



Designing Density: Planning for social connectedness in multi-family housing

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Designing Density:

Social Connectedness in Multi-family Housing

- “ A socially connected community is a place where everyone feels like they belong. It’s a place where people know their neighbours and feel motivated to get involved, build relationships, and contribute to the creation of strong social networks... Socially connected communities support strong citizen engagement and increase the health and well-being of residents.¹

1.1. Introduction

“What can the Township of Esquimalt do to promote more social connectedness in multi-family housing?” That is the question we set out to answer through this Designing Density project, with supporting questions such as:

- ♦ Why is social connectedness important to our mental and physical well-being?
- ♦ What makes multi-family homes a desirable housing choice (or not)?
- ♦ How can we increase the attractiveness and livability of multi-family housing to families, especially those with young children?
- ♦ What are the things that the Township can do to support social connectedness?

For the purposes of this study, multi-family housing was defined to include row homes, townhomes, duplexes/triplexes, low-storey apartments and condominiums (4 storeys and less), and suites in single-family homes.

This report provides a summary of the answers that we gleaned through research, surveys, and focus group discussions during 2019.

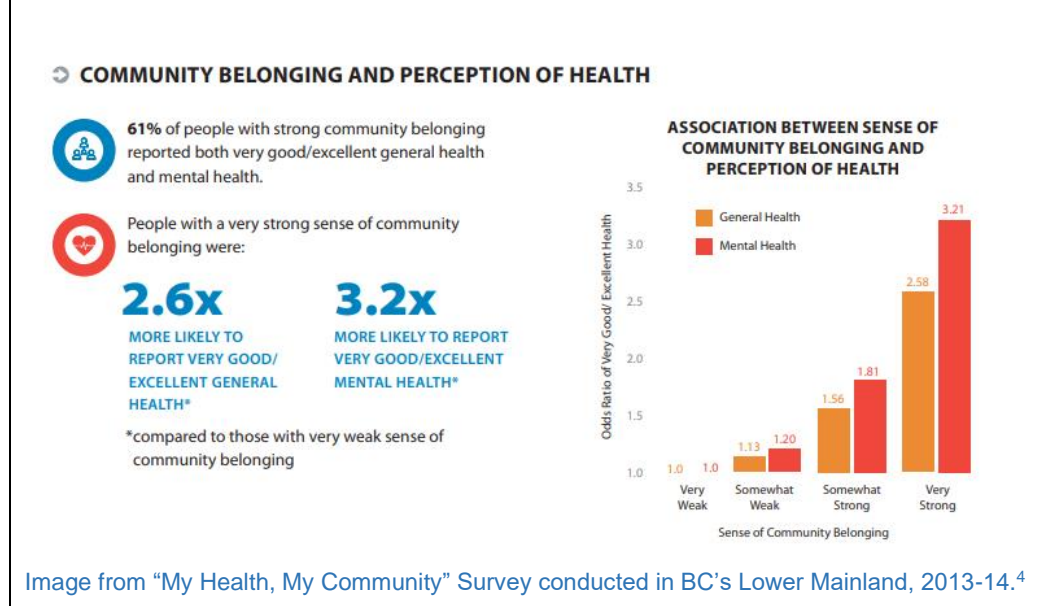
1.2. Social Connectedness and Impacts on Health

We all need social connectedness. As human beings, once our basic needs of housing, food and safety are met, the next most important thing is a sense of social connection. This includes time spent with friends and family, or a smile from a stranger in the street. When we learn to recognize our neighbours, get to know them by name, feel comfortable stopping and chatting, and perhaps even become friends, this is an important part of our happiness as individuals, and this type of interaction (or its absence) can have an impact on our mental and physical health.

Positive effects of social connection include:

- ♦ We live longer, by perhaps as much as 15 years.²
- ♦ We are healthier: Our immune system is stronger and we recover faster from disease.³

Figure 1: Relationship between social connection and health



- ♦ We are happier: We have more friends, lower rates of anxiety and depression, and higher self-esteem.⁵
- ♦ We build community: We have greater empathy towards others, leading us to be more trusting and cooperative with others,⁶ and we are more likely to be engaged in community through volunteering.⁷
- ♦ We are more productive at work.⁸
- ♦ We are more resilient: Social support helps to buffer the effects of an adverse event or stressful life circumstance.⁹
- ♦ We eat and sleep better: Healthy behaviours like physical activity and eating fruits and vegetables are more likely to be reported by those with greater social connectedness.¹⁰

Mental health is also affected by our built environment. Factors that positively affect mental health include a safe, clean and welcoming neighbourhood, opportunities to look at and go into greenspaces, and spaces for accessible community gardens.¹¹

On the flip side, studies have shown that lack of social connection is a greater detriment to health than obesity, smoking and high blood pressure. Socially isolated citizens are more vulnerable to the health impacts of climate change, relating to lack of support during heat events and flooding.¹²

Seniors especially face challenges from social isolation.¹³ These include impacts on physical and mental health (more drinking and smoking, poor eating, more falls, more heart disease and strokes, higher rates of depression and suicide), more elder abuse (including financial abuse), and increased fear of crime and theft, making seniors even less likely to participate in social activities.

From the research:

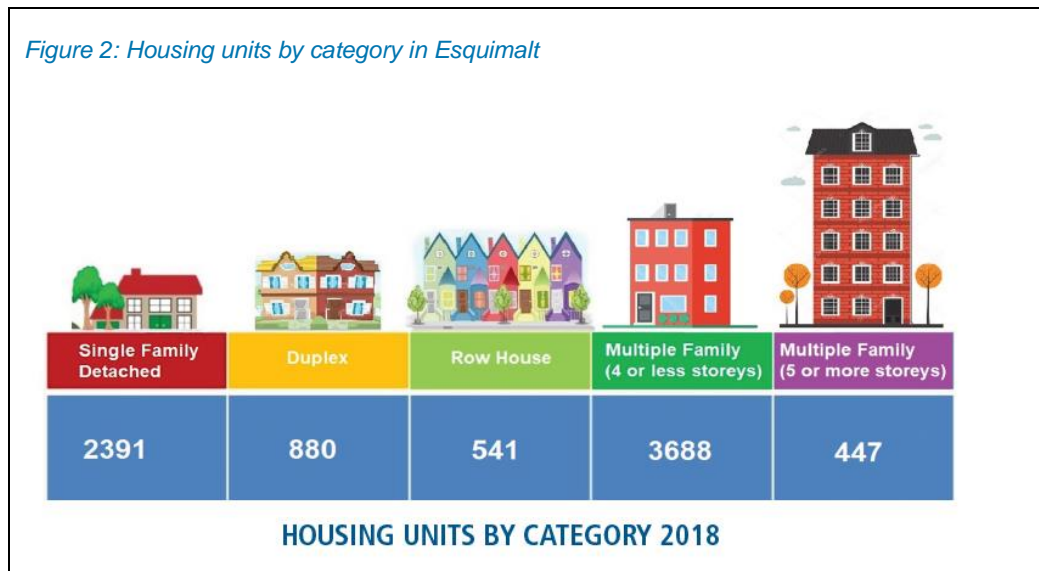
- “ The existence of strong social connections in one’s life has been shown to be as essential as getting an adequate amount of sleep, eating nutritiously, and not smoking. The evidence shows that people who have satisfying relationships are happier, have fewer health issues, and live longer.¹⁴*
- “ After core needs are met, social relationships are the most powerful driver of health and well-being—in cities and across nations. While the pleasure we experience after buying a new car or house wears off quickly, the satisfaction that comes with social bonds is long-lasting.¹⁵*
- “ Canadians with a strong or very strong sense of community belonging are over twice as likely to report that their health is good as compared with people who have a weak or very weak sense of community belonging.¹⁶*
- “ Research shows that belonging to social groups and networks is just as important a predictor of health as are diet and exercise.¹⁷*
- “ Lack of social networks causes those affected to feel stress more acutely due to a lack of social connections that buffer stress; further, lack of social supports causes stress which interferes with quality and quantity of sleep.¹⁸*
- “ 22% of quite/extremely stressed people indicated social isolation as a factor in their stress.¹⁹*



1.3. Multi-family Housing in Esquimalt

- “ Multi-family housing offers both opportunities and challenges for supporting social connections and building a sense of community. When we foster social connectedness in multi-family housing, we help people to develop a sense of belonging, not just with their neighbours, but also with the wider community.²⁰

Multi-family housing is an increasingly important part of the housing mix in Esquimalt, accounting for about two-thirds of all housing units (Figure 2).



Almost all new housing development is focused on some form of multi-family units, including:

- ♦ Rowhouses and townhouses;
- ♦ Duplexes and multiplexes;
- ♦ Apartments and condominiums; and
- ♦ In-home suites.

Focusing on multi-family housing creates many benefits for Esquimalt and its residents such as:

- ♦ Greater affordability, and more housing choices.
- ♦ Better transit service enabled by increased density.
- ♦ An ability to walk or cycle to destinations, creating better health outcomes and more personal interactions.
- ♦ More people supporting local businesses.
- ♦ A better ability to meet climate goals through reduced reliance on single occupant vehicles (residents have a choice to walk, cycle or use transit).
- ♦ More “eyes on the street”, creating greater real and perceived safety for residents.

