House Mates/Home Share programs

House Mates or Home Share programs connect people who need support and have an extra bedroom in their house, with roommates who need reduced cost housing and are willing to provide those supports. The program usually includes assessment, matching and follow-up. Home Share Canada provides a variety of resources.
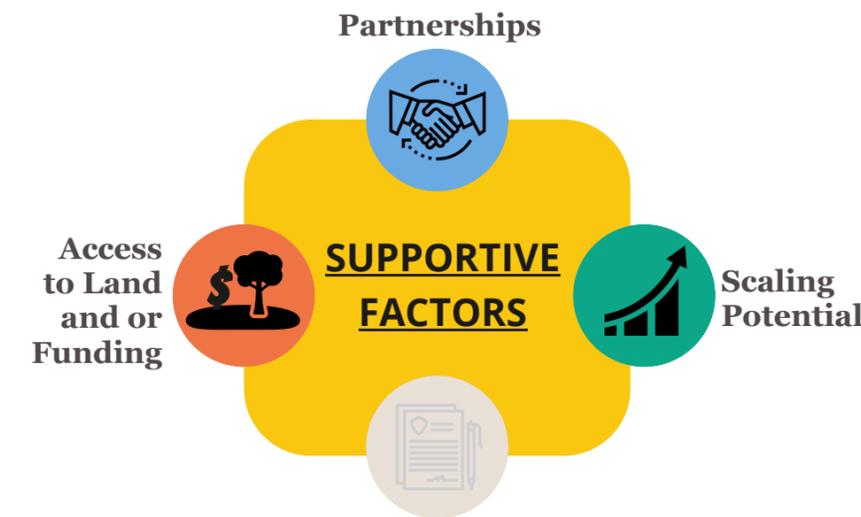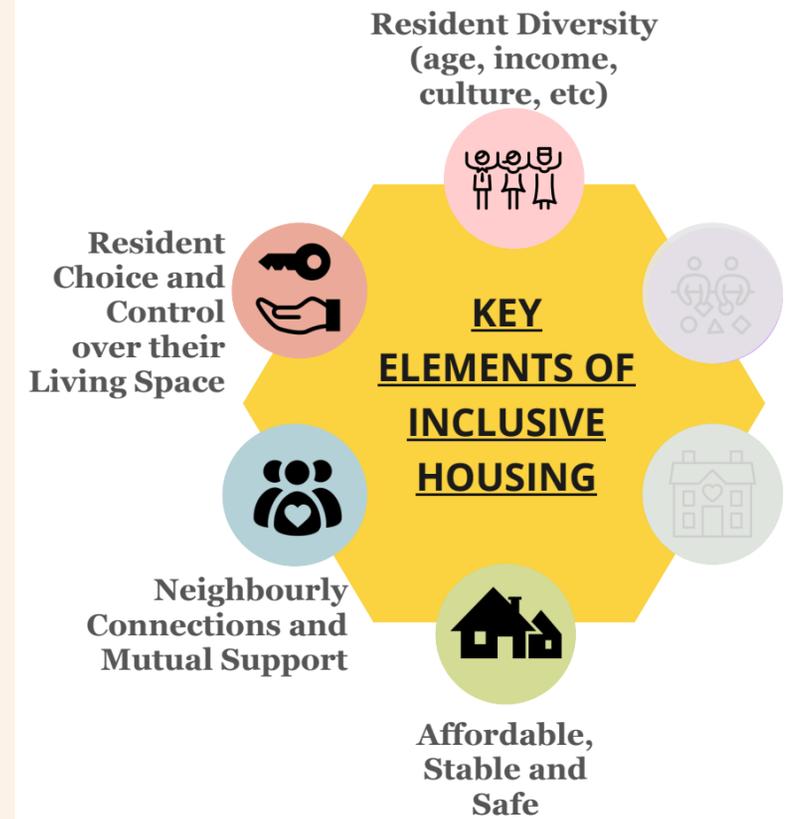
Examples

OLDER ADULT

Applicant Process

Our team will be there to support you every step of the way.

