



# **JUNEAU COMMISSION ON AGING - HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE AGENDA**

**May 24, 2023 at 10:00 AM**

**UAS Egan Library Room 211**

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UAS Egan Library Room 211 @ 11066 Auke Lake Way, Juneau, AK 99801

**A. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

**B. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**1. 2023-04-18 Juneau Commission on Aging-Housing Subcommittee Minutes-Draft**

**D. AGENDA TOPICS**

**2. JCOA Housing Subcommittee Agenda Topics**

1. Develop single tagline for both papers: Universal Design - Everyone Wins?
2. Build a list of everyone position paper should go to in CBJ
3. Get on the agenda for the Chamber, Rotary, etc.
4. Plan for targeting both developers and their influencers
5. Consider Action Line for discussion on Pioneer's Home and Property Tax Credits

**E. NEXT MEETING DATE**

**F. ADJOURNMENT**

ADA accommodations available upon request: Please contact the Clerk's office 36 hours prior to any meeting so arrangements can be made for closed captioning or sign language interpreter services depending on the meeting format. The Clerk's office telephone number is 586-5278, TDD 586-5351, e-mail: [city.clerk@juneau.gov](mailto:city.clerk@juneau.gov).

## MINUTES

### Juneau Commission on Aging (JCOA) Housing Committee April 18, 2023

#### I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Kathleen Samalon, Chair, 10:05 am at UAS, Egan Library, Room 211

**Board members present:** Kathleen Samalon, Carol Ende

**Others:** None

#### II. Approval of agenda and minutes from previous meeting

The minutes were unanimously approved and there were no additions to the agenda.

#### III. Public Participation on Non-Agenda Items

None

#### IV. Discussion Items

1. CBJ Talking Points: Positioning “asks” is pivotal to success.
2. Developer Talking Points: Nothing is onerous.
3. Distribution Plan for Talking Points: Paper & digital, which organizations, cooperation with other organizations.
4. June Assembly Report: What are the highlights for housing?
5. Juneau Pioneer Home: If CBJ requests State capital funding for an expanded home, we would support it.
6. Tagline: One needs to be developed, such as “Build for us, build for everybody.”

#### V. Adjournment & Next Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 am. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 17, 10:00 am at UAS – Egan Library, Rm 211.

# HOUSING CONCERNS: Juneau Senior Survey 2020

April/2023

This document is simply extracts that mention housing from the 105-page Senior Survey (2020). Its purpose is to make it easier for JCOA commissioners and CBJ to understand and to continue to address what the community has told us about housing issues. The survey was provided to residents 55 & older.

## Executive Summary Comments

Housing is the issue that has come up most frequently in this survey.

Providing alternative housing for seniors that want to downsize would free up family-size homes for young families in the community.

Homes age like people. Build homes now that will age in place along with their occupants.

Focus is on new independent housing needs, not on needs expressed for medical care housing options.

Want to downsize to smaller home

A few people already have built homes to accommodate aging in place with room for caregivers

Want to stay near family and in own home.

Housing and affordable housing – housing at all levels of the economic scale

Housing includes apartments, not just private residences

Availability of affordable assisted living housing, affordable independent senior housing homes

## Introduction

Housing was the most mentioned topic in this survey and is a pivotal issue when making the decision to stay or leave Juneau. Availability of affordable assisted living housing, affordable independent senior housing, and services to help residents continue to live in their own homes were identified as the top senior priorities that need work in Juneau.

Of the 495 comments made, 108 of them mentioned housing as an issue. Common issues include the cost and lack of availability of assisted living facilities and physically accessible housing, the lack of a senior housing complex, the difficulty and cost of in-home care, and property taxes. Many of these comments stressed that housing is a pivotal issue when making the decision to stay or leave Juneau.

Affordable senior housing ranked lowest on a list – in terms of meeting current needs, with over 80 percent of respondents, indicating that this area could sue improvement or need a lot of work.

The increase in fees at the Pioneer Home was unanimously condemned. Respondents indicated they could not or would not be able to afford the fee increases and will have to find alternative housing and care elsewhere, more than likely outside of Alaska.

The greatest percent, 29 percent, anticipated a need for a more accessible/lower maintenance home, a need that could be met by adaptations to one’s current home as opposed to living elsewhere. Although Juneau’s senior population was not knowledgeable of many nationally growing alternative housing programs (Integrated Resident Communities, The Village to Village Network, etc.), the “Tiny Home” concept showed the most familiarity with 13 percent saying it would be a good fit in Juneau. Affordable senior independent housing was the top answer for Question 45 “What do you think Juneau residents aged 55 or older need that is not now adequately and/or readily available in Juneau?”

