

## City of Cincinnati Visitability Standards

Visitability is a concept that encourages the construction and renovation of residences to enable mobility-impaired persons to visit persons in their homes without undue obstacles. A “Visitable” residence is designed to be accessible to people who use wheelchairs, walkers, or have difficulty with steps.

On March 26, 2014 City of Cincinnati adopted the following visitability standards (“Cincinnati Visitability Standards”), all of which must be met in order to achieve Visitability Certification under City of Cincinnati Ordinance No. 43-2014:

- (a) **No Step Entrance.** The dwelling unit must provide at least one “No Step Entrance.” The required No Step Entrance must be visitable from the driveway or public way via a Visitable Path. “No Step” means no greater than a one-half inch ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) elevation change unless access is provided using a code compliant ramp under the Residential Code of Ohio or the Ohio Building Code, as applicable.
- (b) **Visitable Path.** All hallways and corridors from the No Step Entrance to the central gathering place of the residence (e.g., great room, living room, or family room) (the “Central Gathering Place”) and the Visitable Bathroom must be Visitable Paths. A “Visitable Path” means a No Step path of travel with a continuous minimum net clear width of at least thirty-six inches (36”).
- (c) **Doors/Openings.** All doors and openings along the Visitable Path from the No Step Entrance to the Central Gathering Place shall have a minimum net clear width of at least thirty-two inches (32”), including the doorway to at least one Visitable Bathroom along the Visitable Path.
- (d) **Visitable Bathroom.** There shall be at least one Visitable Bathroom located on a Visitable Path between the Central Gathering Place and the No Step Entrance. “Visitable Bathroom” means a full bathroom, half bathroom, or powder room having a clear floor space of at least thirty inches by forty-eight inches (30” x 48”).

Please refer to the illustrations in Exhibit A for examples.

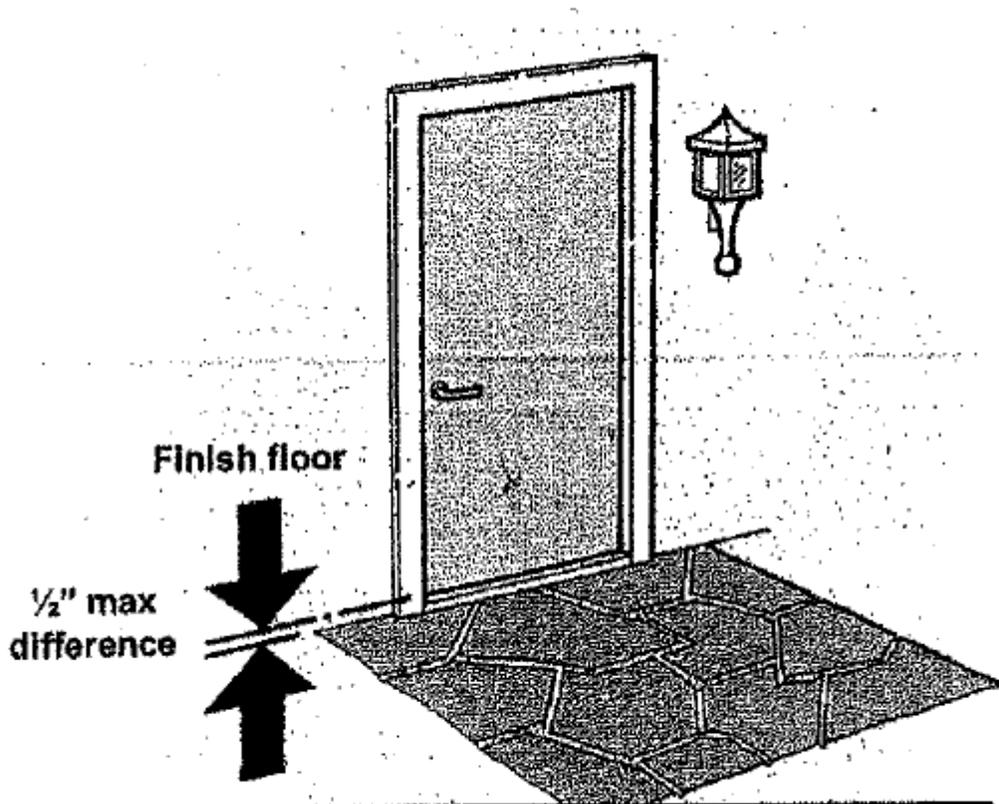
**Certification Process:** An applicant must initiate the Visitability Certification process at the *beginning* of the permit application process with the Department of Planning and Buildings. At *final* permit inspection, a building inspector will verify whether the applicant has met Cincinnati Visitability Standards. If the inspector determines that the structure meets Cincinnati Visitability Standards, the building inspector will indicate Visitability Certification on the final Certificate of Occupancy.