1 A project team member will first set up an intial meeting with you to discuss the project.

2 A project team member will then assist you with filling out application.

3 Once your application has been reviewed, our project team will schedule a follow up interview.

4 A project team member will then come visit your home to assess the living situation.

5 Our team will then check the references you provided & request a criminal record check.

6 Our team will reach out to you once the team has made suggested matches and set up meet and greet.

7 You can meet your match up to three times before deciding whether you would like to commit to the match.

8 Final step is to sign contract agreement, go over orientation and schedule the move in!

iGenNB
INTERGENERATIONAL LIVING for COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

iGenNB is a pilot project of The Ville in Fredericton that connects students with seniors for companionship and mentorship through shared living and household responsibilities. The program supports more affordable living for students, additional income and supports for the senior to age in place and diversity through intergenerational connections.

In Melbourne, **Home Share** helps home owners assess their needs and find a match with a home sharer who can provide the needed support (up to 10 hours a week) in exchange for reduced rent. This program is government funded.

Resident Diversity (age, income, culture, etc)

Resident Choice and Control over their Living Space

KEY ELEMENTS OF INCLUSIVE HOUSING

Neighbourly Connections and Mutual Support

Affordable, Stable and Safe

Partnerships

Access to Land and or Funding

SUPPORTIVE FACTORS

Scaling Potential

The Home Share program has strong potential for **partnerships, scaling** and **access to funding** given that one program could serve multiple populations which means diverse partners, funding and replication in different contexts.

Co-Housing Model

Co-Housing is a home that is shared by a group of people who come together with a common purpose or lifestyle they share. Usually the homes have smaller private spaces and larger shared spaces. Often, homes are owned through a strata title, however, in the example below Elmira has adapted the model for non-profit ownership and resident rentals. More information at the [Canadian Co-Housing Network](#).

Example

"It's a wonderful thing being in this Fields of Dreams... I love it every day!"
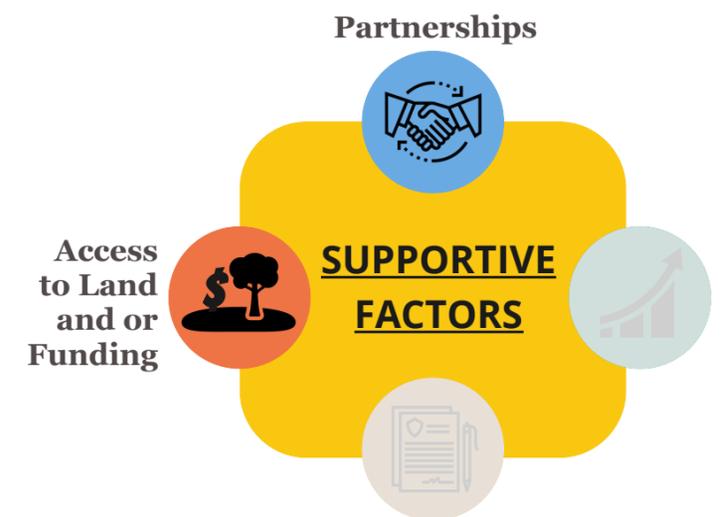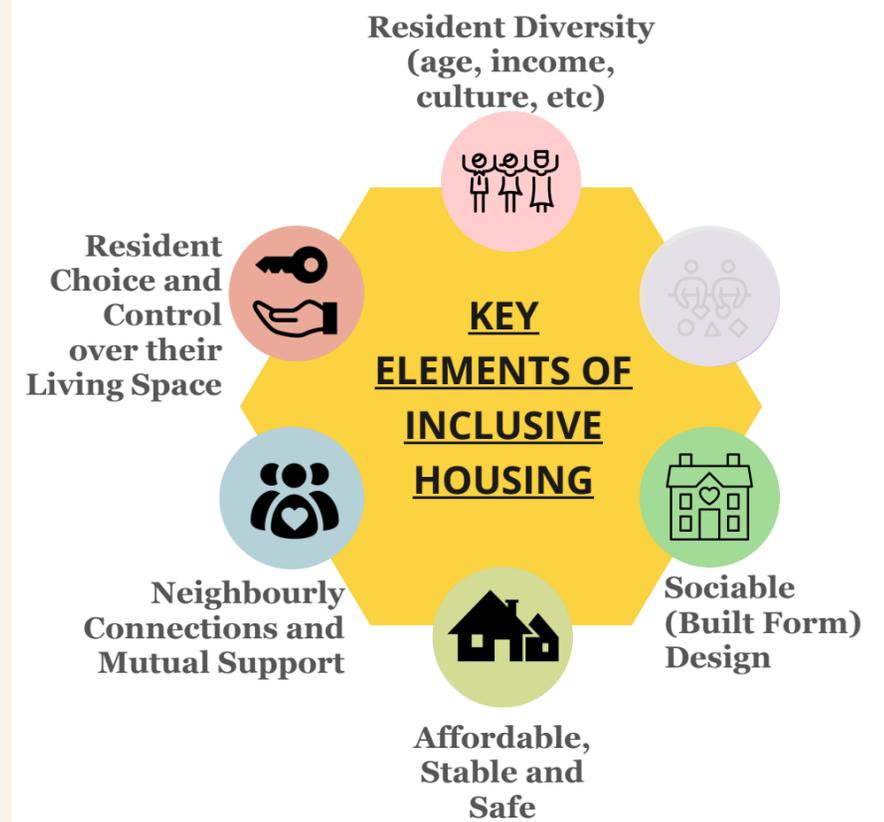DEE, TENANT