Seventy-six percent of respondents now live in houses compared to 65 percent in 2010. This shift can perhaps be explained by the aging into the survey of homeowners who moved to Juneau and bought homes during a Juneau housing boom and now are aging in place in the Valley. 78% of respondents age 55-74 lived in homes.

The survey showed that 32 percent of respondents under 75 anticipate needing to make their houses more accessible and require less maintenance or they indicated a need to move to homes that meet those requirements.

Over 62 percent of respondents ages 75 older anticipate that they will need a different housing situation altogether. The most common answer, 29 percent, anticipated a need for a more accessible/lower maintenance home.

In the current survey, respondents were given a choice of impairments for which home modifications may be needed, including the choice of no disability. Mobility issues were the predominant concern, followed by hearing and vision impairment, with the percentage of respondents needing this adaptation increasing with age.

## Does your current living situation need to be adapted to be made more accessible and safe features

Condos one level, affordable single level housing

Might buy a condo

Planning to build a retirement home with limited maintenance needed

We want to downsize, but cannot find a favorable condo to purchase

I am considering buying a condo here but they are so expensive for what you get. I also own a condo

Probably accessible low maintenance condo

Purchase condo or house elsewhere and may choose to leave Juneau and live there due to affordability

We would like to live in a new condo development

Availability of a nice condo to purchase.

Home was built to accommodate aging in place with room for caregivers

Independent living apartment

Financial grants and advice to help with accessibility issues like ramps and stairs

Ideally in a low maintenance home with elders, my peers and young people around interacting with the elders as part of their housing.

possibly ground level apartment versus on 2nd floor

No stairs. Now I have 17 in apartment

Have been making upgrades as necessary to make house more elder friendly

Senior living elsewhere in Alaska

Super insulated, low-maintenance, 200% renewable energy

Transitional housing that will meet my needs as I age

Urn for ashes

Built home with accessibility as priority

High toilets, walk-in shower, and grab bars

It will become difficult, too many stairs

Make downstairs livable in case can't traverse stairs.

More user-friendly kitchen and bathroom.

Most thing have been made accessible.

Need bus and CARE A VAN to come to Auk Nu Condos

Need chairlift outside home by stairs

Need more units with no stairs

STAIRS

Stairs are a concern.

Stairs are very difficult

The townhouse is on three levels and might become an issue.

We have already made some changes

We remodeled bathrooms, but our house has stairs.

We wish we'd put in space for ab elevator!

When we remodeled 20 years ago, we made the house accessible.

## **The question “Could use improvement” or “Needs a lot of work”**

Affordable senior independent housing was the top answer

The topic of suitable and affordable housing was at the top of the priority list.

The increase in fees at the Pioneer Home was unanimously condemned with responses that highlighted the huge financial burden that came with this fee increase.

## **Do you Own, rent or Other?**

While the majority of respondents, 84 percent overall, own their home, seniors in the oldest age cohort show a transition away from home ownership to rental

Compared to 2010 results, there is a shift in the last decade toward more home ownership and less rentals.

This further supports the idea that younger seniors are aging in place in the homes they purchased in the Valley when they first moved to Juneau.

## **If You Anticipate the Need to Live in a Different Housing Situation, What Type of Housing Situation Will You Need?**

There is a significant difference in the needs of seniors 75 and over compared to younger seniors.

About 32 percent of respondents under 75 anticipate needing to make their houses more accessible and lower maintenance in the future and/or indicate a desire to move to homes that meet that need

The greatest percent, 29 percent, anticipated a need for a more accessible/lower maintenance home.

As this is a need that can be met by adaptations to one’s current home and does not indicate a need to “live elsewhere.”

## **New Approaches and Innovations in Senior Living Communities Are Being Developed. How Familiar Are You with the Programs Listed Below**

Almost all respondents, 94 percent or more, have either not heard of or don’t know much about Integrated Resident Communities, the Green House Project, International Elder-Friendly communities, and the Village to Village Network.

More seniors have heard of Tiny Homes and Communities, but again, 85 percent of respondents don’t know or know very little about this option

Low income village with shopping center, bank hospital/clinic and rides is what we need for all the working people that live check to check

Granny Pods

Compounds for elderly that allow easy transition from independent apartment living to assisted living to a nursing home

Co-housing would be nice to have in Juneau

Cottage housing neighborhoods would work well here.

