

Housing Standards Guide

The City of Columbia Housing Division “Housing Standards Guide”: HOME edition 2022

This document is provided for use by Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs), sub-recipients, developers, contractors, homeowners and/or their respective agents to help in better understanding the guidelines that must be followed as a condition of securing HOME funding through the City of Columbia Community Development Department (City). This document covers the minimum construction / rehabilitation requirements for HOME funded City programs. Certain non-essential items may not qualify for funding under this program. The City reserves the right to determine which items are non-essential and deny funding for those items.

The intention of City housing programs is to promote the rehabilitation of existing housing and to encourage the construction of new housing. All housing utilizing HOME funding should be constructed and/or rehabilitated to the highest of construction standards. Use of energy saving materials and techniques are highly encouraged. All new construction and rehabilitation projects must meet current State of SC and City of Columbia building codes, ordinances, and zoning requirements as applicable to type of work performed and as enforced by The City of Columbia Planning & Development Services. The City of Columbia’s latest adopted version of the International Property Maintenance Code shall serve as a minimum standard requirement for all existing housing. Participating contractor must meet licensing and certification requirements as set forth on the “Contractor Information Form” furnished by the City. Contractor must also meet federal lead-based paint certification requirements whenever working on existing property that has tested positive for lead-based paint as defined at 24 CFR part 35. All funding is contingent upon approval by the City loan committee. Applicants should make any construction contracts and/or outside agency agreements contingent upon approval by the City of Columbia Community Development Department Loan Committee.

All construction related activities performed must be compliant with all applicable codes, ordinances [to include zoning], regulations, laws, and other applicable requirements per Federal, State, and local governments. Federal requirements shall include but not be limited to: property standards at 24 CFR part 92 subpart F [§92.251], lead-based paint requirements at 24 CFR part 35 and 40 CFR part 745, accessibility requirements at 24 CFR part 8 and 28 CFR parts 35 & 36 [as applicable]; multi-family dwellings as defined at 24 CFR 100.201 must meet design and construction requirements at 24 CFR 100.205; all HOME funded projects must meet Uniform Physical Condition Standards [UPCS] pursuant to 24 CFR 5.705. All housing projects of a building with more than four rental units, must include installation of broadband infrastructure as defined in 24 CFR 5.100

unless the City determines an exception is warranted in accordance with §92.508(a)(3)(iv). For multifamily rental housing rehabilitation projects of 26 or more total units, a capital needs assessment of the project must be performed to determine all work that will be performed along with the long-term physical needs of the project. Upon completion, all assisted units shall be decent, safe, sanitary, and in good repair as described in Federal regulation 24 CFR 5.703 and must meet all requirements listed in these standards. Rental housing units must be maintained to meet these standards throughout the City designated affordability period with the following additional conditions in place:

- a. All rental housing units must be free of all health and safety defects throughout affordability period.
- b. All Life-threatening [LT] deficiencies as determined by City Staff utilizing HUD's Uniform Physical Condition Standards (UPCS) inspection format, shall be corrected by the owner within 72 hours of discovery and/or notice.
- c. All non- life threatening [NLT] deficiencies as determined by City Staff utilizing HUD's UPCS inspection format, shall be corrected by the owner within thirty days of discovery and/or notice.

The City reserves the right to make the final determination on matters of program compliance as it relates to these housing standards.

Definitions:

Acceptable-	in a condition that is favorable to all parties involved including the City.
Defective/ Defects -	in a condition unlike that which was original at time of construction; not working properly or missing parts that are needed for a complete unit; not in a “finished out” condition;
Deteriorated-	in a state of disrepair; not structurally sound; rotten; not “finished out”;
Excessively Damaged-	damaged to a point where pavement is separated ½” or more in any direction.
Finished out-	in a condition that is favorable to all parties involved including the City; in like new condition; in a condition that is widely accepted as complete in the construction industry;
Free-and-clear /free of -	not containing; absent of;
Functioning Properly -	working in a manner consistent with that which it was originally designed to operate;
Good working Order -	working in a manner consistent with that which it was originally designed to operate;
Good condition-	in like new condition;
Like new Condition -	in a condition that is favorable to all parties involved including the City; functioning properly; free of defects; good working order;
Notable-	obvious; visible; apparent;
Originally Designed/ Manufactured	in like new condition and working in a manner as was originally constructed to operate;
Over spanned-	exceeding an acceptable length as determined using standard engineering design practices;
Patchwork-	any work where joints, seams, or any other types of intersections of materials are noticeable to the naked eye from a distance of 5’-0” from the area in question [not to include obvious joints at inside and outside corners].
Stacked Masonry unit-	masonry unit installed atop another masonry unit without installing a continuous mortar bed between the units
Structure-	any building supported by a permanent foundation;
Structurally	

sound- capable of supporting all imposed loads; free of excessive deterioration;

Demolition:

During construction and/or rehabilitation of property, all construction debris shall be removed from premises weekly unless contained in a commercial grade trash container, dump truck, trailer, or other vehicle used specifically for debris removal. The debris may remain on premises until the container is filled to a reasonable capacity upon which time, it shall be removed from premises. All debris shall be taken to an approved landfill as determined by The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control Agency (D.H.E.C.) based upon the composition of material, including any lead-based paint, asbestos, or other hazardous waste.