Sue Gautreau - Parent

"I've always known Justin had the ability to live on his own, he just lacked the confidence and belief in himself. TIFS gave him that. Justin in now moving into his own apartment, growing up, and moving on, and we are so thankful that TIFS gave him the knowledge to believe in himself and that he can do this."

Justin Gautreau - TIFS Graduate

"The independence TIFS gave, made me feel the urge to try more new things outside my comfort zone. I liked the experience of 'living on my own."

In Toronto, [Field of Dreams](#) Co-Housing in Elmira accepts housing applications from people with developmental disabilities and non-disabled people and all tenants agree to "be good neighbours" offering each other (reciprocal) mutual support, check-ins, etc. The units are all affordable and rent covers operating costs.

KEY ELEMENTS OF INCLUSIVE HOUSING

- Resident Diversity (age, income, culture, etc)
- Resident Choice and Control over their Living Space
- Neighbourly Connections and Mutual Support
- Affordable, Stable and Safe
- Sociable (Built Form) Design

SUPPORTIVE FACTORS

- Partnerships
- Access to Land and or Funding

In one of their first buildings, **development costs were shared across three main partners**, and supported by **donated land**. Elmira Development Support Corporation (a subsidiary of Community Living Toronto) was the developer, Community Living Toronto and the Region of Waterloo supported funding.