Small homes with common front yard grass, garden, benches.

Communal living communities

I am familiar with all of these but there are not funds nor enough interest in Juneau to pursue them.

Building a small home on existing property to allow family care.

Tiny homes or apartments to an existing home would allow seniors to remain on their own property and have family or friends give assistance living next door

Inter-generational Co-housing communities

Co-housing, that's what I really want. Like anchorage hass

Group housing

Dog friendly housing desperately needed with NO ARBITRARY LIMIT on size of dogs. My parents had to give up their beloved older dog when they moved into an assisted living situation due to health

Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC)

I hope to stay in Juneau indefinitely if needed services and housing are available

I know that I cannot live in Juneau once I retire. It is not an affordable place and lacks sufficient aging housing

I could move like some of our friends have because of CBJs anti-senior attitude

Lack of affordable housing is a BIG problem

Must get Assisted Living Facility in Juneau & more Housing for Seniors without stairs

Would like to get a single story house for long term accessibility but don't think it's financially realistic

Affordable single level housing

Small, ranch-style single family homes

Independent housing designed to transition between large family home and apartment dwelling. Two master bedrooms with bath etc.

Need affordable senior housing

- Senior retirement complex with separate 1 or 2-bedroom apartments with dining facilities, exercise, hobby, and community areas

Tiny homes within walking distance of services

Tiny house community

### **How Well Are the Following Quality of Life Needs Met in Juneau for Seniors?**

Affordable assisted living and affordable senior housing ranked lowest on the list, with over 80 percent of respondents indicating that these needs could use improvement or need a lot of work.

### **What Do You Think Juneau Residents Aged 55 Or Older Need That Is Not Now Adequately and/or Readily Available in Juneau?**

Overall, all respondents agreed that the greatest unmet needs in Juneau are for affordable senior independent housing and more specialty medical care

### **Do you have any additional comments/thoughts/concerns you would like to share?**

Housing was the most frequently addressed topic in this section. Of the 495 comments made, 108 of them mentioned housing as an issue

Common issues include the cost of and lack of availability in assisted living facilities and physically accessible housing, the lack of a senior housing complex, the difficulty and cost of in-home care, and property taxes.

Many of these comments stressed that housing is a pivotal issue when making the decision to stay or leave Juneau.

Affordable independent senior housing, and Services to help residents continue to live in their own homes got the most “Could use improvement” or “Needs a lot of work”

Having affordable housing that can accommodate the needs of seniors is absolutely essential if they are going to continue living in Juneau.

### **If you anticipate the need to live in a different housing situation, what type of housing situation will you need?**

Don't want to think about it

Downsize to smaller home

Grave

Having a person who could help me with light tasks live in my home

Home care -- part time

Home was built to accommodate aging in place with room for caregivers

I am considering buying a condo here but they are so expensive for what you get

I 'anticipate' living in my own home until my last day.

I would need continuum of care with more assisted living, nursing 24 hours in home and possibly Pioneer Home.

I live in an accessible house built for aging in

Ideally in a low maintenance home with elders, my peers and young people around interacting with the elders as part of their housing.

If necessary - Lower 48 area closer to more medical care

Independent living apartment or move in with or closer to out-of-town family and friends



Independent living apartment, assisted Living, Pioneer Home  
 Independent/Assisted Progressive Care Facility  
 Might buy a condo  
 Affordable housing with no stairs  
 Move back to Anchorage when I retire  
 Move out of town; Juneau is too expensive  
 Possibly ground level apartment versus on 2nd floor  
 No stairs. Now I have 17 in apartment  
 Need to get where I have less maintenance  
 Out of town residential community  
 Outside of Juneau to be closer to medical specialists  
 Plan to die at home  
 Probably accessible low maintenance condo  
 Purchase condo or house  
 Senior living elsewhere in Alaska  
 Single family home  
 Single family residence  
 Small townhouse in valley  
 Something affordable - so leaving Juneau, most likely  
 Stay in my own home with intermittent caregiving  
 Transitional housing that will meet my needs as I age  
 Urn for ashes  
 We would like to live in a new condo development

**Does your current living situation need to be adapted to be made more accessible and safe?**

Apartment that will have a room for medical equipment  
 Grab bars for safety in the bathrooms  
 High toilets, walk-in shower, and grab bars  
 I have no disability now, but I'd like to get rid of the exterior steps.  
 I would like to see us get emergency pull cords for the apartments  
 Make downstairs livable in case can't traverse stairs.  
 More user-friendly kitchen and bathroom.  
 Need more units with no stairs  
 We wish we'd put in space for an elevator!

