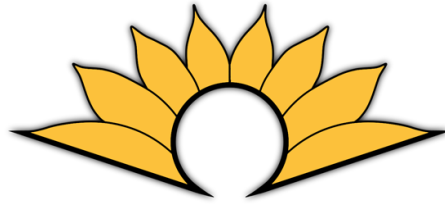


AGE FRIENDLY BUILDING/ RENOVATION RECOMMENDATIONS



AGING WELL IN K.L.

Making Kirkland Lake an Age-Friendly Community

The Town of Kirkland Lake Age-Friendly Community Plan

The Town of Kirkland Lake has committed to the Age-Friendly Community Outreach initiative in a joint effort by the Ministry of Senior Affairs, the University of Waterloo, the Ontario Interdisciplinary Council on Aging and Health, and the Seniors Health Knowledge Network to develop Kirkland Lake as a community that will promote active and healthy aging. The idea is to accommodate the needs of the aging population, which is continuing to increase. An Age-Friendly Community will benefit more than just Seniors in the long term. Targeting older adults and taking into account their various needs will enable Kirkland Lake to improve the quality of life for all residents, regardless of their physical and mental capabilities.

As the number of older adults rises within Kirkland Lake and Area, so does the need for services and infrastructure to accommodate their growing needs. The Age-Friendly Community Plan aims to enhance the quality of life for older adults within the municipality. The initiatives resulting from this plan will benefit the community as a whole by accounting for a wide range of physical and mental abilities.

Why Build Age-Friendly?

Choosing to make these adjustments throughout your build or renovations means you are contributing to the town's economy and ensuring our residents of Kirkland Lake have the ability to age in place. These considerations will allow for the long-term commitment of residents in your home or apartment as the renovations and accessibility are already put into place as they age. Age-friendly homes allow families to stay together and provide our seniors with the independence they are seeking.

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Age-Friendly Building Considerations

1. Single level design

Single-level home designs are becoming increasingly popular among all home buyers however it is additionally beneficial for the seniors in our community. Single Level homes reduce barriers such as stairs, thus providing easy access to all amenities.

2. Wheelchair access

Go the extra mile and make your building wheelchair accessible, creating a minimum 5-foot turning radius, knee space under sinks and countertops, low storage, place light switches and outlets 27 inches from the ground.

3. Elevators

If unable to build a single-level design consider the installation of elevators or stairlifts within the building. Elevators are a great feature for apartment buildings in order to ensure all floors are accessible to our residents.

4. Ramps

Furthermore, if the single level or elevators are not an option consider the use of ramps. Ramps are a great alternative and simple addition to any home or apartment both interior and exterior. Ensure the ramp is the correct length for your building based on the slope and you have the required clearance.

5. Handrails

Hand railings are important in many aspects of the house including staircases and bathrooms. The handrail should extend past the bottom step a few inches so it's easily reached. Original handrails might not be strong enough, so pull them with all your weight—as if you were stumbling and grabbing onto them for support—and make sure they're sturdy and well-secured. We also recommend the installation of shower rails and bathtub and toilet bars in the bathrooms.

6. Non-slip flooring

Slippery surfaces are not the only danger underfoot, although they're the most obvious. All floors should be made slip-resistant, such as by adding non-skid mats under area rugs (or getting rid of the area rugs completely). Trips are as dangerous as slips, so eliminate trip points like thresholds wherever possible, or reduce their height. For those who use

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walkers, low-pile carpeting is safest so the walker doesn't catch on deep piles and cause a fall.

7. Widen doors/ hallway

Consider using wider doors in your renovations and builds to allow wheelchair access and as an increased mobility option. It is recommended to have a 21-36 inch doorway and a 46-48 inch hallway for increased accessibility.

8. Replace knobs with levers

You probably don't think much about turning a doorknob, but it can actually be quite a chore, even painful, for someone with arthritis or other conditions. Simply replacing doorknobs with lever-style hardware can make life easier for residents. Levers are also best on faucets, and illuminated rocker switches are better than the standard toggle light switches.

9. Lighting

Both natural and artificial light will help with mental and physical well-being among our senior population. Lighting is a big factor in assisting with visibility to prevent trips and falls. LED lights are a great choice as they allow for less frequent replacement, and are also energy efficient. The installation of motion sensor lighting will also reduce barriers for seniors.

10. Accessible Bathrooms (Barrier-free)

Installing walk-in showers or tubs with seating and slip-resistant. Purchase comfort height toilets at 17-19 inches high as compared to the standard 15 inches as it may be difficult for older adults to get up once seated, as well as grab bars in the shower and beside the toilet. Install sinks without a vanity for wheelchair users to access without barriers.

Rental units

One step further

If you're the owner or operator of a rental unit, go one step further in offering additional services to your units including lawn care, maintenance, and repairs.

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Have information/ bulletin boards regarding community services such as meals on wheels, Encore Club, Timiskaming Home support, etc.

Communal spaces have also been highlighted as a need in our Community, a social space with seating would be a beneficial factor for seniors.

Senior Home Safety Tax Credit:

The Seniors' Home Safety Tax Credit is a temporary, refundable personal income tax credit that can help you make your home safer and more accessible, helping you stay in your home longer.

The credit is available for the 2021 and 2022 tax years and is worth 25% of up to \$10,000 in eligible expenses per year for a senior's principal residence in Ontario.

Expenses must be paid or payable in 2021 and 2022. The maximum credit is \$2,500 per year.

Who is eligible

You are eligible to claim the credit if you:

- Are 65 or older by the end of the year, or
- Live with a senior relative, or
- Will live with a senior relative within 24 months after the end of the year.