Social Connectors/Animators

Social Connectors or Animators are making a difference in residential buildings and neighbourhoods in Canada where they facilitate neighbours meeting each other for socializing, health, emergency preparedness and other purposes. Social Connectors can be paid staff, resident volunteers, groups, or a combination. The Hey Neighbour Collective shares a variety of Connector approaches and lessons for multi-unit housing buildings, and the Tamarack Institute has profiled some Block Connector programs here. The Resilient Streets Toolkit and Hey Neighbour Resident Animator "Recipe Book" offer inspiring ideas for building connections between neighbours, as well as a Toolkit for Property Managers to help building connections between residents.
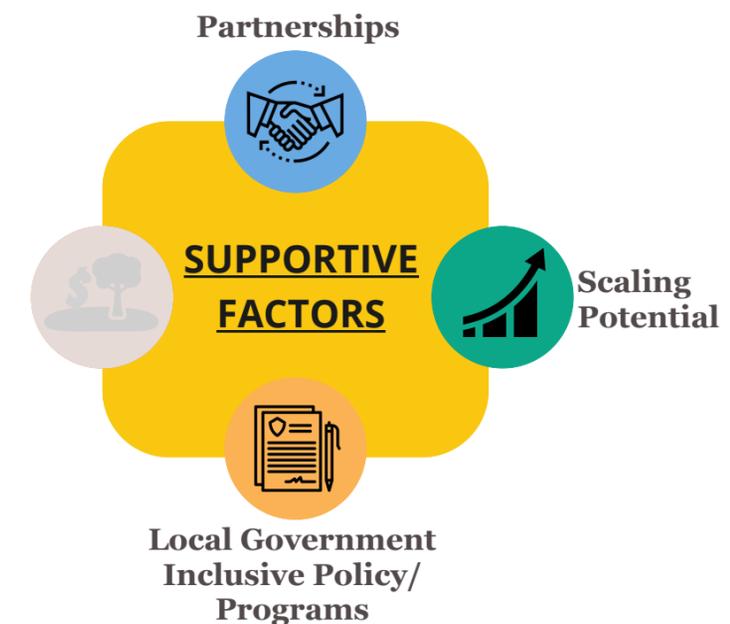

Examples

Community Living

We believe renting an apartment home is like joining a community. Well-appointed common areas are an extension of your living space and offer connections with your neighbours. And our Virtual Villages provide an online community for further sharing.

In partnership with the City of Vancouver, Concert Properties has been piloting a **Community Connector program,** where volunteer resident "connectors" are paid a small monthly honorarium to connect building residents through events, shared spaces and technology (Virtual Villages provide on-line connections for residents). Residents benefit from social connections and mutual support. This year the Community Connector initiative is expanding to 15 other Concert buildings.

Connectors are also supporting inclusive neighbourhoods in Edmonton where the city funds the Block Connectors program, and Openlab is facilitating NORC (naturally occurring retirement communities) Ambassador groups to meet and collaborate with neighbours to support healthy aging in place. While these initiatives have different purposes, they both employ someone to train/support unpaid resident Connectors or Ambassadors. Connectors can also play a role in referring residents to community services and activities.

KEY ELEMENTS OF INCLUSIVE HOUSING

Neighbourly Connections and Mutual Support

Sociable (Built Form) Design

Affordable, Stable and Safe

SUPPORTIVE FACTORS

Partnerships

Scaling Potential

Local Government Inclusive Policy/ Programs

These examples illustrate the leadership role that local governments, private sector and residents themselves can play to strengthen social inclusion. City of Vancouver and Concert Properties pilot evaluation also built the business case for scaling the program.