Creating homes where people want to live and that encourage social connectedness by design can contribute to positive health and well-being outcomes for Esquimalt residents.

2. Reaching Out: The public engagement process

This project involved a combination of research into best practices for social connectedness and multi-family housing, and hearing directly from Esquimalt residents and local experts.

<i>Figure 3: Engagement summary</i>	
Five focus groups	33 stakeholders representing residents, community associations, developers and builders, architects, landscape architects, housing providers, faith organizations, CFB Esquimalt and non-profit groups
One community survey	438 respondents
Three pop-up events	Farmers' market, CFB Esquimalt Naval and Military Museum open house and Esquimalt Adventure Park
One open house	October 2019

Focus Groups

A series of five focus groups was held with key informants and residents in February and March 2019. The 33 participants included residents, designers, developers and builders, representatives of numerous community organizations and agencies and individuals with diverse expertise in this area. The full list of attendees is available in Appendix A.

Focus group participants were asked either:

- ♦ What features in multi-family housing make it more conducive to the social health and well-being for all residents? What should be avoided?
- ♦ What are the barriers to providing these types of features in multi-family housing? Are there ways to address these barriers?
- ♦ What policies have other municipalities used to create “excellent” multi-family housing?

Or:

- ♦ What’s already working well for multi-family housing owners/residents in Esquimalt?
- ♦ What’s missing from existing multi-family housing in Esquimalt? What would make it more attractive to families? Seniors? People with disabilities?
- ♦ Which multi-family housing features are most important to you (and your clients)?

A summary of input from the focus groups is provided in Appendix B.

Focus group participants also contributed valuable feedback on a pilot version of the community survey prepared in advance of the final version.

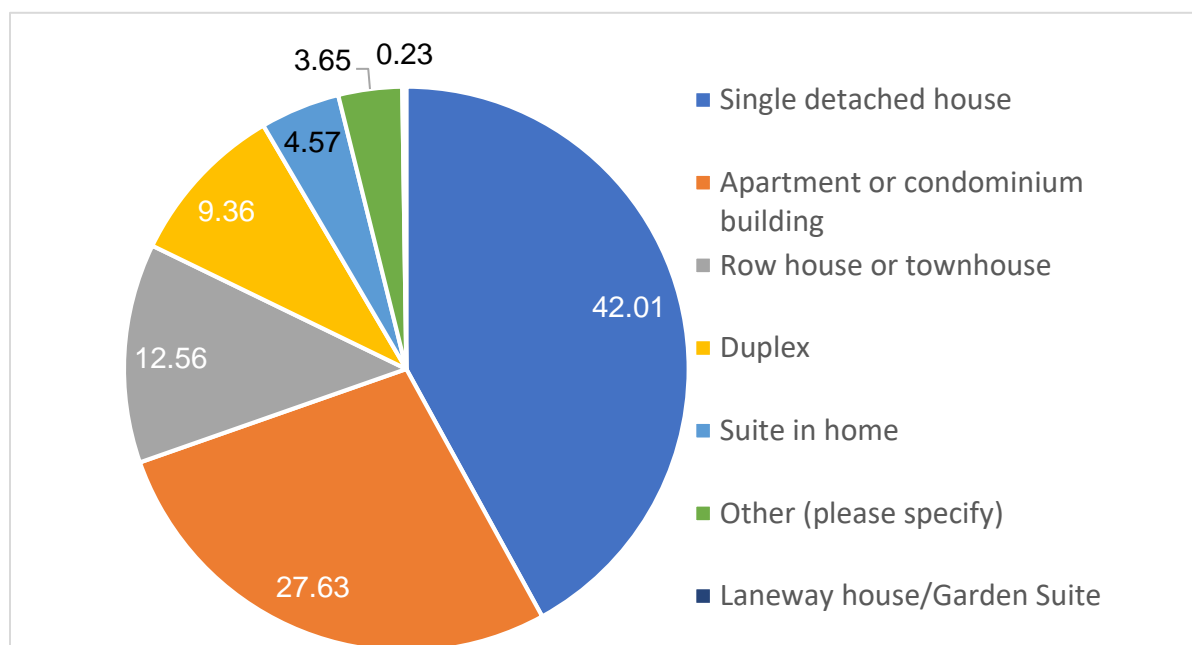
Survey

Throughout the summer of 2019, we provided opportunity for people to fill out an online survey (Appendix C). Respondents could access the survey on the Township's website via a short URL which was advertised through Facebook, Twitter, 'The Current' newsletter, community electronic notice boards and postcards made especially for the project. A total of 438 people responded to the survey, with more than half currently living in multi-family housing.

While the results are not statistically significant (as this was not a random sample), the responses provide an important insight into people's housing desires and choices. The responses provided are also very consistent with research findings from other communities.

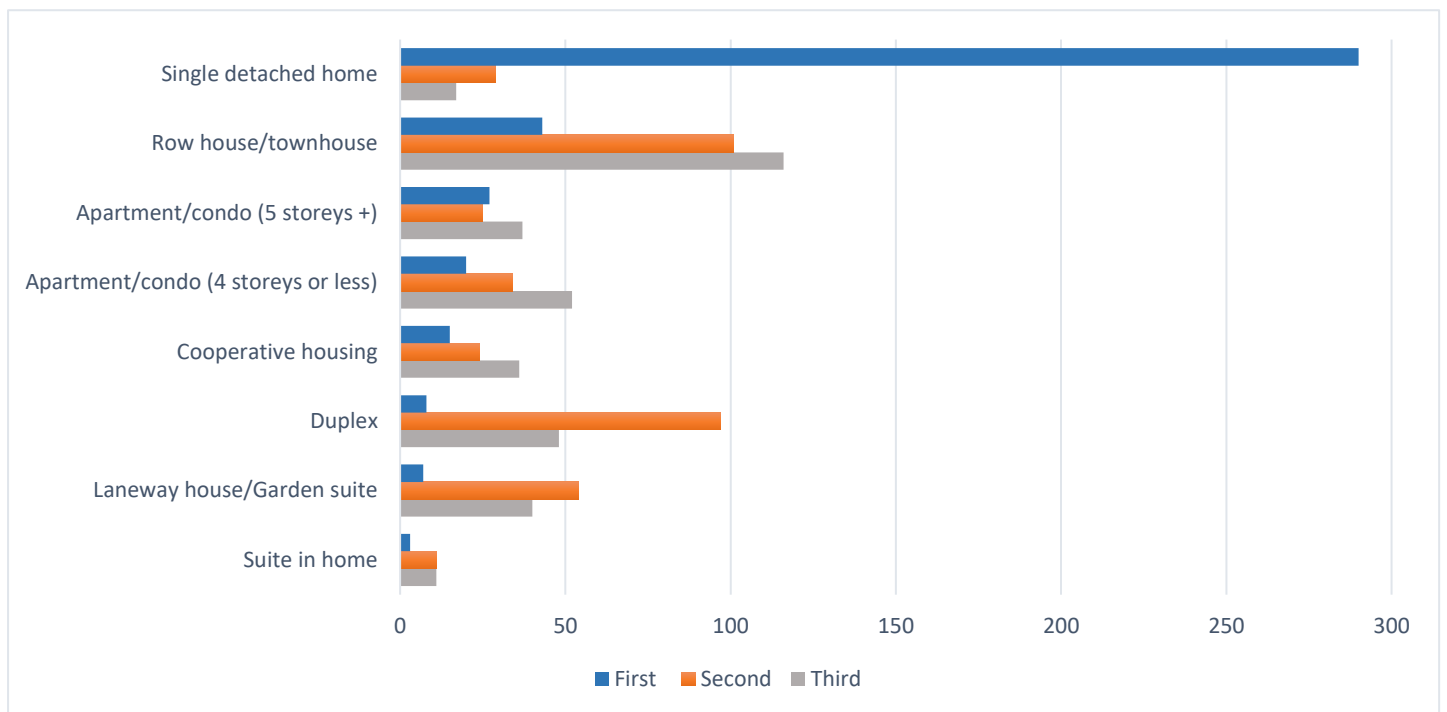
Many survey respondents currently live in single detached homes (Figure 4), however almost one-third of these completed the full survey based on prior and other experiences with multi-family housing. One quarter (25%) of respondents have children under 12 at home, and 16% of households included teens/young adults. Almost one quarter (23%) were single people aged 26–64. Many respondents were seniors, living alone (16%) or with another senior (30%).

Figure 4: Current housing (% respondents)



When asked about their preferred form of housing (if cost were not a factor), the most common choices were single detached home, followed by rowhouse/townhouse (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Preferred form of housing (if cost not a factor)



Reasons for not choosing a multi-family housing option as a first choice included:

- ♦ Lack of privacy, noisy, too crowded, too close to neighbours.
- ♦ Size of home (too small).
- ♦ Lack of space for gardening, playspace, hobbies or storage.
- ♦ Dealing with strata councils, restrictions on what you can/cannot do (e.g., have pets).
- ♦ Dealing with other residents (noise, lack of respect, smoking).
- ♦ Lack of sun exposure or rooms with windows.
- ♦ Preference for ground level access.
- ♦ Traffic and parking.

