

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS CHECKLIST

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE – *Public open areas must be designed to the same level of quality as any other “space” in a development.*

Outdoor Rooms

Think of public open space – shared outdoor areas intended for use by all residents – as “outdoor rooms,” and design them as carefully as any other rooms in the project. Avoid undifferentiated, empty spaces. Consider the types of activities that will occur in the “rooms,” including cultural or social activities unique to specific user groups, and design the shared open space accommodate these activities.

Access

Provide direct access to open space from the dwelling units that the open space is intended to serve. At the same time consider designing in ways to control nonresident access to these spaces. When terraces or balconies are used as shared open space, consider locating so they serve as extensions of indoor common areas.

Boundaries

Provide clear boundaries between publicly controlled spaces (streets), community controlled spaces (shared open space) and privately controlled spaces (dwellings and private open space). Consider enclosing or partially enclosing open space with project building(s) to provide clear boundaries.

Surveillance

Provide visual access to shared open spaces from individual units, preferably from the kitchen, living room or dining room.

Play Areas

Consider play – and play areas – as critical to the successful functioning of any family housing project. Avoid placing a low priority on these spaces and leaving their design until the end of a project. In particular, consider how play areas will be used by different age children (2-5 years, 5-12 years, and teenagers) and design these areas accordingly. Avoid “one space fits all” solutions. Locate play areas for small children so that they allow for adult supervision from dwelling units and/or from a central facility such as a laundry. Design play areas so that adults can also congregate and provide supervision.

Nighttime Lighting

Consider a lighting plan for shared open spaces that provides light from a variety of sources. Match lighting intensity and quality to the use for which it is intended; i.e. the lighting required for a pedestrian path is substantially different from that required to illuminate a parking garage. Avoid lighting which shines directly into dwelling units or is overly intense and bright. Consider energy efficient lighting whenever possible