**Please indicate which of the following you need but CANNOT find in Juneau**

Affordable housing with NO STAIRS!  
 Advise on where/what to do for future housing

## Affordable housing options

### Introduction

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The increase in fees at the Pioneer Home was unanimously condemned. Respondents indicated they could not or would not be able to afford the fee increases and will have to find alternative housing and care elsewhere, more than likely outside of Alaska.

The greatest percent, 29 percent, anticipated a need for a more accessible/lower maintenance home, a need that could be met by adaptations to one's current home as opposed to living elsewhere. Although Juneau's senior population was not knowledgeable of many nationally growing alternative housing programs (Integrated Resident Communities, The Village to Village Network, etc.), the "Tiny Home" concept showed the most familiarity with 13 percent saying it would be a good fit in Juneau. Affordable senior independent housing was the top answer for Question 45 "What do you think Juneau residents aged 55 or older need that is not now adequately and/or readily available in Juneau?"

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The survey showed that 32 percent of respondents under 75 anticipate needing to make their houses more accessible and require less maintenance or they indicated a need to move to homes that meet those requirements.

Over 62 percent of respondents ages 75 older anticipate that they will need a different housing situation altogether. The most common answer, 29 percent, anticipated a need for a more accessible/lower maintenance home.

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### **Does your current living situation need to be adapted to be made more accessible and with safe features**

Condos one level, affordable single level housing

Might buy a condo

We want to downsize, but cannot find a favorable condo to purchase

I am considering buying a condo here but they are so expensive for what you get.

Probably accessible low maintenance condo

Purchase condo or house elsewhere and may choose to leave Juneau and live there due to affordability

We would like to live in a new condo development

Availability of a nice condo to purchase.

Home was built to accommodate aging in place with room for caregivers

Financial grants and advice to help with accessibility issues like ramps and stairs

Ideally in a low maintenance home with elders, my peers and young people around interacting with the elders as part of their housing.

Possibly ground level apartment versus on 2nd floor

No stairs. Now I have 17 in apartment

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Senior living elsewhere in Alaska

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It will become difficult, too many stairs

Make downstairs livable in case can't traverse stairs.

More user-friendly kitchen and bathroom.

Most thing have been made accessible.

Need bus and CARE A VAN to come to Auk Nu Condos

Need chairlift outside home by stairs

Need more units with no stairs

STAIRS

Stairs are a concern.

Stairs are very difficult

The townhouse is on three levels and might become an issue.

We have already made some changes

We remodeled bathrooms, but our house has stairs.

We wish we'd put in space for an elevator!

When we remodeled 20 years ago, we made the house accessible.



## 2020 Juneau Senior Survey – Transportation

May/2023

This informal document is simply extracts that mention housing taken from the 126-page Senior Survey (2020). Its purpose is to make it easier for JCOA commissioners and CBJ personnel to refer back to what the community has told us about housing needs, as well as to be able to reference already made recommendations addressing the issue.

### Cover Letter to the Assembly (May 06,2021)

#### Recommendations

- JCOA recommends that CBJ continue its support of the new assisted living project, Riverview Senior Community JCOA commends CBJ for helping to make this much-needed facility possible by purchasing the land on which it will be built. This development incentive helped reduce up-front costs in recognition of the high cost of construction in Juneau. While Riverview will accommodate many of our seniors currently in need, and many in the near future, we urge CBJ to continue to creatively find additional ways to incentivize senior housing developments.
- We recommend that the Chief Housing Officer get the most current senior population numbers for Juneau to aid in better projections of senior housing needs. With current data CBJ, will be in a better position to work with local developers and contractors to create programs and incentives that will encourage development of more senior-friendly housing. Aging in place requires multiple housing options, from in-home modifications to new, accessible, low-maintenance homes located close to shopping, bus, community centers.

- We recommend that CBJ requires developers to include a reasonable percentage of senior-friendly units in multi-unit developments. Both rentals and condos/cottages are desired by seniors from all income levels. Senior-friendly might mean multi-family units that have no stairs within units or an elevator if a multistory building. Senior-friendly also means handrails in bathrooms, wheelchair accessible, zero to minimal indoor stairs. We urge you to meet with developers and contractors to reexamine together what is needed and how to fill the gap.
- We urge Juneau to look at creative new ideas for senior housing. Other communities are implementing solutions like co-housing, Tiny Homes and micro-housing, college dorm-sharing, senior “village-to-village” organizations, and multigenerational housing.