Nevertheless, comments throughout the survey indicated that many people enjoy living in multi-family homes.

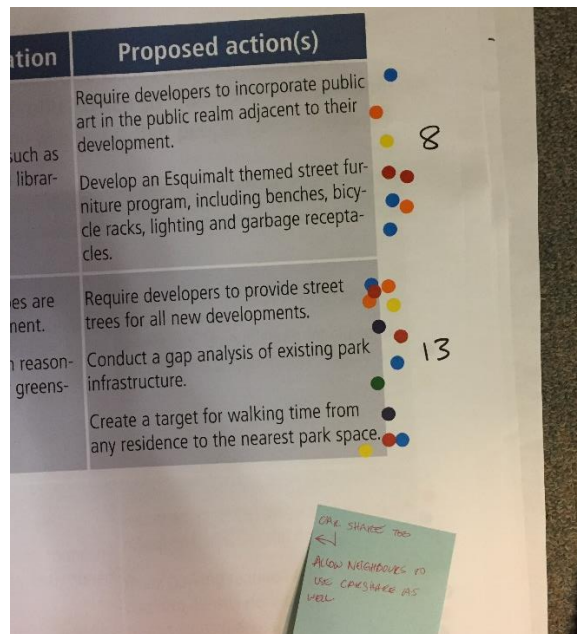
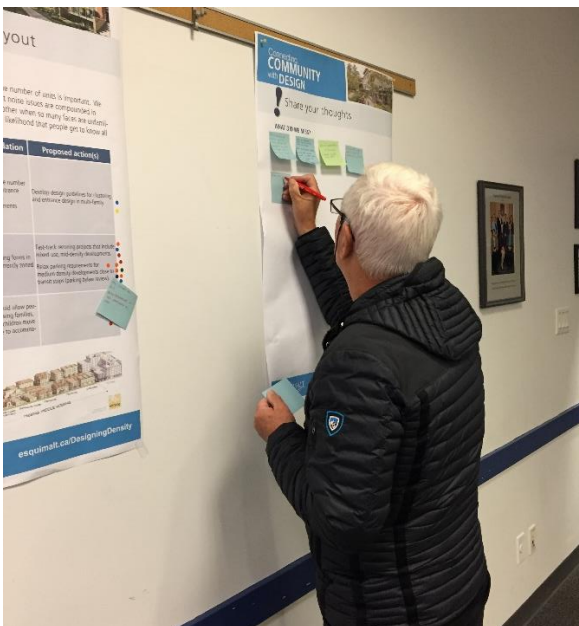
Pop Up Events

Three “pop-up” events were hosted by municipal staff to raise awareness of the Designing Density work and to encourage submissions to the online survey.

Open House

An open house was held at Municipal Hall in October 2019, to provide an opportunity for those interested to see and comment on the results of the work to date.

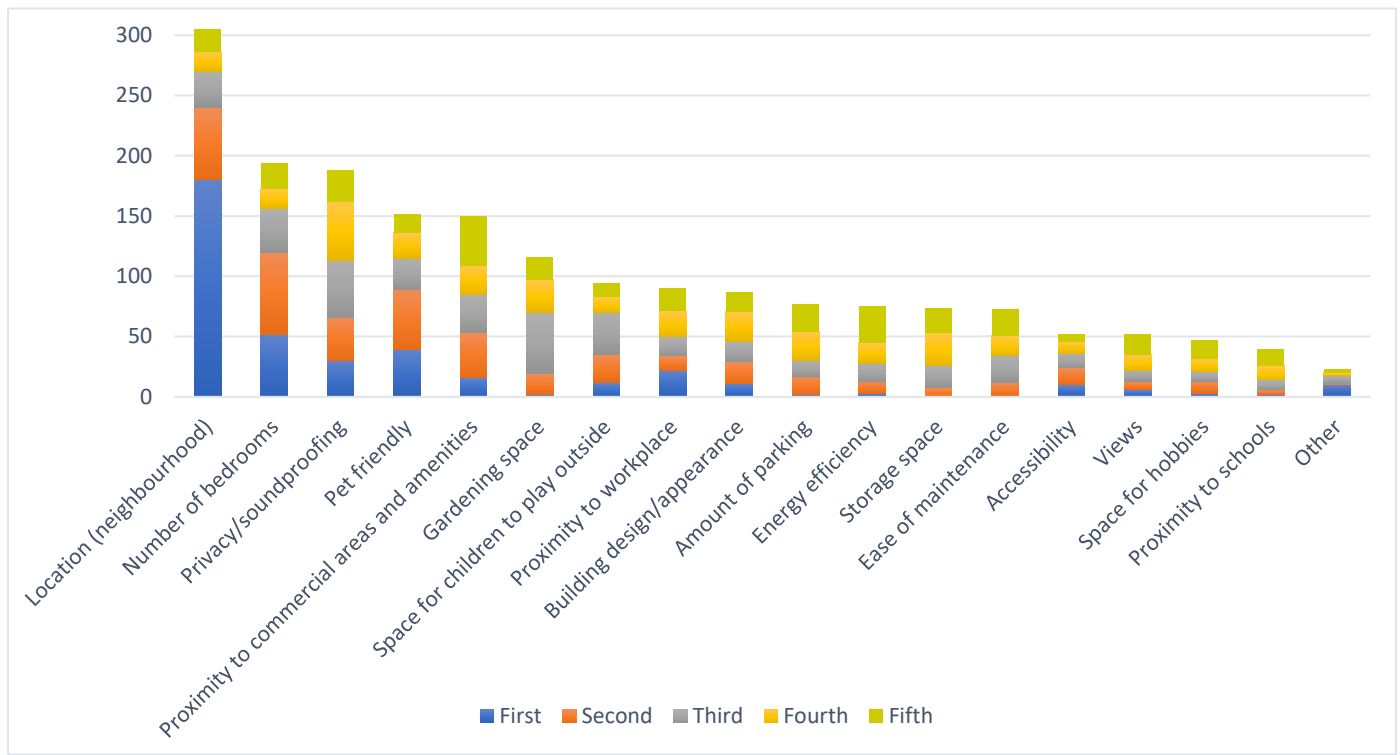
Figure 6: Images from the open house



3. Creating Connectedness by Design

To provide greater understanding of what helps to make multi-family a desirable housing choice, the survey asked what factors (beyond affordability) were important in choosing a home. More than half the respondents indicated that their neighbourhood (including proximity to services and amenities), number of bedrooms, privacy/soundproofing and having pet-friendly options were among their “top five” (Figure 7).

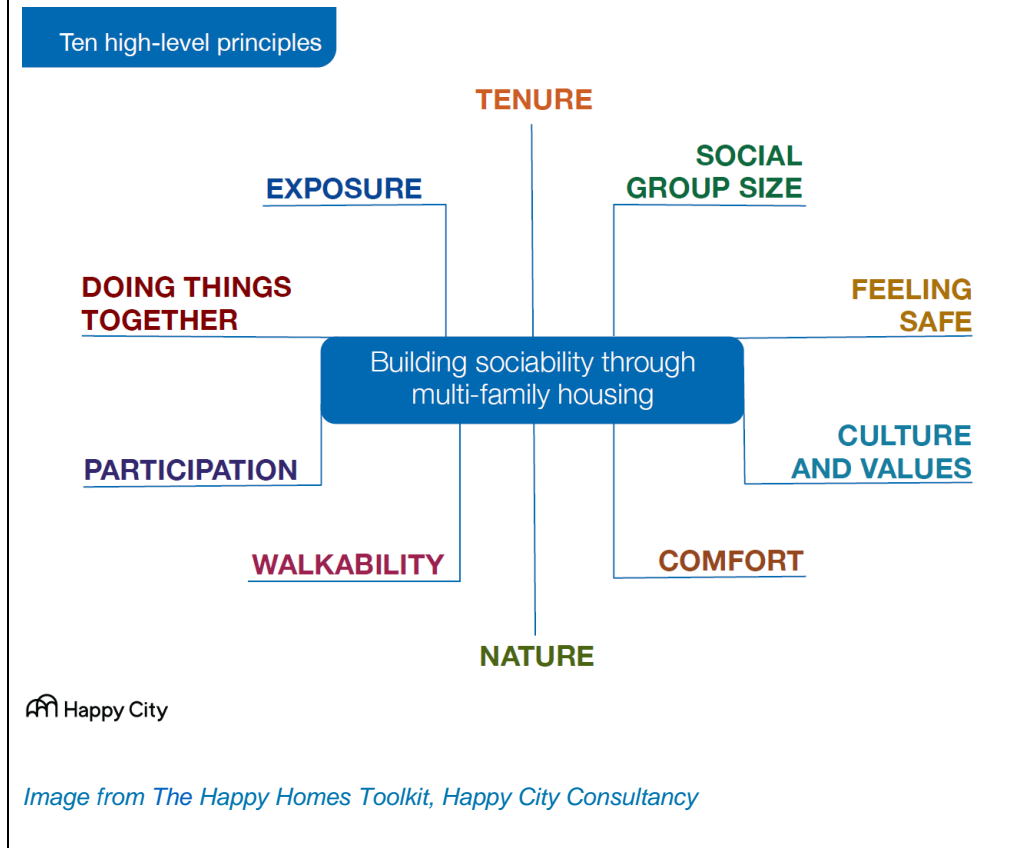
Figure 7: Factors considered in choosing a home (other than price)



These factors are explored in greater detail on the following pages. Each section looks at:

- ♦ The impact on social connectedness and well-being (drawn from research);
- ♦ What we heard (from the survey, focus groups and open house);
- ♦ Best practices (from research); and
- ♦ Actions that can be taken by the Township to address or implement these ideas.

