

2027 Design & Architectural Standards Comments

Draft May 2026

New Construction

G1. Introduction

“Affordability – Improve energy & Resource efficiency to reduce utility costs to the Project and residents...”

Comment: *This is built into the Building Codes – this is a redundant step that OHFA can verify through other documents that are required to submit during the application process.*

Additional Features for 504 Mobility Units

Chart of options

Column A1 – pick one	Column B – pick one	Column C – pick four
Range/cooktop does not exceed nominal 34" in height	Pull-out drawers or pull-out pot organizers in multiple base cabinets	Cooktop adjacent to sink (on contiguous counter, no more than 4ft away measured edge to edge)
Oven with side-opening door	Wall oven	Full height pantry
Auto operator at unit entry	Roll-under cooktop	Side-by-side refrigerator
Entry door with fob/card reader, key pad, or lock box for easier caregiver entry	Kitchen sink with "enhanced reach range" as defined in ANSI A117.1-2017 Section 606.5 (and exceptions 1 & 2)	Space designated for wheelchair charging in appropriate location with appropriate electrical outlets
Stair lift (in multi-story units)	Pull-down storage in multiple upper cabinets	Ice and water dispenser within reach range
	Eat-at peninsula or island in kitchen with overhang and room for at least two wheelchairs	Swing-up grab bar on open side of toilet, meeting ANSI A117.1-2017 609.8 for structural strength
Column A2 – pick one (whole building)	Auto operator at all common area trash chute room doors	Dishwasher
More than one elevator serving building	Remote control of thermostat by resident	Storage in bathroom (e.g. for healthcare supplies)
Permanent generator that provides power to elevator	Double acting hinge, pocket or barn door at all passage doors	Manual pull to close door on all passage doors within unit and any exterior doors
Playground or splash pad designed for wheelchair-inclusive play	42" wide leaf for all passage doors	Grab bars installed at toilets and tubs/showers
Casement windows with all operating hardware within reach range	Washer/dryer by owner in unit meeting the project's chosen accessibility standard for Section 504	Closets with no doors; install curtain rods instead (rehab must remove any residual door hardware)
		Pull-out work surface near the oven, refrigerator or microwave

Comment: *“Most of these options will be very burdensome and costly for rehabs. We respect OHFA’s intent to add additional features in mobility units but are often space-constrained in rehabs. The additional cost will also mean that sacrifices will need to be made in other units or across the whole project.”*

N3.2 Building Design

N3.3.4 All affordable Units must include adequate storage space for unit residents:

N3.4.2 At least 2 LF of full-height shelving in hall or bathroom

Comment: *Will a bathroom “pantry” cabinet count?”*

N3.9. Durability

N3.9.2.5 Windows and exterior doors must meet at minimum Version 6 (V6) Energy rating for climate zone 5.

Comment: *“Ohio is split between zone 4 and 5. Please clarify that the appropriate zone for the project should be used.”*

N3.9.2.5.3 Storefront Windows that are not typically Energy Star rated should meet the U-value requirements for Energy Star V6 if possible.

Comment: *“This is costly and not standard. We request that this requirement be eliminated.”*

N3.9.2.6 Cabinet materials must be in accordance with the requirements of ANSI A161.1 “Minimum Construction Performance Standards for Kitchen Cabinets” and must also have solid wood doors/fronts.

Comment: *“We request that OFHA add Wood style with plywood panel back in for cabinet doors”*

Rehabilitation

R4. Sustainability

In addition to meeting all energy efficiency requirements as stated in the Ohio Building Code or Residential Code, all OHFA funded projects must meet the requirements of one of the below energy efficiency or green building certification.

Comment: *“Why is this only required on rehab projects and not New Construction. It can be more burdensome for Moderate rehab projects. Please clarify”*

R6. OHFA Design Requirements

R4.3.4 All Affordable units must include adequate storage space for unit residents:

R4.3.4.1 At least 6 LF of hanging storage for Efficiency and 1-bedroom units, plus an additional 4 LF for every additional bedroom

R4.3.4.2 At least 2 LF of full-height shelving in a hall or bathroom.

Comment: *“This requirement is costly and burdensome to some Moderate rehabs, if these closets are not existing. Further, with historic rehabs the existing floorplan may not allow for new storage spaces. We do our best to include adequate storage but would appreciate the linear foot specificity of this requirement being removed.”*

R4.9. Durability

R4.9.2 Specific materials designated as historic by the State Historic Preservation Office of Ohio (SHPO) as addressed in writing by SHPO are exempt from individual requirements. The latter must be provided at application and include each item specifically addressed to meet this exemption.

Comment: “SHPO does not provide documentation stating that specific materials are historic. Specific information about the project and the treatment of various fixtures and finishes is provided to SHPO in the historic Part 2 application. Often SHPO and NPS take months to respond to the Part 2, so the project team does not have approvals or denials of specific treatment until much later than the proposal applications and thus design exception requests are due. Project teams can commit to working with SHPO and OHFA on historic items but this timing will not line up with applications and exception requests.

R4.9.3.5 New and replacement windows and exterior doors must meet at minimum Version 6 (V6) Energy Star rating for climate zone 5.