## Survey - Executive Summary

- The most notable difference in results from prior surveys is the number of respondents living in “Downtown Juneau” compared to the number living in the Valley. The Valley has seen a dramatic increase in its senior population while Downtown Juneau has seen a sharp decline in its senior population over the past 10 years.
- Compared to results in 2010, there is a shift in the last decade toward more home ownership and less rental.
- Seventy-six percent of respondents now live in houses compared to 65 percent in 2010.
- While the majority of respondents, 84 percent overall, own their home, seniors ages 75 and older show a transition away from home ownership to rentals.
- Housing was the most mentioned topic in this survey and is a pivotal issue when making the decision to stay or leave Juneau.
- Availability of affordable assisted living housing, affordable independent senior housing, and services to help residents continue to live in their own homes were identified as the top senior priorities that need work in Juneau.
- Affordable senior independent housing was the top answer for Question 45 “What do you think Juneau residents aged 55 or older need that is not now adequately and/or readily available in Juneau.”

## Question Analysis

- the vast majority of survey respondents now reside in the Valley, where previous survey results showed most respondents residing in downtown Juneau. The shift in age demographics by area seems to follow home construction over time.
- Seventy-six percent of respondents now live in houses compared to 65 percent in 2010. This shift can perhaps be explained by the aging into the survey of homeowners who moved to Juneau and bought homes during a Juneau housing boom and now are aging in place in the Valley.
- While the majority of respondents own their homes, 84 percent overall, seniors in the oldest age cohort show a transition away from home ownership to renting their homes. This may be partially explained by the trend seen in the previous question for some older seniors to move into senior housing, care facilities, or live with friends or family.
- the survey showed that 32 percent of respondents under 75 anticipate needing to make their houses more accessible and require less maintenance or they indicated a need to move to homes that meet those requirements.
- Mobility issues were the predominant concern, with the percentage of respondents needing this adaptation increasing with age.
- Almost all respondents, 94 percent or more, have either not heard of or don't know much about Integrated Resident Communities, the Green House Project, International Elder- Friendly communities, and the Village-to-Village Network. More seniors have heard of Tiny Homes and Communities, but again, 85 percent of respondents don't know anything or know very little about this option. More seniors think Tiny Homes and Communities are a good fit for Juneau than not, 13% compared to 3% respectively.
- Affordable assisted living and affordable senior housing ranked lowest on the list (in terms of meeting current need), with over 80 percent of respondents indicating that these areas could use improvement or need a lot of work.
- Overall, respondents agreed that the greatest unmet needs in Juneau are for affordable senior independent housing and more specialty medical care.

## Do you have any additional comments/thoughts/concerns you would like to share?

- Housing was the most frequently addressed topic in this section. Of the 495 comments made, 108 of them mentioned housing as an issue.
- Common issues include the cost and lack of availability of assisted living facilities and physically accessible housing, the lack of a senior housing complex, the difficulty and cost of in-home care, and property taxes.
- Many of these comments stressed that housing is a pivotal issue when making the decision to stay or leave Juneau.
- Some seniors voiced a desire to live within walking distance of necessary amenities to minimize their dependence on a car.

## Summary of Findings

- Housing is the issue that has come up most frequently in this survey.
- Availability of affordable assisted living housing, affordable independent senior housing, and services to help residents continue to live in their own homes got the most “Could use improvement” or “Needs a lot of work” answers in Question 44.
- Affordable senior independent housing was the top answer for Question 45 “What Do You Think Juneau Residents Aged 55 Or Older Need That Is Not Now Adequately and/or Readily Available in Juneau?”
- Having affordable housing that can accommodate the needs of seniors is absolutely essential if they are going to continue living in Juneau.
- There was very little knowledge among respondents concerning alternative senior housing options. The most widely known alternative senior housing option was Tiny Homes, though 85 percent of respondents indicated they knew little or nothing about this option. Without education about housing alternatives, it is likely they will never be considered an option. These alternative options should be shared with the community to at least gauge interest for the ideas.



## Written Responses

(Not all responses are shown.)