**Eligibility for Tax Abatement Bonus:** Some newly built and renovated properties receiving the Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) Tax Abatement are eligible for an additional tax abatement bonus for achieving Visitability Certification. Please refer to the tables in Exhibit B of this document to determine whether your project might be eligible for the Visitability Certification tax abatement bonus.

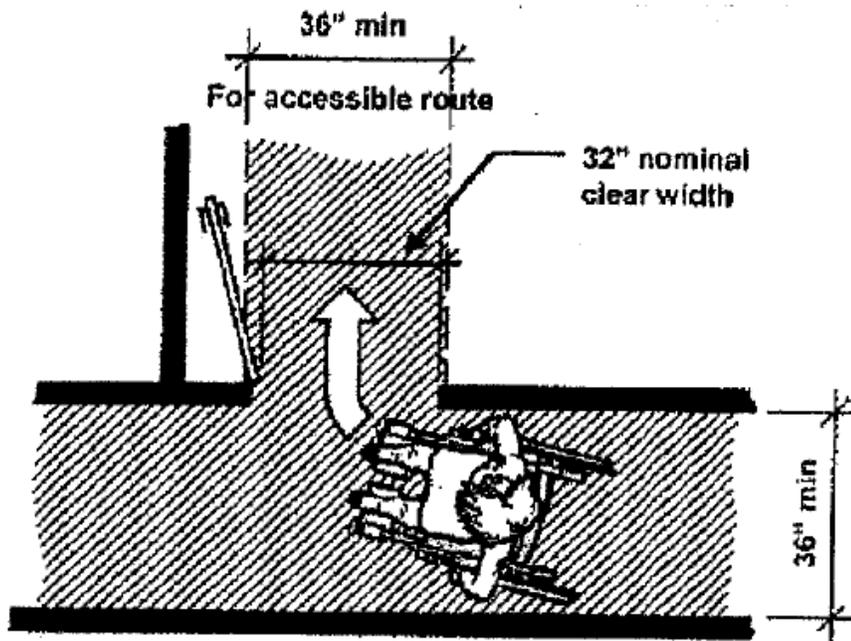
It was not possible to create across-the-board Visitability incentives under the CRA program because the City already offers the maximum abatement term for certain categories of construction and remodeling work. For example, renovation of one and two unit structures (LEED and non-LEED) already receive the maximum term for a CRA abatement under Ohio law. (“LEED” means Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, as certified by the United States Green Building Council.) In addition, the Fair Housing Act already mandates federal accessibility requirements for structures containing four or more residential units that were ready for first occupancy before March 13, 1991.

Keep in mind that remodeling is eligible for a visitability certification bonus only if (1) the remodeled dwelling unit meets Cincinnati Visitability Standards and (2) the remodeling improvements directly enhance the visitability of the structure.