Purpose Built, Inclusive Affordable Housing

Purpose Built, Inclusive, Affordable Housing is often developed by and for special populations such as seniors or people with disabilities, however, they are also intentionally inclusive. This means they are affordable, engage diverse tenants, pay attention to location and design of spaces, and involve residents in planning building features. CMHC published this overview on Developing Socially Inclusive, Affordable Housing in 2019.
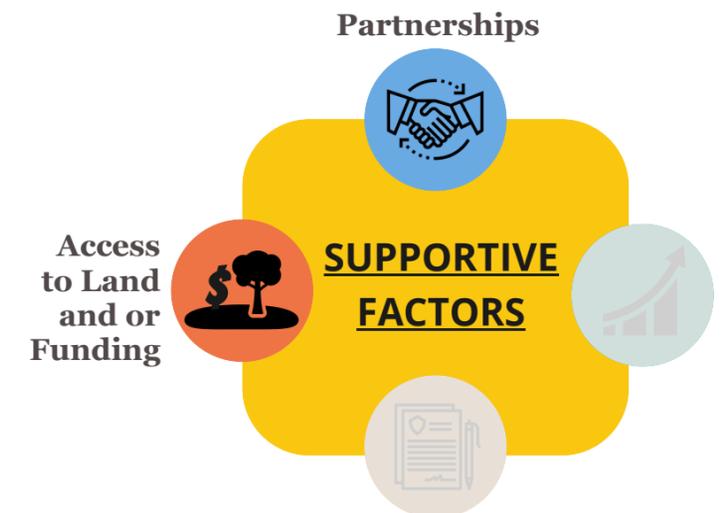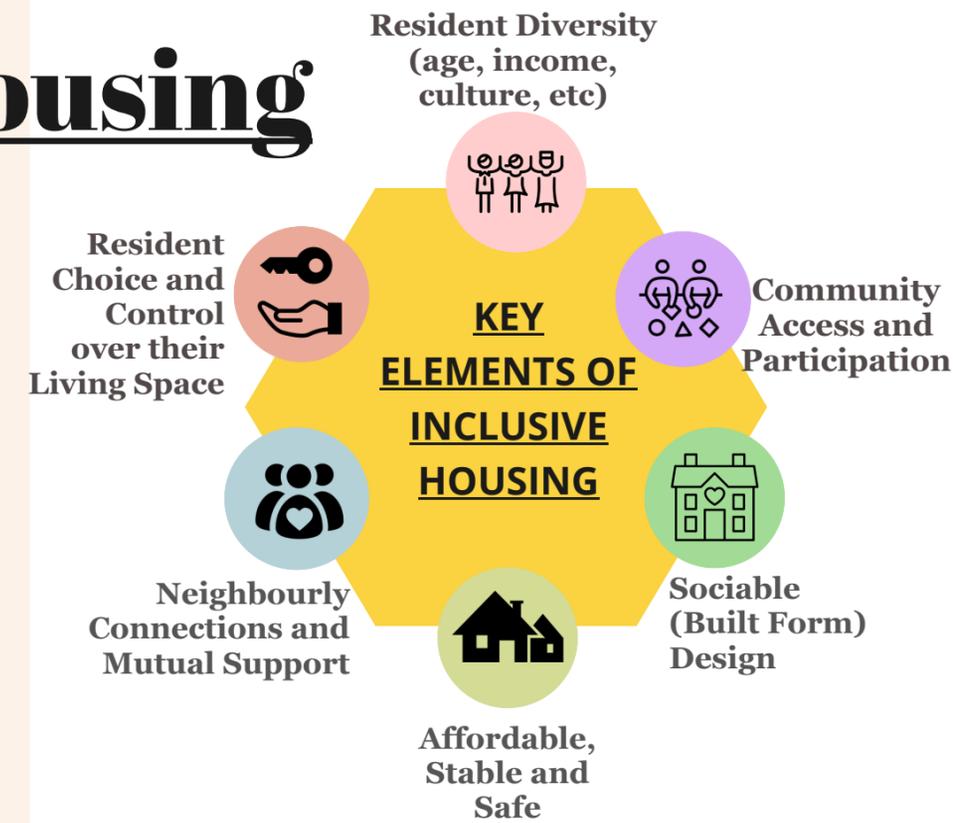
Examples

SällBo residents play cards together in a communal area, Photograph by Jonas Linne in The Guardian

UNITI Housing in Surrey BC owns and operates Chorus Apartments: 71 units, 21 of which are designated for people with developmental disabilities who have access to tailored supports as needed. The paradigm-shifting vision for Chorus was that of an apartment building like any other that creates opportunities for people with developmental disabilities to live their lives as independently as they choose in housing that reflects their broader community. Chorus is located next door to the Treehouse, which is a multi-purpose facility also built by UNITI to provide recreation programs for people with developmental disabilities as well as a range of services for non-disabled people.

