

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
2025 Legislative Session

Bill No. CB-035-2025

Chapter No. _____

Proposed and Presented by Council Member Ivey

Introduced by _____

Co-Sponsors _____

Date of Introduction _____

BILL

1 AN ACT concerning

2 Universal Design for Housing - 2025 Revisions

3 For the purpose of removing and re-lettering certain definitions; providing for amending a
 4 certain definition; clarifying that all site plans, under certain circumstances, covered under the
 5 Site Plan definition in this Division, are approved for a certain exemption; providing for
 6 revisions to certain design elements; providing for a certain width for certain exterior door
 7 entrances; providing for a certain width for certain lead walks; providing for a certain width for
 8 certain hallways on the accessible level; providing for a certain width for certain doorways on
 9 the accessible level; providing for a certain width for certain interior hallways in townhouse and
 10 two-over-two units; providing for a certain width for certain interior doorways in townhouse and
 11 two-over-two units; providing that a waiver shall not be granted under certain circumstances as a
 12 condition of approval of a Detailed Site Plan, Special Exception, or a Zoning Map Amendment;
 13 and generally regarding Universal Design elements for certain newly constructed residential
 14 housing dwelling units.

15 BY repealing and reenacting with amendments:

16 SUBTITLE 4. BUILDING.

17 Sections 4-356, 4-357, 4-358,

18 4-359, [and] 4-364[,], and 4-365,

19 The Prince George's County Code

20 (2023 Edition; 2024 Supplement).

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED by the County Council of Prince George's County, Maryland, that Sections 4-356, 4-357, 4-358, 4-359, [and] 4-364 and 4-365 of the Prince George's County Code be and the same are hereby repealed and reenacted with the following amendments:

SUBTITLE 4. BUILDING.

DIVISION 6. UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR HOUSING.

Sec. 4-356. Universal Design: Definitions.

[(a)] **Accepted by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission** means an application that is submitted and accepted by the Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement and distributed to all agencies for review.]

[(b)] (a) **Accessibility** means a site, building, facility, or portion thereof that complies with the ADA Standards for Accessible Design | ADA.gov, IRC requires compliance with IBC chapter 11 when 4 or more dwellings. International Residential Code (IRC) - CHAPTER 3 (iccsafe.org), and IBC – meet all of chapter 11, INTERNATIONAL BUILDING CODE (IBC) | ICC DIGITAL CODES (iccsafe.org).

[(c)] (b) **Accessible Range** - For reach ranges, ADAAG 308.1, there is forward reach, side reach. ADA Standards for Accessible Design | ADA.gov

[(d)] (c) **Accessible Route** - Accessible routes shall comply with Chapter 4. 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design | ADA.gov, and IBC – a continuous, unobstructed path that complies with chapter 11.

[(e)] **Approved by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission** refers to accepted by the building official, per the IRC.]

[(f)] (d) **Disability** is a physical condition that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities.

[(g)] (e) **Dwellings covered by the design requirements** means that the public or common use areas of the building can be approached, entered, and used by individuals with physical disabilities.

[(h)] (f) **Knobs** - handles require more grip strength to grab and turn the handle.

[(i)] (g) **Levers** - handles can be more easily used regardless of the user's grip strength as levers can be pushed.

[(j)] (h) **Site Impracticality** means of evaluating individual buildings and sites with

difficult terrain.

[(k)] (i) **Site plan**, for purposes of this Division, shall include a [p] Permit [s] Site [p] Plan, a [d] Detailed [s] Site [p] Plan, a [s] Specific [d] Design [p] Plan, [and] a [s] Special [p] Permit [s] Site [P] Plan, a Special Exception Site Plan, and a Planned Development Basic Plan.

[(l)] (j) **Slip Resistant Floors** mean accessible surfaces must be slip resistant to minimize hazards to people with disabilities, especially those who are ambulatory or semi-ambulatory or who use canes, crutches, and other walking aids. Flooring designed with material properties to help reduce slipperiness and increase traction.

[(m)] (k) **Two-over-two's "Dwelling, two-family,"** is a building containing two dwelling units. For the purpose of this Division, two-over-two's are units stacked one above the other in a vertical configuration, sharing common vertical solid walls extending from the grade to the roof, or horizontal floors and ceilings. The building typologies commonly referred to as two-over-two dwellings or stacked dwelling units are examples of two-family dwellings.

[(n)] (l) **Universal Design** is the design of buildings, products, or environments so that they can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability, or disability.

[(o)] (m) **Usability** [refers to the ease of access and/or uses within and around a dwelling unit.] means the public or common use areas of the building can be approached, entered, and used by individuals with physical disabilities.

Sec. 4-357. - Universal Design: Application; Exemptions.

(a) With the exception of exemptions and waivers granted, as set forth in this Division, this Division shall apply to all new single-family attached, single-family detached, two-family, two-over-two's, three-family, and multifamily residential dwelling units constructed in Prince George's County on and after January 1, 2026.

