



Our Certifications

CAPS

Certified Aging-in-Place Specialist (CAPS) is the only national designation program that teaches the technical, business management, and customer service skills essential to providing quality service within the residential remodeling industry: home modifications for the aging-in-place.

NAHB

National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) is a trade association that helps promote the policies that make housing a national priority. Since 1942, NAHB has been serving its members, the housing industry, and the public at large.

ADA

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliant-Livability meets all of the guidelines and requirements set forth by the ADA, which guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

Who Needs Us

Nationwide, there is a growing demand from seniors, the disabled, and those with chronic conditions to remain in their own homes. To meet this need, Livability works directly with these individuals, their children and relatives, couples planning for retirement, and regional Aging-in-Place service providers. Some examples of who we work with include:

- **Individuals needing immediate home modifications to ensure their residence fulfills their personal safety requirements.** These people have come to the point in their lives where they must decide whether to move into an assisted living facility or remain in their homes.
- **Middle-aged or older individuals planning for retirement and old age.** These people wish to remain in the comfort of their own homes, and would prefer to invest their money into retrofitting their current residence to accommodate an Aging-in-Place lifestyle, rather than pay to live in an assisted living facility.
- **Children and Family who wish to provide their relatives with a more comfortable option.** Often times, families would prefer to create a living arrangement that allows their aging parent or loved one to remain in a familiar setting, where they can easily spend time with and attend to them. Remaining in the home also helps keep loved ones active in daily community, neighborhood, and family life, which can have a positive effect on their sense of purpose and well-being.



Costs & Paying for Livability Services

There are a number of ways that individuals and their families can pay for the services provided through Livability. We will work with you and your loved ones to determine the best way for you to afford the expenses associated with home modification.

Useful Tools

Long-Term Care Planning Tool from Medicare.gov helps calculate how much you can expect to pay for long-term care, and what services and financing options are available to support your long-term care needs.

Benefits Check Up is the nation's most comprehensive Web-based service to screen for benefits programs for seniors with limited income and resources.

Eldercare Locator helps seniors find local agencies, in every U.S. community, that can help them and their families access home and community-based services like transportation, meals, home care, and caregiver support services.

- Reverse Mortgage
- Home Equity Loan
- Tax Credits
- Long-term Care Insurance
- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- Medicaid & Other Government Benefits
- USDA Grants Program
- Private Home Sale



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Who We Are

Throughout Western North Carolina, thousands of people are seeking an alternative to assisted living and skilled nursing facilities. Some require immediate changes in living arrangements due to disability, aging, or chronic conditions; others simply wish to adapt their homes in preparation for the future. Livability aims to assist all of these individuals by remodeling and retrofitting their current residence, utilizing universal design principles to allow them to remain in the comfort and familiarity of their own home for as long as possible. Our team of experienced contractors combine building and design experience with health care knowledge and compassion to create a safe and comfortable environment for those who need it most.

Heidi Owen, Director of Community Services for Hospice of Rutherford County for the past sixteen years, serves as Executive Director of Livability. Owen, originally from Etowah and now a resident of Rutherford County, has a bachelors degree in journalism from the University of North Carolina and a masters degree in business administration with a health care concentration from Gardner-Webb University. She is a Certified Fund Raising Executive as well as a Certified Aging in Place Specialist. Owen has served as project manager over construction of all facilities at Hospice of Rutherford County.



Livability is a collaborative venture between two regional hospices in the foothills of Western North Carolina: Four Seasons in Flat Rock, NC and Hospice of Rutherford County in Forest City, NC. These organizations combine many years of experience in caring for chronically and terminally ill patients and their families. Since the 1980's, both organizations have acquired a reputation of excellence in serving individuals in their own homes.

What is Aging in Place?

Your Life. Your Home. Your Way.

Aging-in-place is most simply defined as remaining in one's home regardless of age, ability, or condition, rather than in an assisted living situation. This requires a living environment that is both safe and comfortable, and provides a sense of independence. Since most homes are not equipped with safety features and functions that cater to seniors and limited mobility residents, these individuals can incorporate Aging-in-Place retrofitting techniques, such as Universal Design, to reduce potential hazards within their homes.

Many middle-aged and older individuals have begun incorporating Aging-in-Place into their retirement plans, preferring to invest their money into retrofitting their own homes rather than pay to live in a facility. Livability can provide the consulting and home modification expertise to help equip you or your loved ones with everything needed to remain at home, safely and comfortably, for as long as possible.

AARP reports that 90% of American adults, aged 50 and older, wish to stay in their current home as long as possible. This kind of living arrangement can be a great source of solace to elderly and disabled people, allowing them to benefit from the familiarity of their surroundings, and to take pleasure in the daily activities and events that occur in and around their home.



Our Services

Accessibility

Build and install ramps, handrails, and guardrails. Widen doorways at minimum to master bedroom and bathroom. Install lever handles or retrofit products on existing doorways. Adjust main doorways and install specialty hardware such as closures and safety latches for proper operation. Adapt lower floor of home for possible one level living. Adjust electrical outlets for easier access; 18 inches instead of 12. Adjust light switches for easier access: 42 inches instead of 48. Non-skid/no-trip flooring - ensure rugs and other obstacles are either secured or removed.

Home Safety

Home inspection by Livability to verify structural integrity and proper working condition of all the major elements of the home such as electrical, plumbing and HVAC. Remodel of master bath to include ADA compliant sinks, toilets, walk-in showers, grab bars, fixtures, etc. (Costs will be variable based on needs, sizes, tastes.) Add or optimize overhead lighting in the living area (kitchen, dining, living, master bed and master bath) Install safety/call system in bath. Strobe light or vibrator-assisted smoke and burglar alarm systems. Gas sensor near gas cooking, water heater and gas furnace.

Home Monitoring

Home monitoring utilizes internet technology to discreetly track and monitor doors, appliances, movement and activities taking place in the home. The system, which uses small motion and pressure sensors, is quick and easy to install, and can provide peace of mind for independently living seniors and their families. Automatic alerts are sent to emergency services and family members in the event of an emergency, preventing a loved one from being left for hours or even days if serious injury or illness prevents them from calling for help.

Additional Services

Energy efficiency evaluation of the home (i.e., HVAC, lighting, insulation, encapsulated crawl spaces). Upgraded technology designed for seniors. Kitchen remodel based on universal design and needs. Laundry room remodel based on universal design and needs.

Universal Design Concepts

The term 'Universal Design' was coined by the late Ronald Mace, founder and program director of The Center for Universal Design in Raleigh, NC. Ronald defined universal design as "the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design." In essence, incorporating universal design principles into the creation of products, communications, and indoor and outdoor spaces helps to simplify life for people of all ages and abilities.

7 principles to Universal Design

1. Equitable Use

Design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

2. Flexibility of Use

Design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

3. Simple and Intuitive Use

Design is easy for everyone to use and understand

4. Perceptible Information

Design communicates necessary information effectively to the user.

5. Tolerance for Error

Design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

6. Low Physical Effort

Design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

7. Size and Space for Approach and Use

User can easily approach, reach, manipulate or use a feature, regardless of ability.

Livability incorporates Universal Design concepts into all of our projects, helping to enhance the comfort, safety, and accessibility of our clients' living spaces.