Foundation:

Shall be structurally sound; all deteriorated and/or over spanned building components shall be replaced and/or properly supported. The City reserves the right to require an inspection by a licensed structural engineer registered to practice in South Carolina to determine the structural soundness of a component. All foundation vents shall be screened and prevent water from entering the crawl space. Crawl spaces shall be ventilated to meet section 408 of the IRC or be “unvented” per the same section of the IRC. A professional termite pest control company shall inspect structure for the presence of termites. If evidence of termite infestation is present, structure shall be treated for termites by a state licensed exterminator who upon completion of treatment shall issue an “Official South Carolina Wood Infestation Report” showing that structure is free of infestation or damage caused by any wood destroying insects or fungi. Structures treated within the last five years by a state licensed exterminator may be exempt from full treatment and utilize spot treatment only provided City’s receipt of documentation confirming previous treatment. New piers shall be permanent masonry units with poured concrete footings. Existing structurally sound masonry piers may remain in place. Stacked masonry units, wooden piers, and metal jacks are prohibited for use as piers and if in place, must be removed and replaced with permanent masonry units with poured concrete footings. Accessory doors/ windows located below main level of structure and all sub-flooring are part of the foundation as they relate to these standards. The foundations structural integrity must exhibit a remaining useful life /wear expectancy of at least five years from date of City final inspection.

Yard:

Paving repairs and replacement are a permitted expense when the existing paving creates tripping hazards greater than 3/4", or where the condition of the paving creates access issues for occupants that have mobility issues. When the absence of paving from the street, or from a driveway to a building entrance creates a safety hazard, the installation of new walkway paving is acceptable. Necessary measures shall be taken to drain water away from structures and to keep lot from eroding. All large holes or cavities in yard that present a safety hazard, shall be backfilled with compacted dirt. All tree limbs within six feet of a habitable structure along with any trees where roots from the tree are undermining the foundation of a habitable structure shall be removed in their entirety.

Siding / Cladding:

Siding must be intact, shed water to grade, be free from holes or defects, and if painted, have a continuous paint finish. All defects that could allow pest entry shall be repaired. Moisture and termite damaged exterior wood products and any defective [split, large knot holes, etc.] exterior wood products shall be replaced with material matching the remaining wood products. Other types of damaged siding [brick, block, vinyl, aluminum] shall be replaced with in-kind materials. Repairs shall include cleaning, caulking, and, where applicable, "pointing up" of mortar joints so as to acquire an acceptable finished product. Siding / Cladding must have a remaining useful life /wear expectancy of at least five years from date of City final inspection

Porches & Steps:

Porch and step components shall be structurally sound and any missing materials needed to address health, safety, or applicable code replaced. All newly installed wood products used in porch / deck floor system or exterior steps shall be preservative treated material or composite material manufactured for exterior use. The installation of ramps, installed per ADA guidelines, is an approved treatment if the occupants have a demonstrated accessibility issue. Repairs to existing ramps with structural or health and safety issues are an approved expense. Porches & Steps must have a remaining useful life /wear expectancy of at least five years from date of City final inspection.

Windows:

Windows must operate as originally manufactured and must be free of defects [cracked glass, brittle spackling, defective hardware, etc...]. Existing windows must be insulated glass or be used in conjunction with storm windows. Screens must be in good condition. Shutters, if present, must be free of defects and properly secured to structure. Bedroom windows must meet code egress requirements. New windows must be EnergyStar® certified for the Columbia, SC

region. All window components must have a remaining useful life /wear expectancy of at least five years from date of City final inspection

Exterior Doors:

Exterior doors must operate as originally designed, be free of defects [cracked glass, brittle spackling, defective hardware, splits in wood, etc...], and must be weather-stripped. Existing doors must be factory insulated or be used in conjunction with storm doors. Double cylinder deadbolts shall not be used on egress doors. If storm door is present, all hardware must be functional. New doors must be EnergyStar® certified for the Columbia, SC region or have at least R-5 value. Exception: Structures listed as historic at the Federal, State, and/or City level must comply with applicable design requirements whenever replacing an exterior door.

