Strategies for Home Modification and How to Access Financing

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Strategies for Home Modification and How to Access Financing

Minnesota Gerontological Society
Webinar
November 12, 2019
Today’s review will cover...

• Home access remodeling
  • Benefits, challenges
  • Funding challenges, techniques
• Resources
  • Financing options grid
  • Publications

Terms – for reference

• Accessible design – responds to reduced capabilities
• Universal design –
  • Isn’t another name for accessible design
  • Not just for seniors or those with disabilities
  • Following it may not make a place fully accessible
  • Does overlap with accessible design
Terms - for reference, con’t.

• UD expands conventional design range - benefits more of the population, e.g.,
  • Children, temporarily disabled; those very short or tall
  • Can benefit many others in the process
• Visitable design – goal of installing set of core accessible features
  • For getting in and out of home, using the bathroom
    • (“Access Very Lite”)
• Will focus on accessibility today...

Home access remodeling benefits

• Respond to livability, safety issues for those with reduced capabilities
• Features can promote
  • Aging in place
  • Fall prevention
  • Increased independence
• May be helpful to other residents, visitors as well
Home access remodeling examples

(Whatever’s conventionally designed can be redesigned...)

• Garage, drive, walk repair
• Stairs - repair, gentler step run, rails
• Entrance ramp or berm
• Lifting equipment – outside or in
  • Chair lift, platform lift (vertical, inclined), elevator
• Floor covering, circulation changes – e.g., door widening, change how operates, handle/hinge changes

Home access remodeling examples, con’t.

• Bath – grab bars, storage changes, comfort-height toilet, shower stall, hand-held controls, fold-down bench, sit-/roll-under sink
• Kitchen – storage changes, sit-/roll-under sink, change appliance style/controls/positioning, better workspaces, etc.
• Lighting - upgraded, different style
• More stable heating, cooling
• “Smart” electronic features, controls
Access remodeling challenges

- Interdisciplinary field – complications because
  - Many professions involved, none “own” it
  - With no one “in charge” - no
    - Trade association, credentialing
    - Policy outreach/advocacy
    - Coordinated training
    - Consistent design standards

Access remodeling challenges, con’t.

- Homes should be in good overall condition before considering access remodeling
  - Particular challenge – homes of modest-income owners
    - Often deferred maintenance also requires attention
  - Remember the rehab “oh oh” factor...!!
Access remodeling challenges, con’t.

• Should tailor home access features to individual needs
  • Don’t follow access building codes or ADA!!!!
  • May have to balance against needs of others in household
• Requires familiarity with
  • Ability, disability
  • Operating characteristics of mobility equipment
• As much as possible, build in “capacity”
  • Accommodate needs changing over time

Access remodeling challenges, con’t.

• Tailoring complicated by “generations” (150 years?) of existing housing, e.g.,
  • Victorian/Romantic period – Gothic, Queen Anne, Italianate
  • Late 1800s – early mid-20th Century – foursquares, bungalows, Craftsmen/Mission, Tudor
  • Mid-20th Century - Colonial Revival, mid-century Modern, mid-century Minimal
  • Late 20th Century - ranch/rambler, split-level, split-entry
Access remodeling challenges, con’t.

• Early 21st Century – “starter castles”, Craftsmen revivals
• Each
  • Has typical layouts, number of stories, square footages, etc.
  • Results in – unique remodeling challenges
    • Affect feasibility, costs!!

• Further complexity - access work involves using
  • Conventional products in unconventional ways
  • Unconventional/specialized products
• All the above often results in knowledge gap
  • In properly designing, installing even basic features
  • Gap may include even building officials and contractors...
Ideas for addressing challenges

• Research information sources on key features, how they’re typically installed, equipment, e.g.,
  • Books, other materials
  • Web sites
  • Others who’ve had work done
  • Product vendors
  • Advocacy groups, members

Ideas for addressing challenges, con’t.

• Look into
  • Expertise, past projects of persons providing assessment and/or construction services
    • Past client referrals, particularly those with similar circumstances
  • Knowledge, experience level of volunteers who may assist
Access remodeling financing challenges

- No silver bullet – no single $$s source to rely on
- Complexity due to $$s coming from...
  - Federal system of government
  - Public/private/nonprofit sectors
  - National to local levels for organizations
- Has always been, will stay that way...
- Complexity also due to
  - “No-strings” vs. “payback” vs. self-funding $$s
  - Household income/assets/affordability span

Access remodeling financing strategies

- No-strings/payback $$s – most scarce, in greatest demand
- Typical sources – e.g., public agencies, foundations, nonprofits, donations, crowdsourcing, fundraising
- Typical uses
  - Outright grant, no obligation
    - Usually for those with very little income/affordability
  - “Deferred loan” – grant-like $$s; may require repayment
Access remodeling financing strategies, con’t.

• Many deferred loan strategies, e.g. –
  • Reduced sliding % owed over time if terms triggered
  • Obligation may remain constant until end of term
  • May be no end of term
  • Forgiveness based on occupant age, disability status, etc.

Access remodeling financing strategies, con’t.

• Liens typically put on title to enforce deferred loans
  • Repayments typically recycled into more loans
• Another use for no-strings $$s – make loans with interest/periodic payment to
  • Risky borrowers
  • For risky locations
• Further use for no-strings $$s – stretch borrowed $$s
Access remodeling financing strategies, con’t.

