

Universal Design and Visitability Program

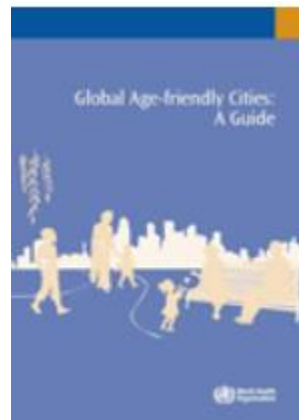
**Tom Polk, Planning and Development
Services**

**Lee Hayes Byron, UF/IFAS Extension and
Sustainability**

December 8, 2015

- **Board Action**
- **What are Universal Design and Visitability?**
- **Why Does it Matter?**
- **Cost**
- **Proposed Voluntary UD and Visitability Program**

- **May 24, 2006 –Resolution 2006-120, “Community for A Lifetime” initiative**
- **October 22, 2014 –Seniors Advisory Council Annual Report**
- **May 6, 2015 –World Health Organization Age-Friendly Communities Network Proclamation**



Recommendation

- **To adopt a resolution relating to a voluntary Universal Design and Visitability Program for residential housing units.**

Universal Design

- Enables occupants to “age in place”
- A healthier, more accessible and productive home environment
- An attractive, stylish space that everyone, regardless of age, size, or ability, can live in or visit

What are Universal Design and Visitability?



Visitability

- **Lesser Standard**
- **Ensures that everyone, regardless of mobility, will be able to at least visit a house and use the washroom**

What are Universal Design and Visitability?



Sarasota County is unique:

- **3rd highest median age of large counties in U.S.**
- **Median age: 53.1 years**
- **31.7% of population over 65 years of age vs. 18% statewide**
- **Projected to increase to 38% by 2040**

Not Just Seniors:

- **In 2010, 35.1 million U.S. households had one or more people with a disability.**
- **More than half of US homes will at some time have a disabled person visiting them.**
- **Sarasota County: 18% of residents in 2013 had a disability**

Benefits of UD & Visitability

- **Increase social sustainability & connections**
- **Maintain dignity and independence**
- **Plan for the future**
- **Reduce premature institutionalization**
- **Reduce health care expenses**

- **Low costs when part of initial design**
 - Larger doors
 - Open plan vs. hallways
 - No-step entry
 - Change in cabinet design
- **Retrofits can be expensive**

- **Incentive Program**
- **Voluntary participation by contractors and developers**
- **Certification of residential units that meet standards in checklists:**
 - **Visitability**
 - **Universal Design**



Incentives for Participation

- **Visitability**
 - Recognition
 - Certification decal
 - Eligibility for Award
- **Universal Design**
 - Recognition
 - Certification decal
 - Eligibility for Award
 - Fast Track Permitting



- **Encourage builders to construct accessible housing**
- **Educate the community**
- **Simple implementation: plans review and inspection**
- **Low cost: no additional budget needed**
- **Not required by federal laws**
- **Other communities have similar programs or requirements**

- **Reviewed and supported by the Seniors Advisory Council and Development Services Advisory Council**
- **Supported by Manatee Sarasota Building Industry Association**
- **Reviewed by other stakeholders**

Recommendation

- **To adopt a resolution relating to a voluntary Universal Design and Visitability Program for residential housing units.**

Discussion and Questions?