**If you anticipate the need to live in a different housing situation, what type of housing situation will you need? Other (please specify)**

- Downsize to smaller home
- Grave
- Senior living elsewhere in Alaska
- Have not thought carefully about this
- Having a person who could help me with light tasks live in my home
- Having aids in my own home to assist me as needed
- Home was built to accommodate aging in place with room for caregivers
- Hope to stay in my own home (2)
- I am considering buying a condo here but they are so expensive for what you get.
- I 'anticipate' living in my own home until my last day
- Ideally in a low maintenance home with elders, my peers and young people around interacting with the elders as part of their housing
- Independent living apartment or move in with or closer to out of town family and friends
- Independent living apartment, assisted Living, Pioneer Home
- Independent/Assisted Progressive Care Facility
- Leaving Juneau
- Move out of town; Juneau is too expensive
- No stairs. Now I have 17 in apartment
- No idea, possibly ground level apartment versus on 2nd floor
- Not sure what will work for me. Need to get where I have less maintenance
- Probably accessible low maintenance condo
- Something affordable - so leaving Juneau, most likely
- Stay in my own home with intermittent caregiving
- Transitional housing that will meet my needs
- Urn for ashes
- We would like to live in a new condo development

## Does your current living situation need to be adapted to be made more accessible and safer for... Other (please specify)

- Apartment that will have a room for medical equipment
- Built home with accessibility as priority
- Bus system nearby
- City created snow berms are too difficult to manage. Need reliable, prompt handyman.
- Closer to town
- Condo already mostly accessible
- Driveway issues and house maintenance becoming cumbersome
- Driving Thane Rd at night with no streetlights is becoming difficult in the winter.
- Eventually, to address possible future mobility issues
- Getting harder to move about a multi-level residence
- Grab bars for safety in the bathrooms
- Grip (arthritis)
- Have already done the work for accessibility and safety
- Have been making upgrades as necessary to make house more elder friendly
- High toilets, walk-in shower, and grab bars
- I have no disability now, but I'd like to get rid of the exterior steps.
- I need bathroom accommodations: high toilets, grab bar, walk-in shower
- I would like to see us get emergency pull cords for the apartments
- It will become difficult, too many stairs
- Less maintenance
- Make downstairs livable in case can't traverse stairs.
- More user-friendly kitchen and bathroom.
- Need chairlift outside home by stairs
- Need help with routine maintenance, esp. Tasks w/ladders
- Stairs are very difficult
- We remodeled bathrooms, but our house has stairs.
- We wish we'd put in space for an elevator!

## **New approaches and innovations in senior living communities are being developed. How familiar are you with the programs listed below?**

- Cottage housing neighborhoods would work well here. Small homes with common front yard grass, garden, benches.
- Dog friendly housing desperately needed with NO ARBITRARY LIMIT on size of dogs. My parents had to give up their beloved older dog when they moved into an assisted living situation due to health.
- AARP Livable Communities Program
- Bridge Meadows format
- Building a small home on existing property to allow family care.
- Cohousing (3)
- Communal living communities
- Compounds for elderly that allow easy transition from independent apartment living to assisted living to a nursing home
- Continuing Care Retirement Communities (CCRC)
- I will never reside in a “senior living community”
- I would be interested in learning more (3)
- Inter-generational Co-housing communities
- Know that options are limited and expect to move out of state for affordable options
- Tiny homes or apartments to an existing home would allow seniors to remain on their own property and have family or friends give assistance living next door.

## **What do you think Juneau residents aged 55 or older need that is not now adequately and/or readily available in Juneau? Other**

- Affordable single level housing
- Financial grants and advice to help with accessibility issues like ramps and stairs
- Independent housing designed to transition between large family home and apartment dwelling. Two master bedrooms with bath etc.
- Nice affordable attractive housing for singles or couples
- Senior retirement complex with separate 1 or 2-bedroom apartments with dining facilities, exercise, hobby, and community areas.
- Tiny homes within walking distance of services



## Juneau Commission on Aging

### Can You Support Age Friendly Construction in Proactive Ways?

**What if** all homes in Juneau could be suitable for anyone regardless of a person's age or physical ability?

**What if** a person who wants to live within their community regardless of his or her age or physical ability, could do just that?

These are questions being asked by other municipalities that, like Juneau, are also members of the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities. CBJ needs to work towards moving the city to a well-designed, age-friendly community with housing that allows elders to continue to spend their retirement years and money in Juneau. Your support is necessary to make this goal a reality.

The fact is that nearly 30% of the Juneau population is over 55. Aging in place is a personal objective of most Juneau Elders as indicated by the CBJ 2020 Senior Survey. Unfortunately, their homes generally were not built in the past taking into consideration an owner's probable future limitations.