Figure 8: Happy Homes principles



Many of the best practices are drawn from the Happy Homes Report²¹ prepared for the City of Vancouver. This report, prepared by the Happy City Consultancy, includes practices drawn from a broad range of research and on-the-ground experience. Their findings are summarized into ten main principles (Figure 8). Esquimalt's Designing Density project focuses in particular on 'Doing things together', 'Nature', and 'Feeling safe'.

Actions for the Township include changes to bylaws, policies and plans. As well, the Township is considering developing a social well-being checklist (similar to the green building checklist) that would encourage developers to consider designs and developments that will support social connectedness.

3.1. Building Location and Neighbourhood

Location, location, location. People like to be close to the services they use, including shopping, schools, parks, transit service, recreation centres, libraries, and other amenities.

3.1.1. Impact on social connectedness and well-being

A building's neighbourhood is part of its appeal and can influence the ease of making social connections.

Having amenities and services within walking or cycling distance make it more likely that people will choose to walk or bike, an option that is healthier for them and for the environment. For some people, this may avoid the need for car ownership, making life more affordable. It also improves our mental health, as we are more likely to engage with and trust our neighbours and get involved in local decision making.²²

Feeling safe in your neighbourhood is important. Knowing your neighbours helps you to feel safe, and you are more likely to spend time out in your neighbourhood if you feel safe doing so.

Nearby parks and greenspaces offer multiple benefits. There is strong evidence that the experience of being in and viewing nature has significant physical and mental benefits, including increased social well-being and reduced stress.²³ Having desirable places to spend time outside also makes it more likely that we will meet and talk to other people in our neighbourhoods. Shared places where children can safely play are good places for families to meet and socialize. Access to natural outdoor spaces makes it more likely that people will be physically active. Even a brief interaction with nature, such as a ten-minute walk or a view of green space, can have restorative effects.²⁴



From the research:

- “ Mixed-use neighbourhoods that encourage walking are most likely to be associated with positive social encounters and a strong sense of community.²⁵*
- “ ...people living within 0.6 miles of a protected bikeway got about 45 minutes more exercise biking and walking per week than people living 2.5 miles away.²⁶*
- “ People who live close to parks use them for physical activity. Studies find that people who live within 800 metres of a park get 50% of their vigorous physical activity while at the park. People who live just 800m further away get just 16% of their physical activity while at the park.²⁷*
- “ Access to nature is strongly linked to positive neighborhood relationships and trust among community members.²⁸*
- “ Urban green space is one of the strongest correlates of health and happiness. People who live near public green spaces are more involved in social activities, know more of their neighbours and receive more visitors at home.²⁹*
- “ Both the quantity and quality of green space are linked to social cohesion at the neighbourhood scale. Conversely, a shortage of green space within urban environments has been linked to feelings of loneliness and lack of social support.³⁰*
- “ Children with ADHD particularly benefit from access to greenery: a 20-minute walk in an urban park benefitted the concentration performance of children with ADHD at least as much as prescribed ADHD medications.³¹*

3.1.2. What we heard

People want a “nice” neighbourhood with a good quality of life and well-kept buildings, a quiet location with little traffic noise, views, nearby greenspace, walking distance to the ocean, lots of trees, and proximity to a frequent transit service. They like being close to services and amenities such as shopping, schools, the recreation centre and library.

They want a neighbourhood that feels safe for themselves and their children, including safe routes for walking and cycling.

You said:

- “ Quiet location with little traffic noise, views.*
- “ Close to shops and services (e.g., rec centre and library), transit, parks and greenspace, walking and cycling routes.*
- “ Prioritize multi-family close to schools for walking.*
- “ Prioritize green spaces and ensure all residents are within walking distance to a green space.*

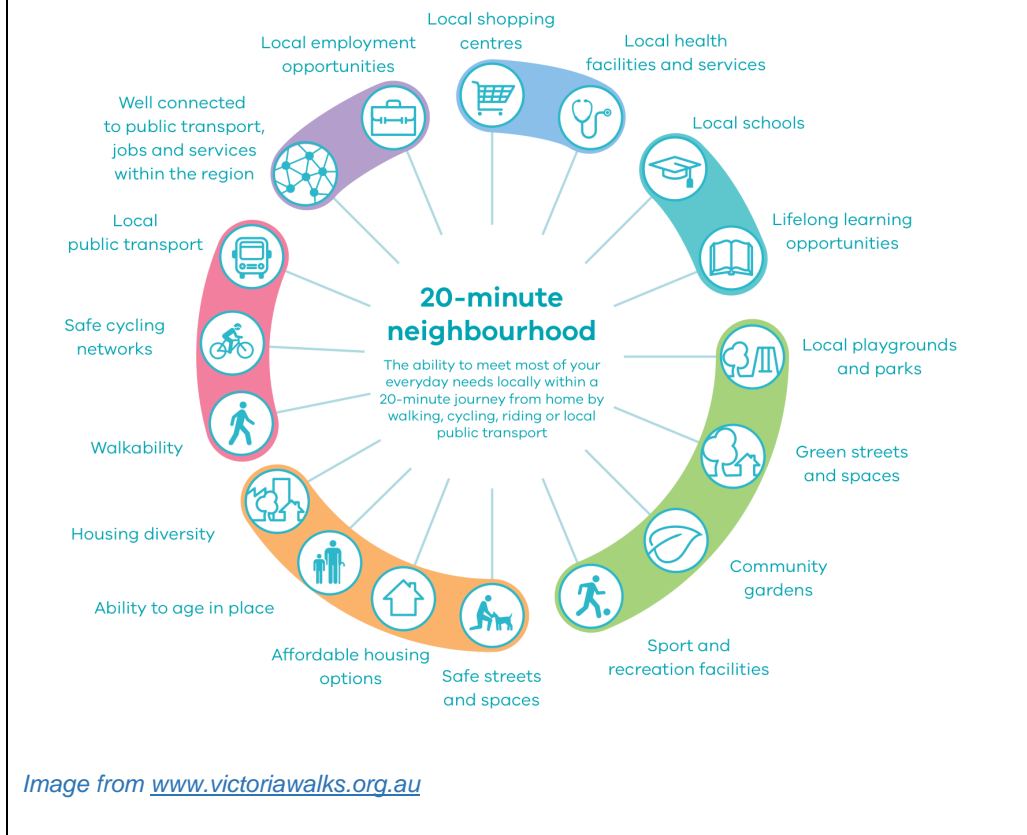
3.1.3. *Best practices*

- ♦ Locate multi-family housing close to parks and services, preferably near to but not on busy routes, and on a safe, comfortable route to those amenities.
- ♦ Create accessible spaces and connections that promote walking, biking and casual social encounters.
- ♦ Keep parks safe and well-maintained, and include attractive recreational facilities.
- ♦ Have a system of parks and public spaces such as:
 - Children's playgrounds: For young families, this can be an easy place to meet other families with similar-aged children (as well as a place for kids to burn off energy!)
 - Adult exercise parks: These encourage adults to keep fit and are places to meet others who are like-minded.
 - Pet-friendly parks: Dog parks provide a place for dogs to run off leash, but also a place where dog owners can meet and chat.
 - Places to have a picnic with friends and family (important for people who do not have private backyard space).
 - Natural open spaces to go for a walk or contemplate nature.
 - Community gardens (either at the building complex or nearby): These are increasingly popular and provide opportunities for people of all ages to socialize, learn from each other and grow their own food.
 - Include adaptive playground equipment and wheelchair-accessible paths.
- ♦ Use CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) features such as natural surveillance (eyes on street), access control, creating territoriality/sense of ownership, that can help to improve real and perceived safety in a neighbourhood.

3.1.4. *Recommendations and actions*

- **Locate multi-family housing, especially those with larger units, on quiet streets wherever possible.**
 - ❖ Review land use designations in the Official Community Plan for multi-family to ensure it is distributed on quiet streets as well as busier roads.
 - ❖ Require multi-family buildings that are located on non-arterial roads to incorporate some larger units for families and family-friendly amenities.
- **Ensure enough space is zoned to meet the commercial needs of future residents.**
 - ❖ Undertake a commercial needs assessment to determine the amount and type of commercial space that will be required to accommodate Esquimalt's future population.
 - ❖ Consider the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood (Figure 9) when assessing rezoning applications for multi-family developments.

