

# MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING by Justin Davies



## CONSIDERATIONS FOR HEALTHY MULTI-TENANT LIVING

Multi-family housing and multi-tenant living spaces face a number of challenges in the Covid-19 era in response to physical distancing measures and lifestyle adaptations. Bialosky considers the immediate factors that can change multi-family buildings, as well as future tenants and the spaces they inhabit. Providing additional space to accommodate social distancing measures proves challenging in high-density building types, but selective strategies can facilitate the ultimate goal of health and safety for tenants and the spaces they occupy.

### ADAPT FOR THE PRESENT

### DESIGN FOR THE FUTURE

## STAY PHYSICALLY DISTANT AND SOCIALLY CONNECTED

- **Evaluate high traffic areas and consider hands-free hardware.** Strategically placed signage and sanitation stations will promote resident and guest safety and inform on current guidelines and building safety policies.
- **Assess existing amenity areas** for potential re-programming and accommodation of distancing guidelines. New furniture systems, modified layouts, and predetermined program schedules for work, play and exercise can respond to tenant needs and a predetermined sanitation schedule.

- **Expect an increased focus on building and unit entry design and sequencing for tenants and guests.** Considerations for secondary service and delivery entries can increase a sense of safety for tenants and facilitate health protocols.
- **Respond to the increased need for remote workspaces** and consider providing additional flex space within building units. Home offices, play spaces, and home gyms can be accommodated with separate den spaces.
- **Consider heightened sound attenuation between units** as more tenants work at home. Increasing the sound separation within the unit den space can also help accommodate a home office and provide an area of solace within a limited floor plan.

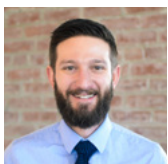
## LEVERAGE THE OUTDOORS

- **Schedule outdoor program activities** with existing outdoor spaces at limited capacity, keeping in mind the needs of children and pets.
- **Increase the size of covered areas in existing courtyards and building entry locations** to enhance usable outdoor spaces and facilitate their use year-round and during inclement weather.

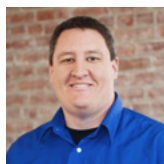
- **Designate private outdoor space or balconies for individual units.** Consider utilizing rooftop areas to increase outdoor options with accompanying vegetation.
- **Consider building orientation and larger operable windows** during early design to promote healthy access to natural light and fresh air. This includes corridors and stairwells, which are frequently void of natural exposure.

## Questions on your current or future project?

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Resources: [www.bialosky.com/news-ideas](http://www.bialosky.com/news-ideas)



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# MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING



## ADAPT FOR THE PRESENT

## DESIGN FOR THE FUTURE

### AMPLIFY TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT

- **Increase accommodations for those working from home** by assessing common work area spaces and boosting Internet capacity and access.
- **Consider bringing amenities into the tenant's home.** Landlord sponsored home work-out programs, remote conferencing service memberships, or food delivery services may be viable replacements for lost amenity options.
- **Listen to your tenants.** Many of the tenant requests and complaints during this period are bound to be around for the foreseeable future, and will develop into trends and opportunities.

- **Consider hands-free hardware applications** which include building and unit entry systems, elevator function, security and call-stations, common area access and plumbing fixtures.
- **Increase storage capacity for parcel and food delivery** in response to the current need and lasting trends. Consider larger parcel storage areas, automated parcel lockers, and refrigeration units as valuable and marketable amenities for the future.
- **Maximize in-unit and remote storage options.** Larger refrigerators and freezers within the units will prove to be a valuable amenity for prospective tenants.

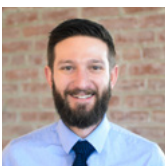
### UPGRADE BUILDING SYSTEMS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH

- **Assess existing building HVAC systems** for optimal performance and possible upgrade solutions.
- **Explore anti-microbial furnishing materials** and surface applications that can help facilitate healthier environments within units and common areas.
- **Install ceiling fans** within units and common areas to promote fresh air flow at a minimal cost.
- **Increase minimum ventilation rates** for common area HVAC units, & upgrade filters to a minimum MERV 13 efficiency

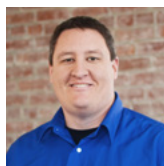
- **Evaluate HVAC system selection and zoning considerations** both within units and common areas. Anti-microbial filtering, increased fresh air exchange, and efficiency are all factors to consider during system design.
- **Consider the health advantages of LEED, Passive House, and WELL building standards.** The pandemic has helped renew the interest in sustainable design practices and its many health benefits to buildings and occupants.

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