Comment: “Ohio is split between zone 4 and 5. Clarify that the appropriate zone for the project should be used.”

R4.9.3.5.3 Storefront windows that are not typically Energy Star rated should meet the U-value requirements for Energy Star V6 if possible. Any existing storefront windows must be in good condition with the frames intact and the thermal seals unbroken.

Comment: “Not Standard and costly”

R4.9.3.5 Cabinet materials must be in accordance with the requirements of ANSI A161.1 “Minimum Construction Performance Standards for Kitchen Cabinets” and must also have solid wood doors/fronts”

Comment: “We request that OFHA add Wood style with plywood panel back in for cabinet doors”

R4.10. Building Systems

R4.10.2.4.1 Duct kits may not block controls or windows.

Comment: “Many PTAC’s and duct kits are existing in front of windows. There would not be a good way to fix this.”

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1. Architectural Submission and Review Process

Submission and Correspondence

All communications related to the architectural review, including notification of submission of architectural plans, should be sent to arch@ohiohome.org. State the project name as it appears in the AHFA/GFA and OHFA tracking number in the subject line, and copy the OHFA architectural staff, and the OHFA underwriting analyst on the email. Architectural plans must be submitted with the project's application via OHFA's File Transfer Site. Notify OHFA if there are any changes to the contacts after submission and send Change of Contacts Form to the underwriting analyst and arch@ohiohome.org

Comment: *"This section is very unclear. In addition to submitting plans with the proposal and final applications via the FTS, are we also to send them to this email address? Who do we copy from the architectural staff? It seems more efficient for plans to be submitted with the applications and then distributed to the OHFA Architectural team for review, or if need be, submitted to arch@ohiohome.org and then distributed by OHFA amongst the architectural team."*

Review Process

...After submitting 80 percent drawings, applicant should expect to receive a review letter from OHFA architectural staff prior to the indicated date of financial closing. If the review identifies any items of noncompliance, the development team must reply to OHFA with a response to each comment and corrected drawings, specifications or forms as applicable...

Comment: *"We strongly request feedback on drawings well in advance of the project's debt and equity closing, especially if it will have budget impact. We would appreciate if OHFA would implement a standardized timeline for when their review comments will be shared. "Before closing" is too vague as budgets need to be finalized and permits need to be issued well in advance of closing."*

Required Documents – Preliminary Architectural Submission

At minimum, the proposal application architectural submission must include all of the following:

- The Design and Construction Features Form (DCF), including Construction Certification, completed, signed and submitted as a pdf.
- Scope of Work form (SoW)

Comment: *"We suggest that reference to the Scope of Work form be removed from this document. It is already in the QAP as a separate submission item and does not come from*

the design team typically. Removing the reference will also remove any confusion and lack of consistency, especially as the Scope of Work form does not currently apply to 4% new construction projects.

- Site Plan
 - o Include adjacent parcel information
 - o Clearly show the context of the neighborhood where property will exist

Comment: *“The reference to context of the neighborhood is very vague and unclear. The project team should be responsible for relaying what is part of the project only.”*

Required Documents – Final Architectural Submission

- Completed verifications, as applicable, that the drawings comply with accessibility, energy efficiency and/or green building requirements required for the development or committed to in the application for funding.

Comment: *“These verifications are not industry standard and should not be an OHFA requirement. Projects go through extensive reviews by permit officials and green reviewers to ensure compliance. OHFA does not need to oversee these elements also.”*

- Documentation that all items required to be completed per Phase I or II environmental site assessment, or per applicable environmental review performed by OHFA have been or will be completed during construction.

Comment: *“We strongly request that OHFA remove this requirement, as this information is not pertinent to construction drawings. Project teams go through extensive coordination and oversight by other teams to ensure compliance with environmental regulations.”*

- Draft legal agreement detailing costs & maintenance of common space (including percentages to be paid by each condo unit if applicable), parking availability, air rights, default remedies, commercial uses, and tenant selection.

Comment: *“These legal agreements will not be available at final application and are reviewed by other funders extensively to ensure fair divisions of responsibility and cost.”*

- Drawing sets should provide documentation of the project meeting all design requirements of the DAS, and must include all of the following, each to a level of 80% completion or greater.

Comment: *“This requirement is vague and unclear. This is what the plans are doing – documenting the design. Additionally, Historic features are not under OHFA’s purview and should not be denoted on the construction drawings. Those are worked through with SHPO and NPS for any projects receiving historic tax credits.”*

3. Construction Progress & Monitoring

Construction Monitoring

Additionally, for all OHFA projects, OHFA requires the submission of any change orders for any major building systems that do not have substantially similar material or solution....

Comment: *“This is vague and unclear. We strongly encourage OHFA not to ask to review change orders – these are approved by many other layers of funding.*

Construction Completion

In addition, the following documents are required to be submitted to OHFA with the request for HDAP project closeout and/or issuance of Form 8609:

Comment: *“Some of these items are not currently submitted with the 8609 request (like the G704 and O&M manuals). It is exceptionally confusing when different OHFA documents relay different requirements. Our suggestion would be to remove this section from the DAPM altogether and leave these submission requirements in the documents that already relay this information.*