Figure 9: 20 minute neighbourhood



- **Ensure that all residents are within reasonable walking distance of a park or greenspace.**
 - ❖ Conduct a gap analysis of existing park green space network.
 - ❖ Create a target for walking time from any residence to the nearest park space.
 - ❖ Consider adding contribution to public park space to amenity list for bonus density.
 - ❖ Seek opportunities to replenish Parkland Acquisition Fund.
- **Encourage place-making activities such as public art, little free libraries or tool libraries.**
 - ❖ Require developers to incorporate public art in the public realm adjacent to their development.
 - ❖ Develop an Esquimalt-themed street furniture program, including benches, bicycle racks, lighting and garbage receptacles.

3.2. Unit and Building Size

People want a home that is “not too big, not too small”. Different people have different space needs, and these needs can change over time.

3.2.1. Impact on social connectedness and well-being

The right kind of living space enables different lifestyle choices and can make multi-family living a realistic option. For example, if you love kayaking but have nowhere to store your gear, that housing unit may not be a good fit for you. Some people are looking for specific features such as communal kitchens or space for hobbies.

Affordability of housing helps people to afford the other necessities of life, including adequate food, medications and energy bills. Having energy efficient homes means that less money is spent on heating and cooling, with more disposable income for other needs.

The number of bedrooms affect who can live there. Most families want three or more bedrooms (also a good option for young people who are co-living). Having guest rooms available may enable visitors to come and stay.

Flexibility of space is important. Family size and family needs can change over time, and if the home design allows people to add bedrooms for growing families, rent out unneeded space as children move out, or create an in-law suite to accommodate aging parents. Having flexibility may allow people to stay long-term in their area where they know their neighbours.

The size of the building (number of units) is also important. People can be isolated or feel lonely in large apartment complexes, particularly in buildings lacking centralized social hubs.³² A building with a smaller number of units increases the likelihood that people get to know all the other building residents.

From the research:

- “ Lower housing costs are associated with an increase in disposable income, making it easier for individuals and families to afford non-housing related essentials such as medication and nutritious food.³³
- “ The longer people can stay in their community, the greater the bonds of trust and local social connection.³⁴
- “ People, both renters and home owners, who have lived in their neighbourhood for 13 or more years are 2.5 times more likely to report a strong sense of community belonging than those who have lived in the community for 2 years or less.³⁵
- “ Social group size has a direct influence on the quality and intensity of trusting relationships that people develop.³⁶
- “ Social well-being research shows that people who live in high-rise apartment buildings are more likely to experience social isolation, especially if they live on a high floor.³⁷

3.2.2. What we heard

“Number of bedrooms” was an important factor in choosing where to live. Bedrooms should not be next to noisy areas (e.g., kitchens), and not adjacent to each other. Multi-family buildings should offer a range of unit sizes, from studio to 3 or even 4 bedrooms. Lock-off areas that can be rented or integrated into the main living area provide flexibility over time.

Storage space is essential, not just within the home but also secure places to store larger items such as bikes, recreational equipment, out-of-season needs (e.g., Christmas decorations), and “stuff”. If there is appropriate storage space, the living unit can be smaller.

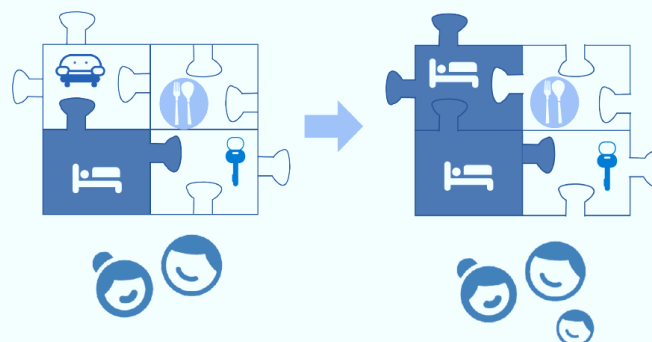
People like a smaller number of units so that they can get to know all of their neighbours.

You said:

- “ Provide flexibility, e.g., through a unit that can be locked off and rented can provide extra income or an in-law suite; or can be integrated into the main living area if a family needs more space.
- “ I have lived in low-rise (6 storey) and mid/high rise (14 storey) and there is a stark difference. Highrise is vertical suburbs and doesn't foster community. Good low-rise that is well adapted to the urban scale in the traditional sense generates rich communities and a potentially beautiful urban environment. Highrise fractures and isolates, and commodifies housing.
- “ Storage for hobbies and activities is important...kayaks, strollers for families, bicycles, etc. Shared woodworking spaces with lockers would be ideal. Shared sewing rooms, etc.

Figure 10: Flexible spaces

Design housing with flexible spaces, such as dividable rooms, secondary suites and exterior additions.



 Happy City

Image: Sandra Shanoada

Image from Happy Homes Toolkit, Sandra Shanoada

3.2.3. *Best practices*

- ♦ Provide a variety of housing forms and mixed income housing developments to increase access to local, affordable, and diverse housing options. These help people to stay in their communities longer and improves their ability to afford other basic needs such as health care and nutritious food, while decreasing stress.
- ♦ Provide a mix of small and larger units to meet the diverse needs of residents.
- ♦ Require energy efficiency features to help people live comfortably and more affordably in their homes.
- ♦ Ensure that the design and mix of dwellings can meet residents' current and anticipated needs over time.
- ♦ Create spaces that work for varied age groups, so tenants have the option to remain in the same building over the long term.
- ♦ Provide ample, secure storage. This should include space for bikes, recreational equipment, seasonal needs and more. Storage space within the unit is also beneficial.

3.2.4. *Recommendations and actions*

- **Promote a wide range of housing forms in residential neighbourhoods currently zoned for single-family homes.**
 - ❖ Fast-track rezoning projects that include mixed-use, medium density developments.
- **Encourage designs which would allow people to add bedrooms for growing families, rent out unneeded space as children move out, or create an in-law suite to accommodate aging parents.**
 - ❖ Address space flexibility in the social well-being checklist.
- **Encourage designs that provide adequate storage space.**
 - ❖ Address storage in the social well-being checklist.
- **Accelerate the construction of highly efficient, carbon-free housing.**
 - ❖ Consider implanting higher levels of the BC Step Code.
 - ❖ Develop incentive programs and/or financial tools to accelerate residential retrofits for energy efficiency and fuel switching.
 - ❖ Continue supporting third party certified green building programs such as Passive House, Built-Green and LEED through rezoning process.
 - ❖ Utilize existing Development Permit Area for Energy Conservation and Greenhouse Gas Reduction to leverage improvements in energy efficiency and low carbon fuel sources in residential housing.

3.3. Building Design

Building design affects the desirability of a multi-family home and impacts how the residents interact with each other.

3.3.1. *Impact on social connectedness and well-being*

If a space feels friendly, people will be friendlier! The front door is where your neighbours see you coming and going, and get to recognize your face even if they don't know your name. Windows and natural light make us feel better and sleep better. Hallways that are wide enough for strollers and wheelchairs make it easier to move around, and to have more sociable interactions as we pass each other by. Open stairwells encourage use of stairs, so are good for getting exercise and meeting neighbours.

Good quality housing is associated with an increased sense of safety, decreased crime, greater social well-being and improved quality of life.³⁸ Indoor air quality and appropriate heating and ventilation helps to maintain good respiratory health and is especially important for children with asthma.³⁹

Also important is not interacting with neighbours when you don't want to. That means not hearing their music or noise of children playing, not smelling smoking or cooking odours. There is a need for a balance between design that encourages casual connections but also allows for privacy, giving people the choice whether or not to interact.

From the research:

- “ *Daylighting—the illumination of buildings by natural light—supports resident psychological well-being and can reduce total building energy costs by as much as one-third.*⁴⁰
- “ *People who live in spaces that give them a greater sense of control over their exposure to others are more likely to build positive social connections.*⁴¹
- “ *... designers can avoid empty and antisocial areas by avoiding blank walls when possible. People tend to bypass blank walls and they can discourage social interactions. These design elements can affect safety and allow people to feel more comfortable outside their homes.*⁴²

3.3.2. *What we heard*

Commonly mentioned features of “good” multi-family housing were:

- ♦ Quality construction and well-designed buildings, proving a sense of separation and privacy.
- ♦ Open concept designs, large rooms, wide corridors, lots of end units.
- ♦ Large windows that provide views and allow for cross-ventilation.
- ♦ Excellent soundproofing between units (and cupboards that don't slam!).
- ♦ Access to outside spaces such as a rooftop garden, ground floor patios or large balconies.

- ♦ Ability to personalize your own space, including the front door.
- ♦ Use of non-toxic materials (paints, finishes and carpets), especially where young children will be playing.