In Sweden, SällBo is attracting international attention for it's multi-generational apartment that is "curing loneliness". Shared amenities from gyms to workshops, eating places and a designated "host" to animate connections are some of its inclusive features for intergenerational connections.
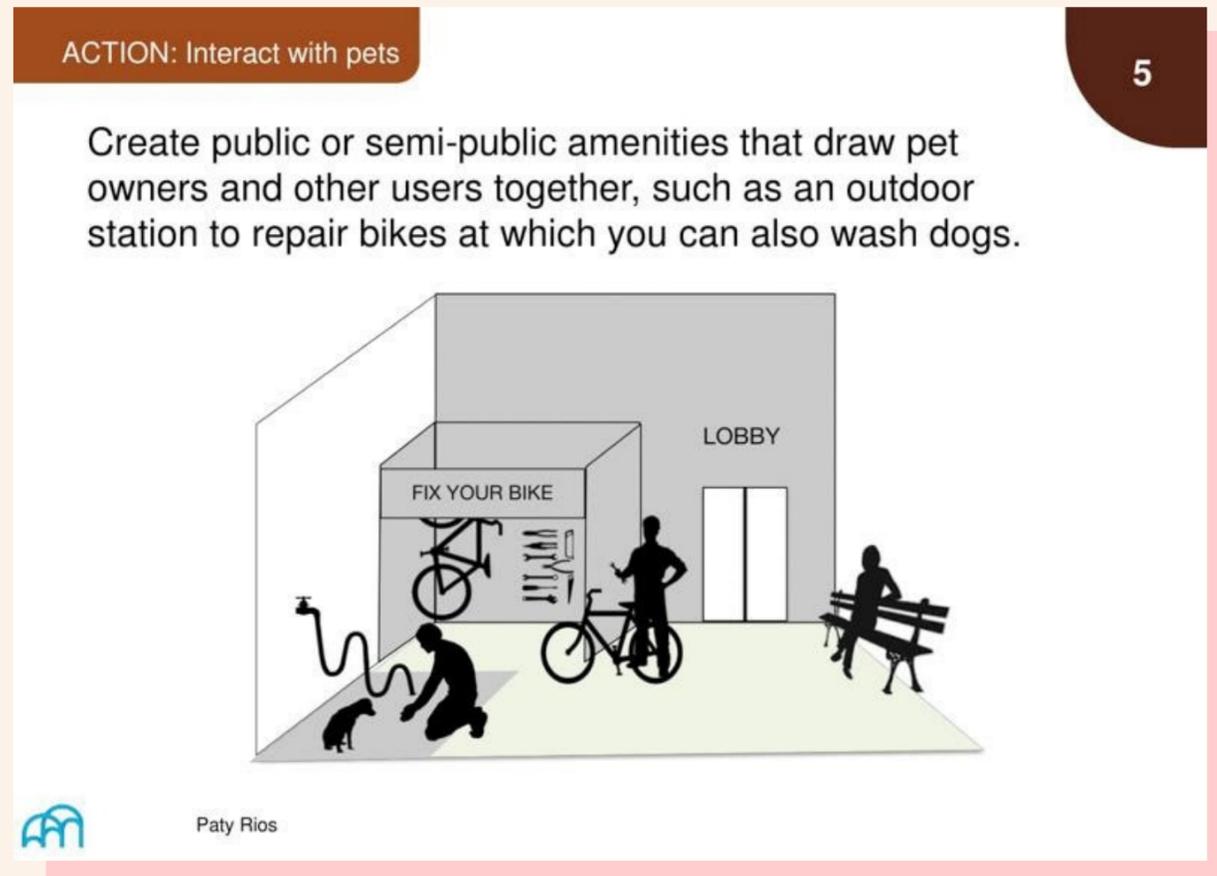

KEY ELEMENTS OF INCLUSIVE HOUSING

- Resident Diversity (age, income, culture, etc)
- Community Access and Participation
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- Neighbourly Connections and Mutual Support
- Resident Choice and Control over their Living Space

