



Design Better. Build Better. Know Better.



Better Living Design

A critical aspect of BLD, *aesthetics*, helps to differentiate Better Living Design from design solutions that might be considered just functional. With a BLD approach, *usability characteristics* are built-in and integrated into the overall scheme, and therefore mainstreamed - not separate and distinct. A BLD solution has to *work well, look good, and be marketable* to a broad audience.

Long-Term Flexibility

While featuring far more utility than a standard home, a BLD home is not expected to eliminate the need for households to customize their home over time. Everyone customizes their home over time. Everyone customizes their home in a variety of ways, but BLD features will help avoid the most costly and extensive re-modeling that is the most often associated with long-term livability.

Basic BLD features are

- Inexpensive to include in new homes (and many remodeling projects)
- Appreciated by everyone every day
- A huge difference maker at certain times in many people's lives
- A value-added feature of a home
- A money saver because many later home customizations can be avoided

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Areas of Coverage

Circulation

- Exterior paths of travel
- Entrance
- Interior vertical/horizontal paths of travel
- Floors

Key Function Areas

- Parking/garage
- Kitchen/laundry
- Bath
- Storage
- Sleep
- Office/family

Controls and Hardware

- Home tech/automation
- Cabinet
- Door/windows
- Appliances/fixtures
- Switches

Environmental Quality

- Air
- Light
- Maintenance



Essential Level Criteria

for Better Living Design Approval

A successful BLD home will have a mainstream appearance inside and outside.

All features must be integrated into the overall design intent of the subdivision, neighborhood and home.

Exterior/Entrance

- Step-free route of travel to one step-free entrance
- Exterior paths of travel are slip resistant, firm and smooth
- Exterior paths, walks, stairs and entrances are well lit
- Illuminated doorbell if provided
- Half or full sidelight at door or view window in door

Interior Circulation

- 42" wide minimum clear width in hallways
- Key function areas are on entry level
- All entry-level passage doors, 32" wide minimum clear opening
- No interior thresholds

Bathroom

- A half bath on entry level must be designed for conversion to fully usable bath, or
- Full bath on entry level must be usable
- Convenience outlets within reachable range
- Slip-resistant flooring
- Continuous wall reinforcing at toilet and bathing fixture
- Easy-to-use controls in tub/shower/sink

Kitchen

- Maneuverable kitchen layout - 42" between cabinet door faces
- Layered lighting
- Full-extension drawers
- Pull-out shelves on base cabinets with doors
- Easy-to-use controls at plumbing faucets
- Outlets and switches within reach

Laundry

- In single story home without basement, laundry is located on entry level
- In single story home with basement, at least rough-in for laundry on entry level
- In multi story home at least plumbing rough-in on entry level

Power and Home Technology

- Audible and visible smoke/fire/CO alarms

Interior Environmental Quality

- Attached garage: passive ventilation and follow best practices for garage/house common wall
- Improve general artificial lighting levels

Maintenance

- Hard-surface flooring or low-pile carpet

Switches, Controls, Hardware

- High-visibility thermostat
- Reachable electrical panel positioned 25-54" above finished floor