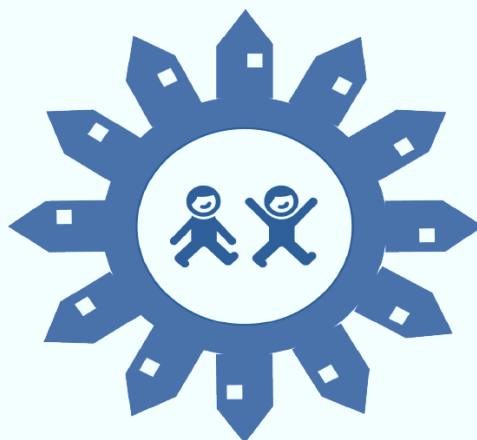
Design aspects to be avoided included intercoms (that can be hard for children and some adults to use), long corridors with identical doors, and apartments with no interaction spaces outside the unit.

You said:

- “ *Design and placemaking important, creating a sense of home.*
- “ *A real front door, that you can paint, express individuality, have your own plants.*
- “ *Balancing accessible community "vibe" with ability to find respite and privacy is important.*
- “ *In narrow hallways and elevators, space is small and people shut down, retreat into their own personal space (does not encourage interaction).*
- “ *Design—when everyone's unit is the same floor plan it is depressing, no pride, individuality.*
- “ *Better soundproofing of units to limit complaints of household noise.*

Figure 11: Create sub-clusters

In standard multi-family housing, create sub-clusters where no more than 12 households share a semi-private space.



 Happy City

Image: Sandra Shanoada

Image from the Happy Homes Toolkit, Sandra Shanoada

3.3.3. *Best practices*

- ♦ Gather homes into clusters that provide both intimate and casual meeting spaces. Ensure residents experience regular, close contact with no more than a few dozen people in semi-private spaces.
- ♦ Provide clearly delineated private, semi-private and public spaces.
- ♦ Provide good soundproofing and ventilation.
- ♦ Make use of natural light as much as possible.
- ♦ In larger multi-family units, use design to help create a sense of privacy and make it feel like there are fewer units, e.g., cluster small groups of front doors in multiple locations.

3.3.4. *Recommendations and actions*

- **Encourage developers to limit the number of households sharing a main entrance and/or the number of clusters in townhouse/rowhouse developments.**
 - ❖ Develop design guidelines for clustering and entrance design in multi-family developments.
- **Develop a social well-being checklist that addresses:**
 - ❖ Design for individual privacy as well as shared spaces
 - ❖ Natural lighting where possible
 - ❖ Welcoming entranceways/lobbies, that encourage casual interaction with fellow residents
 - ❖ An open stairwell to encourage activity and interaction
 - ❖ Ability to customize personal space (painting, landscaping)
 - ❖ Avoidance of long corridors with identical doors
 - ❖ Excellent soundproofing
 - ❖ External and internal seating that allows for longer interactions
 - ❖ Add qualities or aesthetics that make that space distinctive

3.4. Social Amenity Spaces and Community-building

Offering different opportunities and approaches for social connection is important in creating a welcoming and inclusive community for all.

3.4.1. Impact on social connectedness and well-being

Even simple eye contact and listening to others can foster social connection and lessen feelings of isolation.⁴³ Informal social ties provide a feeling of home, security, and belonging, which have positive effects on people's mental and physical health. People with large and diverse social networks and high-quality relationships are better protected against depression.⁴⁴

Having spaces within the multi-family building complex that are designed for casual or planned interactions makes it much easier for that interaction to happen! Spaces for casual interactions can include the building foyer, the parking lot, stairwells and hallways, a rooftop garden, the gym and the laundry room. Some spaces are specifically designed for interaction, such as community kitchens, hobby/workshop space and common rooms.

Social events help to create community and build trust and friendships among the building residents. If people know their neighbours, they are more likely to look out for them, to check up on them, to help them when needed. The Building Resilient Neighbourhoods (BRN) is a collaborative effort to help create more resilient communities and neighbourhoods in British Columbia.⁴⁵ One of its first projects took place in Vic West and led to the first Vic West Street Fest. BRN is now collaborating with the Vancouver-based Hey Neighbour Collective⁴⁶ which encourages residents to get to know each other through activities organized by resident animators. The Hey Neighbour! pilot project aimed to increase a sense of community amongst residents within their buildings while decreasing their frequency and intensity of loneliness.

Having vibrant streets can also create a place for people to connect.⁴⁷

From the research:

- “ *Creating communities where people have the opportunity to meet, be included, and feel safe can be important for developing social connections that enhance the psychological and physical responses of individuals to stress.*⁴⁸
- “ *Residents who have opportunities to do meaningful or enjoyable things together are more likely to develop a sense of trust and connection.*⁴⁹
- “ *Pet owners are more likely to develop social relationships with their neighbours and interact on a casual basis, which can lead to meaningful and trusting relationships with other pet owners as well as with neighbours and people living in the community.*⁵⁰
- “ *A well designed social street is a great outdoor living room that is welcoming of people of all genders, race, ethnicity, age and socio-economic levels.*⁵¹

Pets are important for social well-being. Pets are an important companion for their owner, and the interaction between humans and pets helps alleviate depression, stress, loneliness, grief and social isolation.⁵² Pets, especially dogs, can lead to more social connections. Often people know the name of another person's dog long before the name of the owner!

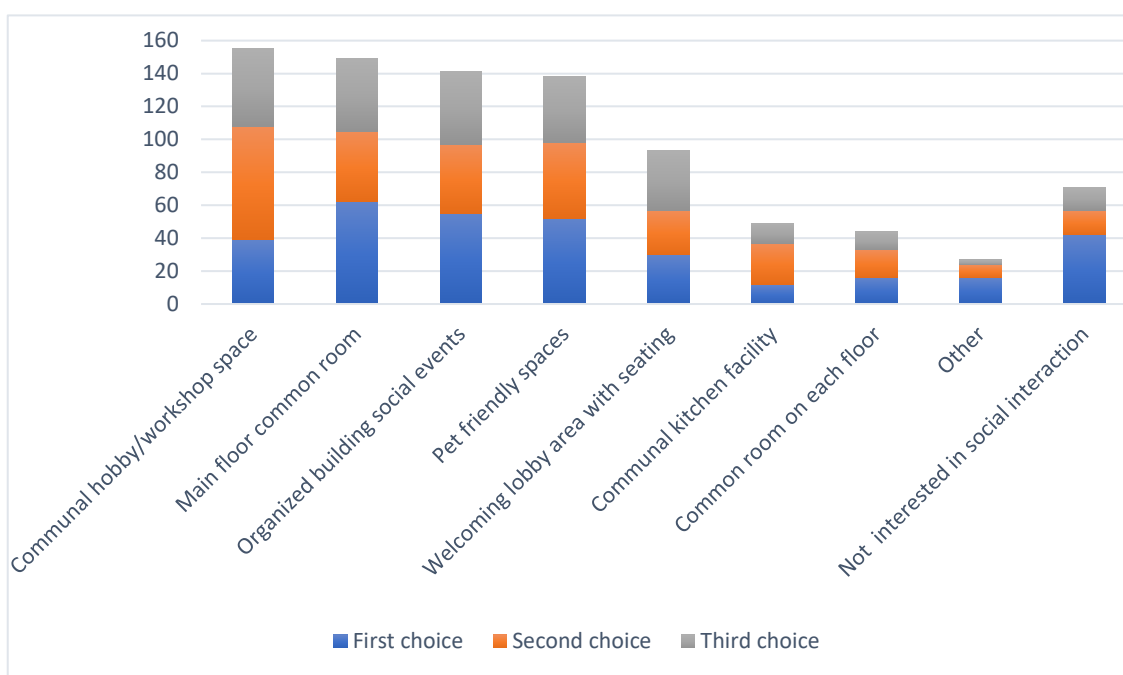
It is about providing the opportunity to connect. There will always be people who prefer not to interact with the other residents.

3.4.2. What we heard

Survey respondents identified communal hobby/workshop spaces, a main floor common room, organized building events and pet friendly spaces (Figure 12) as the preferred spaces for social interactions with their fellow residents. A welcoming entranceway or lobby space, perhaps with a bench or chair for visiting inside or out, provides a casual way to interact with neighbours. Rooftop gardens and decks were also mentioned frequently as a popular way to achieve open space on constrained sites. Combined with gardening space and a place to cook, eat and socialize, these gardens can be welcome respites.

Shared spaces are best located in strategic places that are visible and easily accessed by all residents. Some said the laundry room was where they met the neighbours; others preferred in suite laundry for convenience, especially with younger children. There is a big difference in the effectiveness of good communal space (attractive, inviting, practical) and poor communal space ("the dingy room in the basement with old furniture").

Figure 12: Spaces that encourage social interaction



Even with good design, it is up to the people who live in multi-family units to truly create community. Having “that person” who organizes the Christmas party, is the first one to say “hello” to everyone, or who checks up on their neighbours, can make a significance difference in creating social connectedness. Organized social events are among the top choices for encouraging social interaction (Figure 12). Shared social causes (e.g., supporting a refugee family) or shared interests (e.g., knitting, astronomy) also help to create bonds. It is important to have appropriate spaces (e.g., common rooms) where this interaction can take place.

