitate the preparation and presentation of information useful to the lender regarding the physical needs of the property.

DCA Systems and Conditions the sections of the form may be enhanced to serve the evaluators' needs so long as the information provided remains intact.

Terms of Reference Form

The lender's inspector completes this form for the evaluator. It serves as a reference point for the assessment and provides the evaluator with basic information about the property and the "term of the loan". Four additional topics are covered:

1. Sampling Expectations - The lender's expectations about the number and/or percentage of dwelling units, buildings and specialized systems to evaluate may be stated. If there is no stated expectation, the evaluator should inspect sufficient units, buildings, and numbers of specialized systems to state with confidence the present and probable future condition of each system at the property. The evaluator should provide a separate statement indicating the sampling systems used to ensure a determination of conditions and costs with acceptable accuracy.
 - a. If a Sampling Expectation is provided by the lender which is not adequate to achieve the requisite level of confidence, the evaluator should so advise the lender. Considerations in determining an adequate sample size are age and number of buildings (especially if the property was developed in phases), total number of units, and variations in size, type, and occupancy of units.
 - b. Effective sampling is based on observing a sufficient number of each significant category. Using the above criteria, categories could include buildings by age of each building (e.g., inspect buildings in the 8 year old phase and in the 11 year old phase), buildings by type (e.g. row house, L-shaped row house, walkup, elevator) and/or buildings by construction materials (e.g. inspect the garden/flat roof/brick walls section and the garden/pitched roof/clapboard walls section).
 - c. Dwelling units are separate categories from buildings. At a minimum, sampling is by unit size (0/1/2/3/4 bedrooms). There may be further categories if units are differently configured or equipped or have different occupants (especially family or elderly). Generally, DCA would expect the percentage of units inspected to decrease as the total number of units' increases. Systems which are not unit specific, such as boilers, compactors, elevators, and roofs will often have a 100% sample. The overriding objective: **SEE ENOUGH OF EACH UNIT TYPE AND SYSTEM TO BE ABLE TO STATE WITH CONFIDENCE THE PRESENT AND PROBABLE FUTURE CONDITIONS.**
2. Market Issues - In certain instances, market conditions may necessitate action on certain systems. Examples are early appliance replacement or re-carpeting, new entry paving, special plantings, and redecorated lobbies. If the owner or lender has identified such an action, the evaluator should include cost estimation for such action and indicate what, if any, other costs would be eliminated by such action.

3. Work in Progress - In some instances, work may be underway (which can be observed) or under contract. When known by the lender, this will be noted. For purposes of the report, such work should be assumed to be complete, unless observed to be unacceptable in quality or scope.
4. Management-Reported Replacements - In some instances, the property ownership or management will provide the lender with information about prior repairs or replacements which have been completed in recent years. The lender may provide this information to the evaluator to assist in the assessment of these components. The evaluator should include enough units, buildings, or systems in the sample to reasonably verify the reported repairs or replacements.

Systems and Conditions Form

It is the responsibility of the evaluator to assess the condition of every system which is present at a property. All conditions, except as noted below, requiring action during the "life of the loan" must be addressed regardless of whether the action anticipated is a capital or operating expense.

To assist evaluators in reviewing all systems at a property, four Systems and Conditions sections are provided in this form. Each section lists a group of systems typically related by trade and/or location. The four sections are "Site", "Architectural", "Mechanical and Electrical", and "Dwelling Units". While the sections have several columns in which information may be recorded, in many instances only the first three columns will be completed. If the condition of a system is acceptable, the Effective Remaining Life exceeds the "term of the mortgage by two years", and no action is required, no other columns need to be completed.

The report is not expected to identify minor, inexpensive repairs or other maintenance items which are clearly part of the property owner's current operating pattern and budget so long as these items appear to be taken care of on a regular basis. Examples of such minor operating items are occasional window glazing replacement and/or caulking, modest plumbing repairs, and annual boiler servicing, however, the evaluator should comment on such items in the report if they do not appear to be routinely addressed or are in need of immediate repair.

