Building design – The building design shall be reasonably appropriate for the intended site, resident population, and anticipated market and comply with the following minimum standards:

1. Laundry – Housing shall have access to laundry facilities and shall comply with the following requirements:
   a. Common laundry is required unless laundry equipment is provided in each dwelling unit.
   b. If common laundry, one (1) washer and one (1) dryer must be provided for every twelve (12) dwelling units. Provide folding table and seating area.
   c. If laundry equipment is provided in each dwelling unit, stackable equipment is acceptable in non-accessible dwelling units.
   d. Every clothes washer shall have a disaster pan with floor drain, or be in a room with concrete flooring whereby the floor slopes to floor drain.
   e. Avoid locating clothes washers near areas with carpeting.

2. Elevator – Housing required to have an elevator shall meet the following requirements associated with an elevator:
   a. The maximum length of travel from any dwelling unit to an elevator shall not exceed two hundred fifty (250) lineal feet.
   b. The number of required elevators in each building shall be dictated by the number of stories above grade as follows:
      1. (3 – 5) stories above grade: one (1) elevator required.
      2. (6 – 9) stories above grade: two (2) elevators required.
      3. (>9) stories above grade: consult Commerce.

3. Dwelling unit – Housing shall meet the following requirements associated with decent living space:
   a. Living room
      1. Least dimension shall be 11’-6” and appropriately sized for anticipated household size.
      2. Must have window (or glass patio door) to exterior for natural lighting.
   b. Primary or Master bedroom
      1. Least Dimension shall be 10’-0”
      2. Least square footage shall be 115 sq. ft.
      3. Window to exterior for natural lighting.
      5. Door and walls to ceiling for privacy.
      6. Exception: Efficiency Dwelling Unit/Single Room Occupancy (SRO)
   c. Secondary bedroom(s)
      1. Least dimension 9’-6”.
      2. Least square footage shall be 100 sq. ft.
      3. Window to exterior for natural lighting.
      4. Closet (4 lineal ft. of net rod/shelf length)
      5. Door and walls to ceiling for privacy.
      6. Exception: Efficiency Dwelling Unit/Single Room Occupancy (SRO)
d. Kitchen

1. Kitchen countertop work area.
   a. Minimum length shall be 6’-0” measured along the front footage (excluding sink and appliances) for one bedroom dwelling units;
   b. 7’-0” for two- and three-bedroom dwelling units;
   c. And 8’-0” for larger dwelling units.

2. Snack bar or eat-in kitchen area. (Required in 3-bedroom and larger dwelling units.)
   a. Snack bar shall be 4’-0” long (minimum).

3. Range/oven in all dwelling units.
   a. All units with two or more bedrooms must be equipped with 30” wide range/self-cleaning oven.
   b. All other units shall be equipped with 24” (min.) range/self-cleaning oven.
   c. Avoid locating range in corner or at the end of the counter.
   d. A protective shield must be provided for the section of wall directly behind all ranges and on any abutting partition. Protective shields shall either be high-pressure plastic laminate, enameled steel or stainless steel.

4. “Frost Free” refrigerator/freezer with 15” minimum wide counter on latch side. 14 cu. ft. (min.) for one bedroom and smaller dwelling units. Appropriately-sized for intended household for larger dwelling units.


e. Dining

1. Dining room/area designated with hard-surface flooring distinct from living room is required in 2-bedroom and larger dwelling units.

2. The dining room/area must be appropriately sized for the intended household size and accommodate the following:
   a. 2-bedroom dwelling units: Table w/ four (4) chairs
   b. 3-bedroom dwelling units: Table w/ six (6) chairs
   c. ≥ 4-bedroom dwelling units: Table w/ seven (7) chairs

3. Must have window to exterior, or opening to living room.

4. Exceptions:
   a. An eat-in kitchen may be substituted for dining room/area as long as kitchen and dining area are appropriately sized for the intended household size plus two (2) guests.
   b. A 4’ long snack bar located on rear side of kitchen countertop may be used in lieu of designated dining room/area in 1-bedroom and smaller dwelling units.

f. Bathroom

1. Definitions:
   a. Full Bathroom: (vanity, water closet, and tub w/ showerhead)
   b. (½) Bathroom or Powder Room: (vanity and water closet)
   c. (¾) Bathroom: (vanity, water closet, and shower)

2. A minimum of one (1/2) bathroom required at ground floor of any two-story dwelling unit.
3. A minimum of one Full bathroom required at 2-bedroom and smaller dwelling units
4. A minimum of (1 3/4) bathrooms required at 3-bedroom and larger dwelling units
5. Any “Split” bedroom design (bedrooms on opposite sides of living room): At least a 3/4 bathroom adjacent to any bedroom to avoid having to travel through living space when traveling from bedroom to a bathroom.
6. In 3-bedroom or larger dwelling units, Commerce encourages main bathroom to be compartmentalized for simultaneous, multiple use.
7. Minimum Accessories:
   a. Medicine cabinet (at least one per dwelling unit);
   b. Towel bar(s) (within reach of lavatory and tub/shower);
   c. Toilet paper holder;
   d. Shower curtain rod (if applicable); and
   e. Mirror
   g. Storage space/closets
      1. Entry coat closet is required for 1-bedroom or larger dwelling units.
      2. Designated linen/towel storage space is required.
      3. General storage space for household cleaning supplies, vacuum, etc. is required.
   h. Multi-Story Dwelling Unit Living Areas
      1. Individual units with multi-stories shall have a kitchen/ kitchenette, living area, dining (or eat-in kitchen) on the same, main level. See Visitability Standards for additional multi-story unit requirements.

