

Effective Exterior Design at Senior Living Campuses

Six Common Needs

Applicable to Independent Living, Assisted Living, Skilled Nursing, and Dementia-Care. Each represent a unique aspect of **Senior Living** yet they also share many similar design considerations:

1 Provide pleasant outdoor gathering spaces. *Sidewalks, outdoor seating, safe pedestrian environments, shade.*¹

2 Make opportunities for social participation. *Loneliness, sadness, and isolation can be debilitating health conditions.*²

3 Foster a sense of control with access to a garden space. *People seek natural settings to reduce stress. Make the garden visible from interior gathering areas.*³

4 Include rehabilitation activities when possible. *Design so that physical therapists, occupational and horticultural therapists can work outdoors with recovering patients.*⁴

5 Create positive distraction through contact with nature. *Provide many opportunities for stimulation by sight, smell and sounds of the garden.*⁵

6 Facilitate attention restoration. *Coherence (orderly & organized), perplexity (a rich setting with many opportunities for sensory engagement), legibility (memorable components) and mystery (compelled to explore and discover) are all important ingredients.*⁶

¹ From AARP's Livable Communities The 8 Domains of Livability <http://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/info-2014/slide-show-eight-domains-of-livability.html#slide1> accessed 11/17/14

² *ibid*

³ Therapeutic Landscapes, Clare Cooper Marcus & Naomi A Sachs, John Wiley & Sons, 2014, pg. 24

⁴ Marcus & Sachs, pg. 26

⁵ Marcus & Sachs, pg. 27

⁶ Marcus & Sachs, pg. 28-29