The report is expected to address infrequently occurring "big ticket" maintenance items, such as exterior painting, all deferred maintenance of any kind, and repairs or replacements which normally involve significant expense or outside contracting. While the evaluator should note any environmental hazards seen in the course of the inspection, environment-related actions, such as removal of lead-based paint, will be addressed in a separate report prepared by an environmental consultant.

USING THE SYSTEMS AND CONDITIONS FORM

Purpose

The form's sections can be used both to record actual observations at a specific location and for an overall summary. For example, the Architectural sections can be used for a specific building (or group or identical buildings) as well as for summarizing all information for buildings at a property. The same is true for the Dwelling Unit sections..

In some instances, the evaluator will note components which, while they may continue to be functional, may reduce marketability of the property. For example, single-door refrigerators or appliances in outmoded colors may have such an impact in some properties. The evaluator should note these items, discuss them with the lender, and provide separate estimates of the cost to replace such items if requested.

Each of the four sections has a number of frequently occurring systems and components listed. This list represents only the most frequently observed and is not meant to be all inclusive. Every system present at the property must be observed and recorded. Any system not listed on the form may be included in the spaces labeled "Other".

Note that the assessment includes the systems and components in both residential and non-residential structures. Thus, garages, community buildings, management and maintenance offices, cabanas, pools, commercial space, and other non-residential buildings and areas are included.

Items (EUL)

The Expected Useful Life (EUL) figure which appears in parentheses after the Item is taken from the Expected Useful Life Table provided. This table provides standard useful lives of many components typically found in apartment complexes. Where the parentheses do not contain a number, it is because there are various types of similar components with differing economic lives. The evaluator should turn to the Expected Useful Life Table and select, and insert, the appropriate Expected Useful Life (EUL) number.

Requirements for the replacement of components with a Remaining Useful Life of less than 15 years, building code and health/safety violations, and immediate needs from the Physical Needs Assessment

Note: It is recognized that the Expected Useful Life Tables represents only one possible judgment of the expected life of the various components. If DCA receives substantial material to the effect that one or more of the estimates are inappropriate, DCA will consider making adjustments. Until such changes are made, the Tables provide a useful and consistent standard for all evaluators to use. They avoid debate on what the appropriate expected life is and permit focus on the evaluator's judgment of the effective remaining life of the actual component in place, as discussed below.

Age

The evaluator should insert the actual Age of the component or may insert "OR" for original. If the actual age is unknown, an estimate is acceptable. If there is a range in Age (for example, components replaced over time), the evaluator may note the range (i.e., 5-7 years) or may use several lines for the same system, putting a different Age of that system on each line.

Condition

This space is provided to indicate the Condition of the component, generally excellent, good, fair, or poor, or a similar and consistent qualitative evaluation.

Effective Remaining Life

This space is provided for the evaluator to indicate the remaining life of the component as is. For standard components with standard maintenance, the Expected Useful Life Table provided by the Lender could be used to determine Effective Remaining Life by deducting the Age from Expected Useful Life (EUL). However, this should not be done automatically. A component with unusually good original quality or exceptional maintenance could have a longer life.

On the other hand, if the component has been poorly maintained or was of below standard original quality, the useful life could be shorter than expected. The evaluator applies professional judgment in deciding the Effective Remaining Life. If the Effective Remaining Life is longer than the "term of the loan plus two years", no deferred maintenance exists, and no action needs to be taken during the life of the loan, no other columns need to be filled out.

The only exception may be Diff? (Difference), as discussed below. This should be noted when the evaluator's estimate of the Effective Remaining Life varies by more than two years from the standard estimate.

(Difference)

The Age of the component should be deducted from the Expected Useful Life (EUL) in parentheses and the answer compared to the Effective Remaining Life estimated by the evaluator. Where there is a difference of over two years, the evaluator should "insert a footnote number" in the Diff? (Difference) column and supply in an attached list of footnotes a brief statement of why, in the evaluator's judgment, the Effective Remaining Life of the component varies from the standard estimate. This approach provides consistency among evaluators while making best of the evaluators' professional judgment.