Social media connection can be a critical element (Facebook, Instagram). It is used to create a building ‘community’ and neighbourhood ‘community’ online; is a good way to find out about local events and to meet people in the neighbourhood. It is used to check out places for rent before even going to see it.

More than half of the survey respondents noted that having a pet-friendly building is an important factor in choosing a home (Figure 7). Having a ‘dog park’ on site or nearby is helpful. At the same time, it is important to recognize that not everyone wants pets in their building, citing allergies and noise. Landlords worry about damage to rental units caused by pets.

You said:

- “ Our entire block is duplexes and it is wonderful. We are a close knit community and close to amenities. I like that we are very community minded.*
- “ Diversity of residents brings diversity of knowledge (will be someone who is Mr/Ms Fix-it, someone who can provide help in emergency, safe homes for kids to go to if they need help.*
- “ Regular events (not just a once a year).*
- “ Fall harvest dinner and similar social events to bring residents and neighbours together.*
- “ A one level townhouse with clubhouse with gardening provided. Monthly gatherings for those who like socializing. Pet friendly. A place where we look out for our neighbours.*
- “ Building managers to proactively engage with tenants, if you do it well, people want to stay.*
- “ Residents need to be people who want to be part of a community.*
- “ Social spaces should not be a closed room (which can be daunting for new person to go into), but open area off foyer so that people feel they can drop in.*
- “ Common rooms often not aesthetically exciting; design common spaces so they invite people in.*
- “ Common spaces in complexes—tend to be used if there are kids, but often empty with older residents.*
- “ Common space (party rooms or hobby spaces) need private storage to improve usability (I won’t use a shared workshop if I have to pack up every tool I think I might need and transport it.)*
- “ A pet area is very important to me and helps build community.*
- “ I do think pets can be important but should not necessarily be allowed everywhere.*

3.4.3. *Best practices*

- ♦ Design welcoming common areas in multi-storey buildings to foster positive social interaction. This could include a large lobby with mailboxes, comfortable seating areas, and a place to have coffee with neighbours, benches near the front door, wide corridors in apartments and condos that have nooks for features (e.g., sitting area, plants), open stairwells and lending libraries for books or tools, and fitness rooms.
- ♦ Provide spaces for gatherings, such as a communal kitchen, hobby/workshop spaces, a library/meeting space, roof top space (with BBQ), and recreational facilities/spaces, e.g., ping pong, pool.
- ♦ Have a building manager or resident volunteer designated as the social coordinator.
- ♦ Use social media (e.g., create a Facebook group for building residents) and use this to share information about upcoming events and items of interest.
- ♦ Support pet ownership through pet-friendly building policies, good soundproofing and ventilation, a place for “doggy business” and features such as a place to wash pets.

3.4.4. *Recommendations and actions*

- **Continue to provide opportunities for the community to gather and get to know each other.**
- **Develop a social well-being checklist that addresses:**
 - ❖ A balance of areas for both social connection and privacy.
 - ❖ Casual interaction spaces in the building/complex, such as welcoming lobbies.
 - ❖ Spaces where people can gather, such as communal kitchens (indoor) or picnic/BBQ areas (outdoor), communal hobby space, common rooms, rooftop gardens and decks.
 - ❖ Spaces that residents can book (e.g., common rooms, meeting space, outdoor eating area) if they wish to meet, entertain or hold parties.
 - ❖ Having an onsite building manager or volunteer social organizer.
 - ❖ Use of social media to connect residents.
 - ❖ Pet-friendly building policies (for at least some multi-family housing).

3.5. Open Space

The outside space at multi-unit buildings can be as important as the inside space, both for housing desirability and to encourage socialization.

3.5.1. *Impact on social connectedness and well-being*

Townhomes and rowhomes offer the option to have some private backyard space that leads to a larger common greenspace. The common greenspace has the added benefit of providing children with a larger (sociable) play area than just their own yard space. Apartments and condos can include rooftop space and ground floor patios as well as shared open spaces.

People who connect with nature feel less isolated. Common spaces in multi-family housing projects are used more when they have trees and grass, and the people living adjacent to green spaces know more of their neighbours, report a stronger feeling of belonging, and are more supportive of each other.⁵³

Gardening increases both physical and mental well-being.⁵⁴ Community garden projects can be a great way to bring different age-groups together. Community gardens are shown not only to facilitate access to healthy food, but also to improve mental health by reducing stress and building networks that span generations and cultures.⁵⁵

From the research:

- “ *Common spaces in social housing projects are used more when they have trees and grass, and the people living adjacent to green spaces know more of their neighbours, report a stronger feeling of belonging, and are more supportive of each other.*⁵⁶
- “ *There is consistent evidence that green space provides greater health benefits to lower SES [socio-economic status] individuals and groups than to the general population.*⁵⁷

3.5.2. *What we heard*

Preferred forms of open space include landscaped areas with seating, outdoor picnic areas (with BBQs), individual garden space, and grassy open areas (Figure 13). Features most often mentioned in the survey were seating, gardens, trees and landscaping (Figure 14). Having space for activities (such as croquet) and natural areas were frequently mentioned.

Some residents prefer not to be responsible for landscaping and yard maintenance, others would like some spaces where they can add personal touches or grow food or flowers.

A challenge can be that new buildings are created to be as large as possible, but this may limit outside greenspace to just hardscaping and parking.

A stacked bar chart showing the number of responses for each garden type, categorized by choice rank (First choice, Second choice, Third choice). The Y-axis represents the number of responses, ranging from 0 to 140 in increments of 20. The X-axis lists the garden types. The legend indicates that blue represents 'First choice', orange represents 'Second choice', and grey represents 'Third choice'.

Garden Type	First choice	Second choice	Third choice
Landscaped area with seating	62	41	41
Outdoor BBQ and picnic area	25	64	47
Individual garden allotments	60	30	35
Grassy open space	35	47	37
Natural play area	27	33	39
Pet run area	32	20	28
Shared gardening space	22	28	30
Playground equipment for young children	32	26	17
Native plant garden	20	23	31
Other	10	7	13

[illegible]

Designing Density: Planning for social connectedness in multi-family housing

Desirable outside spaces include:

- ♦ Private outside space.
- ♦ Sitting and social space, with BBQs, trees, seating and picnic tables.
- ♦ Child-friendly space: shared open space, with benches for parents to sit and watch (and meet and chat), ideally where the living unit can overlook that space.
- ♦ Paved areas where children can learn to ride bikes, skateboard, play street hockey, use sidewalk chalk or similar activities in a car-free or low car use zone.
- ♦ Gardening space: containers for flowers and vegetables, raised beds, shared plots that encourage interaction, community garden nearby.

You said:

- “ Not necessary to have high fences, but create illusion of privacy through vegetation between units.*
- “ Grassy open space with perimeter landscaping, shaded seating areas, possibly BBQ/picnic.*
- “ Units around a common courtyard with large green space in the centre.*
- “ Garden space, lawn for multi-use with seating/tables and native plant landscaping.*
- “ Connections between yards—good model of having row of homes with a bit of fencing between to create private patios, then shared greenspaces behind where kids can run up and down.*
- “ More parks and greenspaces.*
- “ Build landscape areas that people can take ownership of (simple to maintain, can personalize).*
- “ Favour a common roof space over private roof decks.*

3.5.3. Best practices

- ♦ Ensure that outside spaces offer residents the ability to experience nature through multiple senses: sight, smell, touch and sounds.
- ♦ Provide a mix of open space types: smaller private areas for a conversation with a friend, and larger open spaces for family games. Spaces should include places both for interaction and for privacy.
- ♦ Place homes around a central open space where people meet and see each other. This works well if units overlook this inner courtyard and people can watch their children playing.
- ♦ Create programs that empower community members to participate in the improvement and care of green spaces together.

3.5.4. Recommendations and actions

- **Ensure that high quality streetscapes are provided along with new development.**
 - ❖ Require developers to provide street trees for all new developments, and to protect existing trees where possible.
 - ❖ Continue with urban forest program.
- **Ensure that landscaping in multi-family housing offers residents quiet, peaceful spaces and abundant greenery.**
 - ❖ Create design guidelines for open space required in new multi-family projects that includes trees and seating requirements.
- **Provide a mix of open space types: smaller private areas for a conversation with a friend, and larger open spaces for family games. Include open spaces both for interaction and for privacy. Ensure that both quality and quantity of soft landscaping is addressed for multi-family housing projects.**
 - ❖ Review landscaping design guidelines for multi-family development permit areas.
 - ❖ Create design guidelines for landscaping requirements for multi-family housing projects.
 - ❖ Address landscaping on social well-being checklist.
- **Encourage multi-family developments to include garden plots.**
 - ❖ Continue supporting community garden program (with individual plots) in public parks and look for potential to increase as density increases.
 - ❖ Address garden plots on the social well-being checklist.
- **Continue to provide a diverse system of public parks and open spaces, while recognizing needs may increase with additional population density**
 - ❖ Consider adding contribution to public park space to the amenity list for bonus density.
 - ❖ Continue with opportunity to replenish Parkland Acquisition Fund.*



3.6. Encouraging Physical Activity

Physical activity supports both our physical and mental well-being.