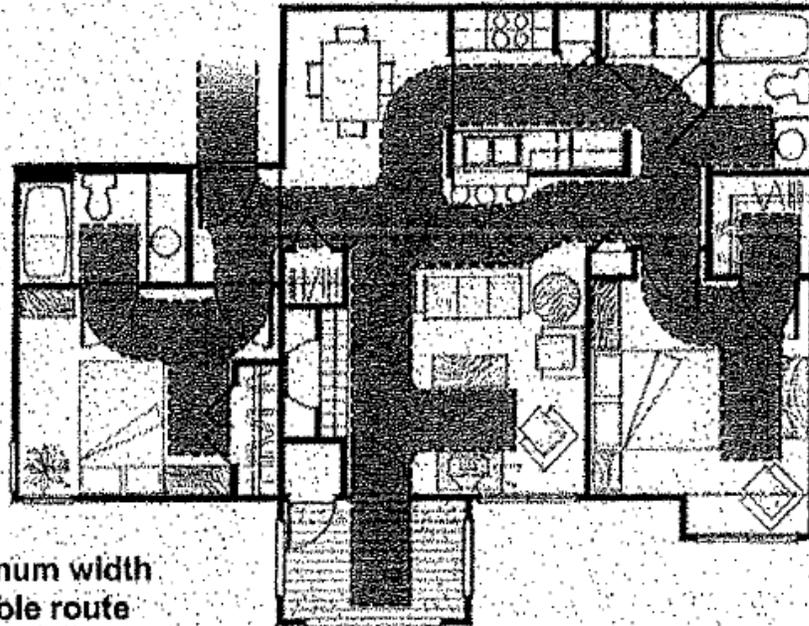
Exhibit A - Illustrations



1. At least one  
no step entrance  
via a visitable path



2. Doors and openings along the visitable route shall have a minimal net clear width of 32".

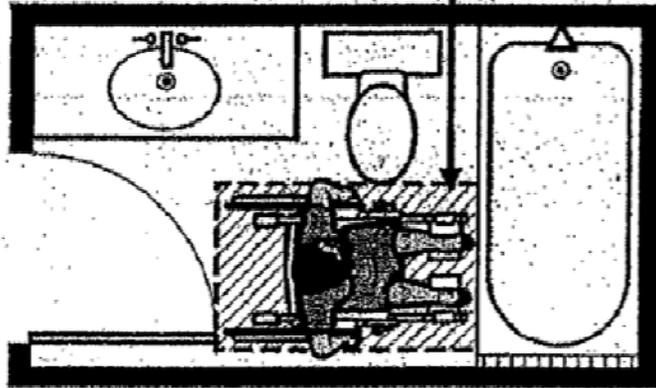


**36" minimum width  
accessible route**

3. Hallways and corridors from the no step entrance to at least one visitable common living space are at least 36" wide.

## Clear Floor Space - Outside Swing of Door

30"x48" outside swing of door



4. A bath, half-bath or powder room on the main floor with clear floor space of at 30" x 48"

Exhibit B – CRA Tax Abatement Visitability Certification Bonus Eligibility Tables

| <b>Single-Family, Two, Three Dwelling-Unit Structure, or Residential Condominium</b> |                |                   |               |                         |               |
|--|----------------|-------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|
|  |                | <b>Renovation</b> |               | <b>New Construction</b> |               |
|  |                | Visitable         | Non-Visitable | Visitable               | Non-Visitable |
| Not LEED Certified   | Max Abatement* | \$275,000         | \$275,000     | \$275,000               | \$275,000     |
|  | Term (years)   | 10                | 10            | 12                      | 10            |
| LEED Certified   | Max Abatement* | \$275,000         | \$275,000     | \$275,000               | \$275,000     |
|  | Term (years)   | 10                | 10            | 15                      | 15            |
| LEED Silver  | Max Abatement* | \$400,000         | \$400,000     | \$400,000               | \$400,000     |
|  | Term (years)   | 10                | 10            | 15                      | 15            |
| LEED Gold  | Max Abatement* | \$562,000         | \$562,000     | \$562,000               | \$562,000     |
|  | Term (years)   | 10                | 10            | 15                      | 15            |
| LEED Platinum  | Max Abatement* | No Limit          | No Limit      | No Limit                | No Limit      |
|  | Term (years)   | 10                | 10            | 15                      | 15            |

\*Abatement applies to improved value only.