All exterior doors must have a remaining useful life /wear expectancy of at least five years from date of City final inspection

Roof:

Roof system must be free of leaks, must be structurally sound, and surface of roof must be clear of any foreign matter and entire system must have a remaining useful life /wear expectancy of at least five years from date of City final inspection [including structural integrity]. If attic vents are present, they must be clad with a maximum of 1/8" sieve size wire mesh. New roofing systems [to include replacement roofing] shall include the addition of roof venting balanced between vents placed high and low on the roof to create natural convection [unless adequate ventilation is already in place]. Adequate ventilation equates to a combined net free ventilating area of not less than 1/150 of the attic area. Newly installed ridge vents shall be shingle-over style. The combination of ridge vents with soffit vents is highly encouraged. Gutters use is discouraged but if in place, must be functioning properly, include corrosion resistant leaf guards, and include splashguards at downspouts. Gutters must have a remaining useful life /wear expectancy of at least five years from date of City final inspection.

Electrical:

Electrical system must be functioning properly. All wiring insulation must be in good condition and meet applicable building code(s). Surface wiring located outside the homes envelope and exposed, must be installed inside conduit. All bedroom(s), immediate area outside bedroom(s) including hallways, and each floor level to include conditioned basements, must have electric with battery backup interconnected combination smoke/CO2 detectors. All outlets in kitchen, baths, and any other room containing a source of water must be ground fault

protected per the City's currently adopted version of "The National Electric Code". Every habitable space within a dwelling unit shall contain not less than two separate and remote receptacle outlets. Every bathroom shall contain at least one ground fault protected outlet. Existing three prong outlets installed without ground wiring must include label stating "non-grounded" outlet. All splicing must take place inside a junction box and include caps and tape. Any bathroom without an operable window must include an exhaust fan vented to outside of structure and rated at a minimum of 50 CFM for half-baths and minimum 80 CFM for full baths. All light fixtures must be free of any defects that could create a safety hazard. Electrical system must have a remaining useful life expectancy of at least five years from date of City final inspection.

Plumbing:

Every dwelling unit must have a minimum of one single bowl sink with hot and cold running water in the kitchen and at least one bathroom containing a sink and shower/tub unit with hot and cold running water along with a functioning toilet. Supply and drain lines must be in good condition and functioning properly for the distribution of water and for the removal of all waste from premises. *Structure must be connected to the City of Columbia water and sewer system. In the limited event that City of Columbia main water and / or sewer lines are not available to the property location, structure shall be connected to a system that is approved by D.H.E.C.

All plumbing fixtures must function properly, be secured in place, and be free of any defects [excessive chipped enamel, rust, cracks, leaks, etc...]. Existing tub/shower surrounds and pans must be in good condition and watertight. Newly installed plumbing fixtures must be Water Sense® labeled. New toilets must score at least 1,000 points on the current MaP test report. and be comfort height. Water heaters must function properly, display no signs of back drafting, be installed per new construction building code, and be free of rust. All water heater units located outside of heated space must be insulated to an "R-8" value and be elevated to a level of at least four inches above adjacent grade. Drain pans are not required on existing functioning water heaters. Dryer must be vented to outside; dryer venting located inside walls, attics, or crawl spaces must be rigid metal; joints and/or seams in dryer ductwork must be sealed with HVAC metal duct tape or duct mastic [not cloth duct tape]. Existing garbage disposals that are defective may be replaced with a minimum ½ HP model. Plumbing system and components must have a remaining useful life expectancy of at least five years from date of City final inspection.

* City reserves the right to allow use of DHEC approved septic system if existing system is in good working condition.

Heating & Air Conditioning:

All structures must contain a central heating and air system that on a year-round basis is capable of maintaining a temperature of sixty-eight degrees Fahrenheit, at a level of three feet above the floor level, in all habitable rooms. Fuel burning equipment must draft properly and not display signs of back drafting. Existing heat and air condition system must have a remaining useful life expectancy of at least five years from date of City final inspection.

Existing systems shall be inspected and serviced by a South Carolina State licensed heating and air technician who upon completion of inspection, shall provide a certification letter to the City indicating that the system is in good condition and that the system meets the aforementioned minimum requirements.

New hvac units shall be EnergyStar® compliant and have a minimum AFUE rating of 95% [gas units] and a minimum SEER rating of 15; seams / joints in existing ductwork shall be properly sealed with UL181 rated sealant or tape prior to insulating any “non-insulated” areas of ductwork to a minimum “R- 8” value.

New ductwork shall be insulated to a minimum “R-8” value and must meet or exceed EnergyStar ® for Homes duct leakage standard with a leakage rate of 5% or less when measured with a duct blaster or similar diagnostic device. Installer shall provide a certification letter to the City indicating that the system meets the aforementioned minimum requirements; City Staff reserves the right to make exceptions to the above requirements as long as installed system meets EnergyStar® requirements for the Columbia, SC region of the United States of America.