That needs to change and CBJ can help. Whatever your role in government, look for ways to facilitate age friendly housing, homes that are attractive to 1<sup>st</sup> time buyers as well as those residents who need to downsize ... universal design. Ask this question *"What kind of housing do you imagine needing and wanting for your well-being as you move towards Elderhood?"*

Requirements to make this happen are not onerous. To make this point here are examples of what the Juneau Commission on Aging is asking developers to voluntarily adopt as construction best practices in all new housing construction. The list was created from recommendations included in the Fair Housing Act Design and Construction Requirements, AARP HomeFit Guide, and other sources. Basically, we are just asking that all new housing and remodels be user-friendly for everybody, regardless of their age.

## Promote universal construction design

1. Apartment & condo units that are single story within a multi-story building
2. Homes have an accessible living space including master bedroom/bath + laundry on at least one floor
3. Doorways (interior/exterior) that are at least 36" wide or made that wide by installing swing-away or swing-clear hinges to make use of entire doorway opening
4. Elevators in multi-family buildings of 3 floors or more
5. One bathroom with a walk-in shower, a built-in bench seat and grab-bars
6. Phone jacks in the master bedroom and kitchen
7. Zero step entrances/ramps into the building and zero step thresholds
8. Electrical outlets (above 18") and light switches and thermostats (below 48")
9. Pocket doors where practical in small spaces

## Encourage feature friendly selections

### Entrances and Exits

- Exterior lightening at all entrances with sensors
- Doors have lever-style handles

### Kitchen

- Cabinetry is easy to access with pull-out cabinetry
- Suitable lighting over sink, stove, and other work area
- Easy to grasp D-shaped pulls and handles
- Stove and cooktop controls are near the front
- Area where a person can work while seated

### Steps and Stairways

- Stairway lights can be turned off and on at both the top and bottom of the stairs
- Non-slip surface on steps
- Handrails on both sides of stairs

### Living Room and Bedroom

- Light switches are rocker-style and installed between 36" and 44" from the floor
- Easy access to electrical and phone outlet
- Closets have interior lights and adjustable rods and shelves
- Room for the bed to place in a location that allows for easy access to the bathroom

### Bathroom

- Raised or high-profile "comfort" toilet
- Easy to use lever handles for sink, bathtub, and shower faucets
- Walls are reinforced with blocking so grab bars can be installed in the bathtub, shower and adjacent to the toilet
- Shower has a no-step entry and seating
- The shower features a hand-held or adjustable showerhead

## What could you do in your job role to increase age-friendly housing?

- Could the city codify any of the requests that we are asking developers to do as a best practice?
- Within your role at CBJ, we ask you to explore ways the city can incentivize developers to include these features.
- Could select Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Fair Housing Act (FHA) recommendations be formally adopted by CBJ?
- Could the Planning Commission, Zoning Commission give credit/points to developers who demonstrate their willingness to help make Juneau an Age Friendly Community - such as including mini pocket exercise areas within their development, etc.?
- Could the city continue to refine current senior population numbers for Juneau to aid in better projections of senior housing needs, specifically how many senior housing units are required of each type?
- Could the Juneau Economic Development Council provide developers loans for senior specific housing? The support could be in the form of loans, or a guarantee to the bank of a portion of the loan, or interim financing for the construction loan.
- Could the city sponsor or work with local builders to develop the Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist (CAP) designation? This is National Association of Home Builders Certification.
- As was done to create accessory apartments, can a new program be created that would make grants available to seniors to help cover the cost of retrofitting a multi-story home with an elevator or other senior friendly requirements.
- Look for ways to encourage or approve the building of tiny homes and other small residential models suitable for elders. Possible examples include adjusting city code to not require streets but rather covered walkways. Could these walkways even be in a CBJ Right of Way? Could public water and sewer also be there and CBJ maintain the covered walkways instead of a street?
- Could the city land code be modified to allow developers to build affordable, small one-level homes on smaller lots than are currently permitted? Could parking requirements be reduced as often senior couples only have one car?

## Be creative in supporting diversity in innovative housing options

It is recognized that Juneau does have land availability issues that impacts the type of housing that can be constructed profitably. Today, however, there are evolving housing types that could diversify options for Elders beyond what is currently available: house/condo/apartment complexes.

What is necessary for this to happen is CBJ supporting these new innovative approaches and removing obstacles to their development. Consider the possibilities.

- Tiny Homes
- Village Model
- Cottage Communities
- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Multigenerational Living Concept
- Etc.