| <b>Residential Apartment Structure with Four or More Units</b> |                |                        |               |                         |               |
|--|----------------|------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|
|  |                | <b>Renovation</b>      |               | <b>New Construction</b> |               |
|  |                | Visitable <sup>1</sup> | Non-Visitable | Visitable               | Non-Visitable |
| Not LEED Certified   | Max Abatement* | ≤ 75%                  | ≤ 75%         | ≤ 75%                   | ≤ 75%         |
|  | Term (years)   | 2 to 10                | 0 to 8        | 2 to 10                 | 0 to 8        |
| LEED Certified   | Max Abatement* | ≤ 75%                  | ≤ 75%         | ≤ 75%                   | ≤ 75%         |
|  | Term (years)   | 2 to 10                | 0 to 8        | 2 to 10                 | 0 to 8        |
| LEED Silver  | Max Abatement* | 75%                    | 75%           | 75%                     | 75%           |
|  | Term (years)   | 12                     | 12            | 15                      | 15            |
| LEED Gold  | Max Abatement* | 75%                    | 75%           | 75%                     | 75%           |
|  | Term (years)   | 12                     | 12            | 15                      | 15            |
| LEED Platinum  | Max Abatement* | 75%                    | 75%           | 75%                     | 75%           |
|  | Term (years)   | 12                     | 12            | 15                      | 15            |

\* City maximum abatement on improved value is 100% less 25% payable to Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) under separate Agreement between Applicant and CPS; nets a 75% maximum.

<sup>1</sup> Visitability bonus applies only to residential apartment structures with four or more units ready for first occupancy before March 13, 1991.

| <b>Mixed-Use (Residential and Other Use)</b> |                |                        |               |                         |               |
|--|----------------|------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|---------------|
|  |                | <b>Renovation</b>      |               | <b>New Construction</b> |               |
|  |                | Visitable <sup>1</sup> | Non-Visitable | Visitable <sup>2</sup>  | Non-Visitable |
| Not LEED Certified                           | Max Abatement* | ≤ 75%                  | ≤ 75%         | ≤ 75%                   | ≤ 75%         |
|  | Term (years)   | 2 to 12                | 0 to 12       | 2 to 15                 | 0 to 15       |
| LEED Certified                               | Max Abatement* | ≤ 75%                  | ≤ 75%         | ≤ 75%                   | ≤ 75%         |
|  | Term (years)   | 2 to 12                | 0 to 12       | 2 to 15                 | 0 to 15       |
| LEED Silver                                  | Max Abatement* | 75%                    | 75%           | 75%                     | 75%           |
|  | Term (years)   | 12                     | 12            | 15                      | 15            |
| LEED Gold                                    | Max Abatement* | 75%                    | 75%           | 75%                     | 75%           |
|  | Term (years)   | 12                     | 12            | 15                      | 15            |
| LEED Platinum                                | Max Abatement* | 75%                    | 75%           | 75%                     | 75%           |
|  | Term (years)   | 12                     | 12            | 15                      | 15            |

\* City maximum abatement on improved value is 100% less 25% payable to Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) under separate Agreement between Applicant and CPS; nets a 75% maximum.

<sup>1</sup> Renovation Visitability bonus applies only to residential apartment structures with four or more units ready for first occupancy before March 13, 1991.

<sup>2</sup> New Construction Visitability bonus applies only if the structure contains three or fewer residential units.

| <b>Commercial/Industrial Not Containing Residential Dwelling Units</b> |                |                   |                         |
|--|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
|  |                | <b>Renovation</b> | <b>New Construction</b> |
| Not LEED Certified   | Max Abatement* | ≤ 75%             | ≤ 75%                   |
|  | Term (years)   | 0 to 12           | 0 to 15                 |
| LEED Certified   | Max Abatement* | ≤ 75%             | ≤ 75%                   |
|  | Term (years)   | 0 to 12           | 0 to 15                 |
| LEED Silver  | Max Abatement* | 75%               | 75%                     |
|  | Term (years)   | 12                | 15                      |
| LEED Gold  | Max Abatement* | 75%               | 75%                     |
|  | Term (years)   | 12                | 12                      |
| LEED Platinum  | Max Abatement* | 75%               | 75%                     |
|  | Term (years)   | 12                | 15                      |

\* City maximum abatement on improved value is 100% less 25% payable to Cincinnati Public Schools (CPS) under separate Agreement between Applicant and CPS; nets a 75% maximum. (No Visitability Bonus for purely commercial/industrial projects.)