Action

If any Action is required - immediately, over the "life of the loan", or within two years thereafter - the Action should be recorded as repair, replace, or maintain. Repair is used when only a part of an item requires action, such as the hydraulics and/or controls of a compactor. Replace is used when the entire item is replaced. Maintain is used where special, non-routine maintenance is required, such as the sandblasting of a swimming pool. In cases where a repair or maintenance may be needed now, and replacement or further maintenance may be needed later, separate lines may be used to identify the separate actions and timing.

Now

If the item involves a threat to the immediate health and safety of the residents, clearly affects curb appeal, will result in more serious problems if not corrected, or should otherwise be accomplished as part of an immediate repair, maintenance or replacement program, this space should be checked. Replacements which may be needed in year one, but do not require immediate attention, need not be checked.

DM (Deferred Maintenance)

The DM (Deferred Maintenance) space is marked in any instances where current management practice is clearly inadequate and the owner's attention should be called to the item, even if no major expenditure or significant labor may be required.

Quantity

For items requiring action, the evaluator should note the Quantity of the system, with the applicable unit of measure entered (each, unit, square feet, square yards, linear feet, lump sum, etc.).

Field Notes

This space, as well as attachments may be used to record the type of component (16cf, frost free, Hotpoint), the problem (valves leaking) or other information (consider replacement for marketing purposes, replace 30% per year, work in progress, etc.) that the evaluator will need to complete the Evaluator's Summary.

Sample Form

The following example from the Dwelling Unit Systems and Conditions form illustrates how this form is properly used. The example presumes an 11 story building containing 1 and 2 bedroom units. There are 100 units. The age of the building is 9 years. The term of the proposed loan is 7 years.

Countertop/sinks are 9 years old. (The entry could also be "OR"). Condition is excellent, with an Effective Remaining Life of 10 years. This is significantly different from the anticipated Effective Remaining Life of 1 (a EUL of 10 years minus an Age of 9 years). Therefore, there is a footnote entry "1" in the "Diff?" column. The footnote will indicate that this item is made of an exceptionally durable material, along with a top-quality stainless-steel sink.

The evaluator's estimate of an Effective Remaining Life of 10 years + is beyond the term of +2. No capital need would be reported.

Refrigerators are also original, reported as Hotpoint 16 cf frost free. Replacement is expected around the Effective Remaining Life, noted as 20% annually and beginning in the 5th year of the loan when the refrigerators are 14 years old. Disposals range from new to original (Age = 0-9). 20% per year replacements will be needed starting in year 1. The evaluator notes that disposals appear to be replaced as part of the project's normal operations.

Bath fixtures are original, and in good condition. No replacement is expected to be required during the term +2 years. The note indicates that they are "dated looking," which may prompt a market consideration for replacement.

Ceiling is a special entry. The "04" stack of units has experienced water damage to ceilings from a major plumbing leak. This is noted for repair NOW. As this apparently occurs in all 10 units in this stack, and therefore is likely to have more than a modest cost, this action would be reported on the Immediate Physical Needs summary form.

Evaluator's Summary Forms

Two separate forms are used to summarize the evaluator's conclusions from the Systems and Conditions Forms. One summarizes Immediate Physical Needs and the other summarizes the Physical Needs over the Term +2 years.

Evaluator's Summary: Immediate Physical Needs

All of the items for which "Now" are checked are transferred to this form. This form provides for the listing of Items, Quantity, Unit Cost and Total Cost of each. The Item and Quantity are transferred directly from the Systems and Conditions Form.

Unit Cost: This is the cost per unit (sf, ea, lf, etc.) in current dollars to implement the required action. The source of the cost estimate should be listed in a separate attachment. The sources may include a third-party estimation service (e.g., R.S. Means: Repair and Remodeling Cost Data), actual bid or contract prices for the property, estimates from contractors or vendors, the evaluator's own cost files, or published supplier sources.

Total Cost: This is the result of multiplying the quantity times the unit cost. It is expressed in current year dollars.

DM (Deferred Maintenance):

If the item evidenced deferred maintenance, this column is checked.