**Mechanical and electrical systems** – Housing shall have plumbing, mechanical, and electrical systems that comply with the following standards:

1. *Independent technical analysis* – Commerce reserves the right to require independent technical analysis of any or all building components to determine life expectancy and anticipated ongoing lifecycle costs, as well as a maximum of 10-year payback on energy-efficient investment premiums.

2. *Utility incentives* – Commerce encourages exploring design options with the local utility company early in the design development phase to determine if any energy assistance program resources or other utility rebate options are available.

3. *Plumbing systems* – Plumbing systems shall meet the following requirements:
   a. All kitchen sinks shall be double compartment (33”x 22” min.), 7” deep minimum. Exception: Efficiency dwelling unit/Single room occupancy (SRO) with dishwasher may have single compartment sink.
   b. Disaster drain pan with floor drain shall be provided under any water heater and clothes washer located above ground level.
   c. Water softening is required where the hardness exceeds 14 grains except where special circumstances exist. The system must conform to the following:
      1. Unsoftened water must be provided to all hose bibs and the cold water tap of each kitchen sink.
2. All other water, hot and cold, is to be softened when water softening is required.

d. Plumbing chases and plumbing walls shall not be located in/at new building exterior walls. If required at existing buildings, chases shall be designed to keep plumbing from freezing.

4. *Heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning (HVAC) system* – HVAC systems shall meet the following requirements:
   a. Bathroom exhaust fans shall be ENERGY STAR-labeled and shall exhaust to the outdoors. Fans shall operate either continuously; or when the light is turned on; or with a humidistat and timer.
   b. Exhaust ductwork for clothes dryers shall be rigid type and vented to outside.
   c. Kitchen range hood shall meet the requirements
      1. By providing direct exhaust to the exterior; Or
      2. By placing a recirculating range hood as part of a heat recovery central ventilation system.
   d. Intake and exhaust ductwork located in unheated spaces shall be insulated.
   e. Air-conditioning shall be provided to all dwelling units.

5. *Electrical systems* – Electrical systems shall meet the following requirements:
   a. Ceiling or wall mounted light fixture in all bedrooms.
   b. Task lighting above kitchen range and kitchen sink.
   c. Each dwelling unit shall be capable of receiving hi-speed Internet access.
   d. Exterior light fixtures and lamps shall be rated for -20-degree F weather.
   e. Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarms as required by 2006 state legislation.

**Building components** – Commerce encourages the advancement of green/sustainable building strategies. Refer to Chapter 8 – Sustainable Housing for more requirements and guidance for Mandatory and Optional and criteria. The following building components shall also meet the following minimum standards:

1. *Millwork*
   a. All new kitchen cabinets and new wood bathroom cabinets shall have solid wood face-frames, doors, and drawer fronts.
   b. Drawer-box construction shall have dovetail or other reinforced joint construction.
   c. All millwork shall meet the Kitchen Cabinet Manufactures Association (KCMA) ANSI/KCMA A161.1 standards. KCMA Certification is suggested but not required.

2. *Exterior windows and doors*
   a. All new windows and doors must be ENERGY STAR-qualified.
      1. ENERGY STAR regularly updates its requirements for qualification. The applicable version current for qualification at the time windows and/or doors are ordered/purchased shall be applied.
      2. ENERGY STAR “Qualified” is based upon standards set for the region in which the window/door is being installed. The applicable region for Montana shall be applied.
b. All windows and windows within doors shall be furnished with window coverings for privacy and control of heat/solar shading.

c. All operable windows and operable windows within doors shall have insect screens.

d. The sill of all windows must be solid wood, stone, or man-made solid surface material.

3. **Roofing**
   a. **Low Slope Roofing**
      1. Shall have a minimum of ¼” inch per foot (finished) slope unless otherwise approved by a qualified Architect and Building Code Official
      2. Approved Systems include 60 mil adhered EPDM & TPO, or 4 ply asphalt/gravel built-up assembly.
      3. Ballasted or mechanically fastened single ply membranes are not accepted.
      4. A Minimum 20-year manufacturer’s warranty required.
   b. **Sloped Roofing**
      1. A minimum 25-year manufacturer’s warranty required.

4. **Patio and entrance slabs** – All patio and entrance slabs shall comply with the following requirements:
   a. Stoop/footing frost protection required at all entrance slabs.
   b. Where soils are frost susceptible, stoop/footing frost protection required at all patio slabs.
   c. ¼” per foot maximum slope.
   d. Protect front entrance slab from rain/snow accumulation. (i.e.: overhang, canopy)

5. **Closet door** – Conventional, residential grade, bi-fold doors and hardware package are not acceptable in new construction. Side-hinged or swing-type doors shall be provided.