SUPPORTIVE FACTORS

- Partnerships
- Access to Land and or Funding

UNITI is a partnership between three organizations: Semiahmoo House Society (supports for people with disabilities), Penninsula Estates Housing Society (land) and the Semiahmoo Foundation (funding). When Chorus was built they expanded their network to include additional partners who shared their goal for inclusive housing: an architect and developer who had worked with them on building the Treehouse, Van City Credit Union (financing), BC Housing (capital grant) and an experienced social purpose real estate developer. A detailed case study for UNITI's Treehouse and Chorus developments is here.
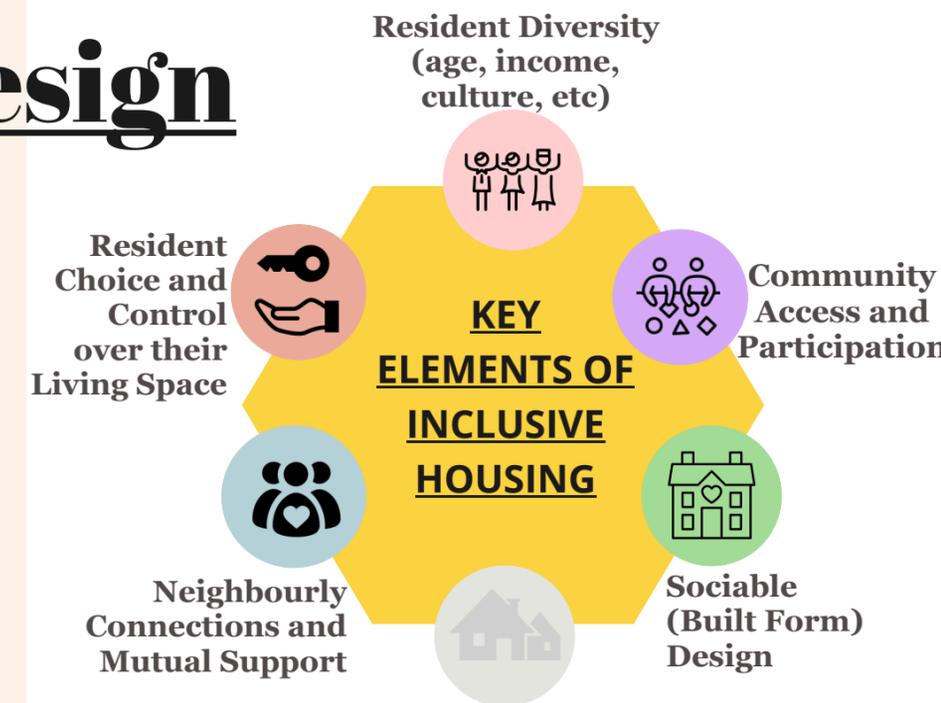
Sociable building & neighbourhood design

Sociable building and neighbourhood design is a growing field in response to mounting evidence of the negative impacts of isolation and loneliness on health and well-being; what Happy City calls a "crisis of dis-connection". This innovation is focused on using the built environment to support connectivity, health and well-being. Happy City has published a variety of resources including [Designed to Engage: Policy Recommendations for Promoting Sociability](#).

Examples

ACTION: Interact with pets

Create public or semi-public amenities that draw pet owners and other users together, such as an outdoor station to repair bikes at which you can also wash dogs.

5

LOBBY

FIX YOUR BIKE

Paty Rios

Building on decades of research, Happy City worked with various partners in the Vancouver area to test and develop the [Happy Homes Toolkit: Building Sociability through Multi-family Housing.](#) The toolkit includes "sociable strategies" related to nature, culture, doing things together, increasing safety, comfort, participation and more.

Municipalities like North Vancouver are beginning to integrate sociable design into their planning: North Vancouver Active Design Guidelines in support of Physical Fitness and Social Interaction in Buildings

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SUPPORTIVE FACTORS

Local Government Inclusive Policy/ Programs

Happy City's role as a catalyst for local government education and policy development is a good example of the importance of the power of intermediaries to create an enabling policy environment.