• No-strings $$s can modify payback loans
  • Interest rate “buydown” - $$s pledged to drop rate some %
  • Principal reduction - $$s pledged to pay off some part of the loan

• Borrower benefit can be smaller payments, shorter loan term

Access remodeling financing strategies, con’t.

• Options to consider when don’t qualify for grants, deferred loans
  • Range of lending products, e.g.,
    • Improvement or home equity line of credit/HELOC loans
    • Personal loans, loans against investments (e.g., CDs)
    • Reverse mortgage if other major needs to tap equity
  • Any coverage in long-term care insurance policy
Access remodeling financing strategies, con’t.

• Divert annual income
• Cashing in
  • Savings, CDs, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, index funds, selling real property, etc.
• Loan from life insurance policy
• Volunteer help – labor, materials, $$s
  • From family, friends, neighbors, neighborhood/community organizations, many other groups, etc.

Funding grid

• “Bucket” organizing categories
• Labelled “draft” – will update, put on website early next year
• Will speak to briefly - explore independently
Housing/community development

• US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development Community Development Block Grant program
  • Entitlement Communities, Small Cities Development Program
• US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development HOME Program
• US Dept. of Agriculture Rural Housing Services
  • Section 504 loans/grants
  • Rural Housing Preservation grants

Housing, community development, con’t.

• MN Housing - Rehabilitation Loan Program, Fix Up Fund
• Housing and redevelopment authorities
• Housing/neighborhood agencies, e.g.,
  • Habitat for Humanity
  • Rebuilding Together
  • Neighborhood Housing Services
Lending

• Unsecured loans
• Secured loans
• Home improvement/equity loans
• Home equity lines of credit
• Mortgage refinancing

Lending, con’t.

• Reverse mortgages
• Remodeler financing
• Federal Housing Administration –
  • Title I, 203K loans
• Community Reinvestment Act
• Federal Home Loan Bank Board Affordable Housing Program
Social services, health care

• US/MN Dept. of Human Services Medicaid/Medical Assistance Home and Community-Based Waivers
• Medicare Advantage insurance
• US Administration for Community Living Money Follows the Person program
• US Social Security Title XX Social Services Block Grants
• US Dept. of Veterans Affairs
• US/MN Dept. of Employment and Economic Development Vocational Rehabilitation

Social services, health care, con’t.

• MN Centers for Independent Living
• MN System of Technology to Achieve Results
• MN Dept. of Labor and Industry Workers' Compensation
• MN Dept. of Public Safety Crime Victims' Reparation Board
• Insurance - health, long-term care, life
• US Administration on Aging - Title III-B services, Title III-E
Civic, advocacy, religious, trade groups; charitable gambling proceeds; foundations

- Disability advocacy groups
- Community service organizations
- Religious groups
- Allied profession trade groups
- Building supply stores
- Vocational technical schools

Civic, advocacy, religious, trade groups; charitable gambling proceeds; foundations, con’t.

- Boys'/girls' groups
- Retiree groups
- Business employee volunteer support
- Business charitable gambling proceeds
Tax benefits

• IRS personal income tax medical capital expense deduction
• IRS capital gains tax
• IRS business tax deduction
• MN ramps and lifts sales tax exemption
• MN property tax exemption for disabled veterans
• MN senior citizens' property tax deferral

Self-funding

• Annual income
• Cash in
  • Savings
  • Certificates of deposit
  • Stocks
  • Bonds
  • Mutual funds
  • Index funds
  • Real estate, etc.
Self-funding, con’t.

• Volunteer help
  • Family
  • Friends
  • Neighbors
  • Groups IDd earlier, e.g.,
    • Community service
    • Religious, etc.

Resources - National Center on Supportive Housing and Home Modification

• [www.homemods.org](http://www.homemods.org)
• At U of Southern California – Davis School of Gerontology
• Prime national resource on home access remodeling
• Provides training - online certificate series
• Website –
  • Library
  • Web links
  • Video list product information
Resources – National Center, con’t.

• Website, con’t.
  • Product information
  • National Directory of Home Modification and Repair Resources
  • The Lifetime Home – room-by-room interactive resource on how to make a home safer and more supportive

Resources – National Center, con’t.

• US Administration for Community Living grant – “Promoting Aging in Place by Enhancing Access to Home Modifications”
• National Center in partnership with
  • National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
  • Advancing States
  • National Council on Aging
  • Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access/SUNY Buffalo
Resources – National Center, con’t.

- Will produce
  - Database of home modification resources in each state
  - Training and tech assistance for AAAs to promote home mods
  - Consumer awareness strategies

“Wet” bathroom

Resources - Publications

- List of useful books, etc.
- Some may be available for Web download
- Older documents still can have timely information
- Check with local/regional libraries for hard copies
- Many on Amazon, some in local bookstores

Publications - Accessibility, Universal Design, Adaptive Homes


Thanks for the opportunity to present!

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Questions or Comments:
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Next Webinar: December 18, 2019, Noon - 1:00 pm

Self Advocacy Project for Persons Receiving Long Term Support Services

By: Jane Brink, Self Advocacy Specialist,
Office of Ombudsman for Long-Term Care