Comments: the comments column, or an attachment, should clearly provide information on the location and the nature of the problem being addressed for each item. The information should be adequate for the owner to begin to implement the action.

Evaluator's Summary: Physical Needs Over The Term

Those items not listed on the Immediate Physical Needs form, but for which action is anticipated during the term of the loan plus two years, are listed on the form. The item and Quantity are transferred directly from the Systems and Conditions Form. The Unit Cost is calculated in the same manner as on the Immediate Physical Needs Form.

An attachment should be provided which gives any necessary information on the location of action items and the problem being addressed for each item. The information should be adequate for the owner to begin to implement the action.

Cost by Year: the result of multiplying the quantity times the unit cost, in current dollars, is inserted in the column for the year in which the action is expected to take place. Generally, the Effective Remaining Life estimate provided by the evaluator on the Systems and Conditions will indicate the action year. For example, if the evaluator has indicated that the Effective Remaining Life of the parking lot paving is 4 years, the cost, in current dollars, is inserted in Year 4.

If the items are likely to be done over a number of years, the costs, in current dollars should be spread over the appropriate period. For example, if the Effective Remaining Life of the Refrigerators is estimated to be 4 years, or 3-5 years, one third of the cost of replacing the refrigerators may appear in each of Years 3, 4, and 5.

Total Un-inflated: After inserting all of the appropriate action items, the evaluator should total the items for each year.

Total Inflated: The evaluator should multiply the Total Un-inflated times the factor provided to produce the Total Inflated.

Total Inflated All Pages: On the last sheet, the evaluator should include the Total Inflated Dollars for that page and all prior pages.

Cumulative Total All Pages: On the last sheet, the evaluator should insert the Total Inflated Dollars of that year and all prior years.

Special Repair and Replacement Requirements

While performing a property inspection, the evaluator must be aware that certain building materials and construction practices may cause properties to experience (or to develop in a short time period) problems that can be corrected only with major repairs or replacements.

The following identifies some specific construction related problems; however, the evaluator must be aware that other construction related problems may be found in any property and should be identified. If any of the following requirements are not met or if the evaluator determines that the following conditions or others are present, the evaluator must contact the lender immediately to discuss the timing as well as the cost of the repairs or replacements. The evaluator should ensure that any of these conditions are thoroughly addressed in the Physical Needs Assessment.

Minimum Electrical Capacity: Each apartment unit must have sufficient electrical capacity (amperage) to handle the number of electrical circuits and their use within an apartment. Therefore, the evaluator must determine, based on referencing the National Electric Code as well as local building codes, what is the minimum electrical service needed. In any event, that service must not be less than **100 amperes (This specific requirement is a DCA amendment to this section of the Fannie Mae Guidelines).**

Electrical Circuit Overload Protection - All apartment unit circuits, as well as electrical circuits elsewhere in an apartment complex, must have circuit breakers as opposed to fuses as circuit overload protection.

Aluminum Wiring: In all cases, where aluminum wiring runs from the panel to the outlets of a unit, the evaluator's inspection should ascertain that the aluminum wiring connections (outlets, switches, appliances, etc.) are made to receptacles rated to accept aluminum wiring or that corrective repair can be done immediately by the owner.

Fire Retardant Treated Plywood: While performing the roof inspection, the evaluator should investigate whether there is any indication that fire-retardant treated plywood was used in the construction of the roof (primarily roof sheathing). This inspection should focus on sections of the roof that are subjected to the greatest amount of heat (e.g., areas that are not shaded or that are poorly ventilated) and, if possible, to inspect the attic for signs of deteriorating fire-retardant treated plywood or plywood that is stamped with a fire rating.

DCA's concern is that certain types of fire-retardant treated plywood rapidly deteriorate when exposed to excessive heat and humidity or may cause nails or other metal fasteners to corrode. Common signs of this condition include a darkening of the wood and the presence of a powder-like substance, warping of the roof and the curling of the shingles. Fire-retardant treated plywood is most likely to be in townhouse properties or other properties with pitched, shingled roofs that were constructed after 1981 and that are located in states east of the Mississippi River and some southwestern states.