Interior Walls & Ceilings:

All interior walls and ceilings must be structurally sound and finished uniformly. They will be devoid of visible cracks, nail pops, buckling, materials not bonding, torn wallpaper, holes, exposed framing, delaminated material, or texturing gaps. The repair will include painting all repaired walls/ceilings in their entirety to present a uniform appearance. For paneled wall areas, replace sections of damaged panels with matching material. If matching material is unavailable, paint all wall paneling in order to give a uniform appearance. Covering damaged ceiling with an additional thin layer of sheetrock is an acceptable method of repair as long as new material is properly secured to ceiling framing.

Insulation:

Accessible portions of the building envelope, such as attics and crawl spaces, or framing exposed during construction, may be insulated to meet the following R values:

Ceilings	R-38	Walls	R-13	Floors	R-19
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Fireplace:

All chimneys shall be structurally sound and in safe working condition. All fireplaces shall have tight fitting dampers. Chimneys not meeting these requirements shall be permanently sealed at all openings.

Interior Trim:

All damaged trim shall be repaired or replaced with a material matching the remaining trim in each room. All door and window hardware shall function properly and any missing hardware installed to bring door and window back to working condition. Bedroom & bathroom entrance doors shall include privacy latches. Countertops must be intact, free from cracks or defects and cleanable for food preparation.

Kitchen:

All cabinets shall be in good working order. Cabinets and countertops shall be free of water damage. There shall be a minimum of 24 c.f. of wall cabinet storage and 40 c.f. of base cabinet storage in each kitchen. Pantry cabinet or closet may be included as storage space when calculating space requirements. Countertops must be intact, free from cracks or defects and cleanable for food preparation.

Bathroom:

All bathrooms shall include at least one each of the following items: mirror, towel bar, tissue holder, shower rod (where applicable), and storage cabinet [medicine cabinet, vanity cabinet, etc...]. Existing fixtures shall be in good working condition. Vanity tops shall be secured to cabinet and sealed at all edges to prevent water infiltration. Tub and shower surrounds shall be watertight and in good condition.

Floors:

All sub-flooring shall be structurally sound. Particleboard sub-flooring is not permitted for use as replacement sub-flooring. Damaged finish flooring will be replaced with carpet, vinyl, or tile. Laminate flooring made of pressed board, fiber board, or any other fibrous structure that is not waterproof, is not permitted. Carpet is discouraged, but newly installed carpet shall meet the minimum requirements listed in the chart below. Carpet and pad shall be Carpet and Rug Institute (CRI) certified Green Label +Plus. Carpet must meet or exceed the minimum weight and density requirements specified in the chart below for the texture used.

Carpet:	BCF Nylon	BCF Polypropylene	Staple Polyester
Texture	Weight/Density	Weight/Density	Weight/Density
Level/Texture Loop	20 / 3300	20 / 3600	N/A / N/A
Cut-pile Heat Set Piled	24 / 1250	32 / 4000	23 / 1550

Newly installed vinyl flooring must meet the FloorScore® Certification Standard for resilient flooring.

- Vinyl sheet goods must meet the standards of ASTM F1303, be fully adhered and have a minimum overall thickness of 2mm.
- Vinyl plank flooring must be a minimum of 4 mm thick with interlocking edges, and a simulated wood design. Vinyl plank flooring must be fully adhered and properly sealed.

Painted floors are not acceptable unless pre-approved by City staff.

Painting:

Interior and exterior painted surfaces damaged or badly deteriorated shall be repainted. All window glazing must be in good condition. Stained woodwork must include a finish sealer type coating. All open seams or joints must be caulked and / or filled consistent with methods widely used in the construction industry. All new interior paints, primers, varnish, sealers, etc. must be less than or equal to the following VOC levels: Flats--50 g/L; Non-flats--50 g/L; Floor--100 g/L. [g/L = grams per liter].

All interior adhesives must comply with Rule 1168 of the South Coast Air Quality Management District. All interior caulks and sealants must comply with regulation 8, rule 51 of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

Appliances:

All habitable structures shall include a kitchen area equipped with a minimum 18 cubic foot refrigerator and a standard size cooktop and oven. Appliances must be clean and in working condition. A stove hood is required above any appliance designed for surface cooking whenever cabinetry is located above the appliance. Range hood vented to the exterior [not the attic, basement, or crawl space] is required to be installed above all gas-fired ranges. Existing appliances must have a remaining useful life expectancy of at least five years from date of City final inspection. New refrigerators and dishwashers must be EnergyStar® certified.

Miscellaneous:

Non-essential items, as determined by the City of Columbia Community Development Department Housing Program Manager, are not eligible in this program. Examples of non-essential items are fencing, garages, out buildings,

patios, hot tubs, ceramic tile, security systems, fireplaces, decks, stained glass windows, marble and granite countertops, swimming pools, and room additions.