

<https://vimeo.com/350186330> **Link to RWV TV Recording *Accessibility Meets Décor***
Adaptations for an apartment to meet needs of both disabilities and attractiveness

25 Minute interview/ tour with residents Nancy and Dick Pawliger

**FEATURES AND CUSTOMIZATION OF A RIDERWOOD APARTMENT
FOR SCOOTER OR WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBILITY**

An apartment may be modified to include many features that are designed to meet the needs of a physically disabled resident and enable that resident to more fully enjoy apartment living at Riderwood. It is more expedient and economical if the resident has the opportunity to work with Riderwood's architect and Custom Design staff *before* any plans are drawn up and *before* construction starts to ensure that the desired features are incorporated in the final design. The resident of this apartment was extremely pleased at the cooperation by the architect and Custom Design to achieve these goals. The cost of adapting some features to meet the needs of the disabled resident that incurred little or no incremental cost over the normal design were borne by Riderwood. The costs for providing other special features and equipment or appliance upgrades were borne by the resident.

Many residents who use a wheelchair or scooter use them mainly to cover long distances such as when going from building to building but *within* their own apartment they walk, perhaps with the aid of a cane or walker or rollator. If a resident uses a scooter both outside as well as within the apartment, that requires additional space for maneuvering.

To make this apartment more suitable for a wheelchair user, the following features were incorporated:

KITCHEN: For access while seated in a wheelchair or scooter:

- The counter tops are 2" lower than standard counter height (34" vs. 36")
- The bottom of the above-counter cabinets are lower than normal (14" above counter top vs. 18")
- To permit access, the sink is located in the middle of the counter rather than in the corner and the undersink cabinet is recessed to allow a wheelchair to pull up close to the counter.
- The kitchen faucet handle is located close to the front of the sink rather in the back. (The spigot from which the water flows is in its normal position in the back and has a pull-out spray.)
- The garbage disposal switch is located midway back rather than on the wall behind the sink.
- A counter top microwave oven was provided in place of one typically located above the stove
- The control knobs for the stove are in the front rather in the back. (A "drop-in" rather than a "slide-in" range was necessary to accommodate the lower counter top.)
- The refrigerator has a bottom freezer

MASTER BATHROOM

- A roll-in shower equipped with:
 - a built-in wall-mounted seat
 - water controls within reach of a person sitting on the shower seat
 - a hand-held shower head in addition to a standard high shower head
 - two niches, one high and one low, for soap, shampoo, etc.

(The shower floor is pitched towards the drain so there is no water overflowing onto the rest of the bathroom floor. The use of 1" square tiles on the shower floor makes the floor less slippery, even when wet.)

- An ADA compliant toilet (17" high vs. standard 15")
- A 4" toilet seat riser atop the toilet
- Toilet mounted (rather than wall mounted) grab bars
- For convenience, a "soft close" toilet seat lid
- An additional wall-mounted grab bar to facilitate transfer from a wheelchair to the bath seat

- For convenience, a “soft close” toilet seat lid

OTHER FEATURES FOR ACCESSIBILITY

- Doorways at least 27” wide to permit easy passage of a wheelchair (An option of offset hinges to allow a wider opening when the door is open proved to be not needed.) Two of the doors are “Pocket” doors, 36” wide.
- A second peep hole in the entrance door at the height of a person seated in a wheelchair
- Lower hanger rods in the walk-in closet
- Side-by-Side Washer/Dryer with front openings (A stacked Washer/Dryer is totally inaccessible from a wheelchair.)
- Hard floors (laminated or tile) throughout except in the two bedrooms, which are carpeted. The hard surfaces make it easier to use a manual wheelchair if necessary.
- For convenience, electrically operated blinds and a light switch operated by voice command were installed in the Master Bedroom
- For convenience, all cabinet drawers and doors in the kitchen and bathrooms are “soft close”

Considered, but felt to be unnecessary, were lower light switches and higher wall outlets.