### Links for additional information

- 2020 Juneau Senior Survey <https://juneau.org/clerk/boards-committees/jcoa>
- Fair Housing Act Design Manual: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/publications/destech/fairhousing.html>
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): <https://www.ada.gov/>
- AARP HomeFit Guide: <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/housing/info-2020/homefit-guide.html>
- National Association of Home Builders Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist (CAPS): <https://www.nahb.org/Education%20and%20Events/Education/Designations/Certified%20Aging-in-Place%20Specialist%20CAPS>
- Example of Tiny House Cottage Community: <https://tinyhousetalk.com/tiny-cottage-community-in-bend-oregon/>
- Example of the Multigenerational Living Concept: <https://seniorhousingnews.com/2021/05/05/bill-thomas-colleagues-unveil-kallimos-communities-multigenerational-living-concept/>
- Universal Design: <http://universaldesign.com/what-is-ud/>
- AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities: <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/>

Just as Juneau's developers will need to be creative and flexible to see how these types of age friendly housing can fit into the land they own, so does CBJ need to see how city practices can be changed to accommodate new housing models. Everybody wins.

Contact: City Clerk's Office [city.clerk@juneau.gov](mailto:city.clerk@juneau.gov) 907-586-5278



## Juneau Commission on Aging

### Building Age Friendly Housing in Juneau

**What if** all homes in Juneau could be suitable for anyone regardless of a person's age or physical ability?

**What if** a person who wants to live within their community regardless of his or her age or physical ability, could do just that?

These are questions being asked by governing agencies and individuals who are working towards moving Juneau to be a well-designed, age-friendly community that allows elders to continue to spend their retirement years and money in Juneau. Your support is necessary to make this goal a reality.

The fact is that nearly 30% of the Juneau population is over 55. Aging in place is a personal objective of most Juneau Elders as indicated by the 2020 Senior Survey. Unfortunately, their homes generally built in the 70's and 80's, did not take into consideration an owner's probable future limitations. Going forward, we hope you see the importance of building new residences of all types that integrate age-friendly features into the design, regardless of the age of the targeted buyer today.

These universal design features are not onerous. They already are recommendations made by the Fair Housing Act Design and Construction Requirements, International Building Code, and the AARP Home Fit Guide and other entities.

Could you voluntarily adopt these choices as construction best practices in all new housing construction as well as consider building smaller houses specifically for those Juneau residents who want and still can live independently?

Basically, we are just asking that all new housing and remodels be user-friendly for everybody, regardless of their age.



## When designing new residences ...

1. Apartment & condo units that are single story within a multi-story building
2. Homes have an accessible living space including master bedroom/bath + laundry on at least one floor
3. Doorways (interior/exterior) that are at least 36" wide or made that wide by installing swing-away or swing-clear hinges to make use of entire doorway opening
4. Elevators in multi-family buildings of 3 floors or more
5. One bathroom with a walk-in shower, a built-in bench seat and grab-bars
6. Phone jacks in the master bedroom and kitchen
7. Zero step entrances/ramps into the building and zero step thresholds
8. Electrical outlets (above 18") and light switches and thermostats (below 48")
9. Pocket doors where practical in small spaces

## When choosing features, select options ...

### Entrances and Exits

- Exterior lightening at all entrances with sensors
- Doors have lever-style handles

### Kitchen

- Cabinetry is easy to access with pull-out cabinetry
- Suitable lighting over sink, stove, and other work area
- Easy to grasp D-shaped pulls and handles
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- Walls are reinforced with blocking so grab bars can be installed in the bathtub, shower and adjacent to the toilet
- Shower has a no-step entry and seating
- The shower features a hand-held or adjustable showerhead

## There is a new variety of creative housing options to consider

It is recognized that Juneau does have land availability issues that impacts the type of housing that can profitably be constructed. Today, however, there are evolving housing types that could diversify options for Elders beyond what is currently available, the house/condo/apartment complexes. Consider the possibilities.

- Tiny Homes
- Village Model
- Cottage Communities
- Accessory Dwelling Units
- Multigenerational Living Concept

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Ask this question *“What kind of housing do you imagine needing and wanting for yourself as you move towards Elderhood?”* Whether your preference is an age friendly house/condo/apartment or one of the newer housing models based on smaller size and larger community, there will be plenty of grateful people that will want to live in what you build.

Contact: City Clerk’s Office [city.clerk@juneau.gov](mailto:city.clerk@juneau.gov) 907-586-5278