(b) Dwelling units for which a building permit has been issued, or for which a site plan application has been approved pursuant to Subtitle 27 of the Prince George's County Code prior to January 1, 2026, as set forth in Section 4-357(a) above, shall be exempt from the provisions of this Division. This would include phased development plans for which the Department of Permitting, Inspections and Enforcement has approved Plans On File (building permit plans submitted by the developer and approved by the Department) for various types of homes in the development prior to January 1, 2026. For, any [Any Detailed Site Plan] site plan approved

before January 1, 2026, the Plans On File subject to the [Detailed Site Plan] site plan do not have to be updated to comply with this Section.

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Sec. 4-358. Universal Design: Exterior/Entrance.

(a) There shall be a step-free route of travel to at least one step-free entrance to the dwelling unit. Entrance to the unit by way of a garage would qualify as an acceptable route. Multifamily dwelling units located within a building that are above the first floor of the building and are only accessible via stairway are exempt from this requirement.

(b) The door of this entrance shall be [have] a minimum of 36-inches wide [clearance] and shall meet all applicable building requirements.

(c) Exterior lead walks shall be structurally firm and slip resistant with a smooth uniform surface.

(d) Lead walks shall be [have] a minimum of 42-inch-wide [clearance] from the point of arrival to the primary or garage entrance and any slope should be consistent with all applicable requirements.

Sec. 4-359. Universal Design: Interior Accessible Route.

(a) At least one accessible route shall connect all spaces and elements that are a part of the accessible entry level floor of the dwelling unit.

(b) The kitchen shall be on the accessible level and on the accessible route.

(c) Hallways on the accessible level shall have a 42-inch-wide minimum [clearance] width measured from wall to wall.

(d) Doorways on the accessible route shall have a minimum door width of [clearance] 36-inches and all doors shall contain levers for accessible access.

(e) Interior thresholds with levels which exceed ¼-inch high, shall be beveled, with a slope not steeper than one-inch rise to a 2-inch run (1:2).

(f) Accessible routes shall have flooring that allows resistance-free use of a wheelchair or similar mobility aid or device.

(g) At least one separate room on the accessible entry level floor of the dwelling unit shall include architectural or design features that include but are not limited to a door that closes and a window to ensure egressibility.

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Sec. 4-364. Townhouses; Two-Over-Two's, Applicable Universal Design Requirements.

Notwithstanding the exemptions set forth in Section 4-357(f) and Section 4-357(g) of this Division, only the following universal design requirements in this Division shall be required for townhouses and two over two's:

(a) Universal Design: Interior Hallways, Doorways, Stairs.

(1) Hallways shall have a 42-inch-wide minimum [clearance] width measured from wall to wall.

(2) Doorways shall have a minimum width [clearance] of 36-inches and all doors shall contain levers for accessible access.

(3) Interior stairs shall be able to accommodate the installation of a chair lift, with an electrical outlet within four feet of the stairs.

(b) Universal Design: Bathroom.

(1) Continuous wall reinforcement at toilet and bathroom fixtures shall be included to enable easy retrofitting with grab bar(s). All wall reinforcement shall be capable of resisting shear and bending forces of a minimum of 250 pounds.

(2) Controls on sinks, tubs, showers, and toilets shall be easily accessible or usable by persons with disabilities.

(c) Universal Design: Smoke Detectors and Fire and Carbon Monoxide Alarms. Audible and visual smoke detectors, fire alarms, and carbon monoxide alarms shall be installed pursuant to the IBC.

Sec. 4-365. - Waiver Provision.

(a) (1) The builder must use best efforts to meet the requirements of this Division Meaning efforts to the maximum extent practicable were made to meet the requirement(s). A builder that indicates that they cannot satisfy the step-free route of travel to at least one step-free entrance to the dwelling unit requirement, pursuant to Section 4-358 of this Division, shall request a waiver.

(2) A waiver shall not be granted if any provision of this Division is required as a condition of approval for a Detailed Site Plan, a Special Exception or a Zoning Map Amendment.

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SECTION 2. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that the provisions of this Act are hereby declared to be severable; and, in the event that any section, subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, sentence, clause, phrase, or word of this Act is declared invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the remaining words, phrases, clauses, sentences, subparagraphs, paragraphs, subsections, or sections of this Act, since the same would have been enacted without the incorporation in this Act of any such invalid or unconstitutional word, phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph, subparagraph, subsection, or section.

SECTION 3. BE IT FURTHER ENACTED that this Act shall take effect forty-five (45) calendar days after it becomes law.

Adopted this ____ day of _____, 2025.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE
GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

BY: _____
Edward P. Burroughs, III
Council Chair

ATTEST:

Donna J. Brown
Clerk of the Council

APPROVED:

DATE: _____ BY: _____
Tara H. Jackson
Acting County Executive