3.6.1. Impact on social connectedness and well-being

Regular physical activity protects against chronic disease, increases mental health and well-being, and reduces loneliness, isolation, and alienation.⁵⁸

Physical activity supports social connectedness. People who walk or cycle to work, were 18% more likely to report a strong sense of community belonging than those who drive.⁵⁹ Public transit also supports walking activity, as people walk to catch the bus.⁶⁰ Being active can be sociable: going for a walk with a friend, exercising the dog, or working out at the gym with a buddy. People with extensive and strong support networks tend to have better physical health through lower rates of unhealthy behaviours (such as smoking, drinking, and an inactive lifestyle).⁶¹

From the research:

- “ *Those who walk more than 30 minutes per day or meet the physical activity recommendation of 150 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous activity were 14–22% more likely to report stronger social connections.*⁶²
- “ *The risk of obesity goes up 6% for every hour spent in a car each day, while the risk of obesity goes down by almost 5% for every kilometre walked each day.*⁶³
- “ *Young teenagers are 2.5 times more likely to walk if there is a recreation destination within one kilometre of their home.*⁶⁴

3.6.2. What we heard

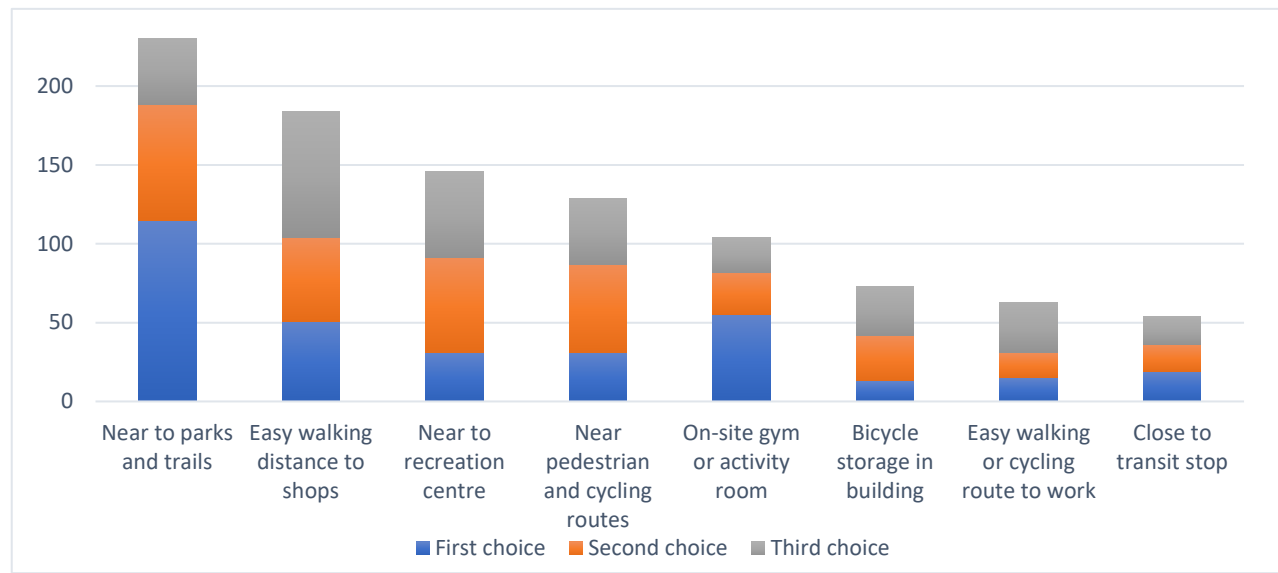
When asked about features that encourage people to be active, survey respondents chose “near to parks and trails”, “easy walking distance to shops” and “near to recreation centre” as the most common responses (Figure 15).

An on-site gym with good equipment was rated as a good indoor option for encouraging physical activity, and a place to meet other residents.

You said:

- “ *Short & easy walk to commercial and food shopping*
- “ *Being close to the amenities and transit stop are things we looked for in a home.*
- “ *The biggest motivator would be someone to exercise with me and keep me honest.*

Figure 15: Features that encourage residents to be active



3.6.3. Best practices

- ♦ Locate multi-family housing near to parks and trails, as well as shopping and other services.
- ♦ Balance neighbourhood density targets with provisions for sufficient, safe, connected, accessible, and nearby natural green spaces and play areas for children and youth.
- ♦ Expand and improve diverse forms of accessible and connected green spaces in underserved and disadvantaged areas to support physical and mental health.
- ♦ Provide ample, secure bicycle storage.
- ♦ Provide an on-site gym or activity area.
- ♦ Provide safe outdoor playspaces for children, including more adventurous options for older children



3.6.4. Recommendations and actions

- **Provide a diverse system of parks and open space.**
 - ❖ Have a system of parks and public spaces that include a mix of children's playgrounds, pet-friendly spaces, picnic areas, natural spaces and community gardens.
- **Support active transportation (transit, cycling and walking).**
 - ❖ Develop an Active Transportation Plan for completion by the end of 2020.
 - ❖ Continue to support BC Transit to increase frequency of transit and develop routes to and from key locations within and outside the municipality.
 - ❖ Support active transportation measures when new infrastructure is developed, or existing infrastructure is replaced.
 - ❖ Encourage or require transportation demand measures such as bus passes, car share memberships and vehicles with all developments.
 - ❖ Research and consider best practices for multi-modal traffic initiatives and strategies.
 - ❖ Create a high-quality network for active transportation throughout the municipality; require the dedication of Statutory Rights of Way along property frontages to create wider pedestrian spaces and bicycling infrastructure.
 - ❖ Review parking bylaw to include secure parking and storage of bicycles, electric scooters and alternate modes of transportation.
- **Develop a social well-being checklist that addresses:**
 - ❖ Spaces for physical activity (such as an on-site gym, outdoor play spaces) that also encourage social interaction.
 - ❖ Convenient and secure bicycle storage.
 - ❖ User-friendly staircases.

3.7. Multi-generational Living

Multi-family units must meet the needs of potential residents to be a viable housing choice. For families with children, this means access to safe playspaces within and outside the home. For other residents, including seniors, it may mean buildings designed to be accessible for less-abled users.

3.7.1. *Impact on social connectedness and well-being*

Multi-family housing can be a good choice for families, with greater affordability and perhaps closer to work and services, provided that the housing is family-friendly. This includes providing safe places for children to play (within and outside the building) make it easier (less stressful) for parents to get on with chores while keeping an eye on their kids. Good soundproofing means parents don't have to constantly tell children to stay quiet. Outdoor playspaces (such as playgrounds) increase social connectedness among residents.

Creating opportunities for social connectedness is important for all ages and especially for seniors. A Canadian Community Health Survey found that 19% of adults over 65 felt either a lack of companionship and/or isolation from others.⁶⁵ Socially isolated seniors are less able to participate and contribute to their communities (which benefits both the seniors and the organizations that they support!). Age-friendly design, including accessible features in the home, building and neighbourhood, makes it easier for people with limited mobility to get out and about and meet their neighbours, and to continue living independently for as long as possible.

From the research:

- “ *Cities that are great for children are great for everybody... If there's a neighborhood that's safe for a ten-year-old to walk across the street and play with his friends and walk home to his apartment building, that park is probably going to be pretty enjoyable for seniors or young professionals in the city.* ⁶⁶
- “ *Places that facilitate the interaction of a wide variety of groups—people of different ages, ethnicities, income levels and household sizes— can build bridges of trust and mutual support between groups.* ⁶⁷
- “ *[R]esidents found that lack of amenity spaces results in problems for seniors and youth such as social isolation, disruptive behaviour and high levels of distrust among the neighbours.* ⁶⁸
- “ *...a positive connection has been identified between ground-oriented high-rise developments and sociability of residents. This can be attributed to the fact that townhouses usually house families and kids which requires that courtyards and playgrounds are built in. Such spaces allow families and other residents to come together.* ⁶⁹
- “ *...upgrading or retrofitting housing to increase accessibility enables people with physical disabilities to continue living independently in their homes.* ⁷⁰

3.7.2. What we heard

Family- and child-friendly features

Survey respondents found the following aspects to be child friendly.

- ♦ Location on quiet streets, close to recreation centre, parks with playground equipment, parks and trails.
- ♦ Yard space to be active in, or just to be outside hanging out, shared open space, some with play equipment, each unit has own yard, fenced open grassy area, shady areas and trees.
- ♦ Entries and hallways accessible by strollers.
- ♦ Shared gardens that are multi-generational.
- ♦ Good soundproofing.
- ♦ Ground floor units.
- ♦ Ample storage space.

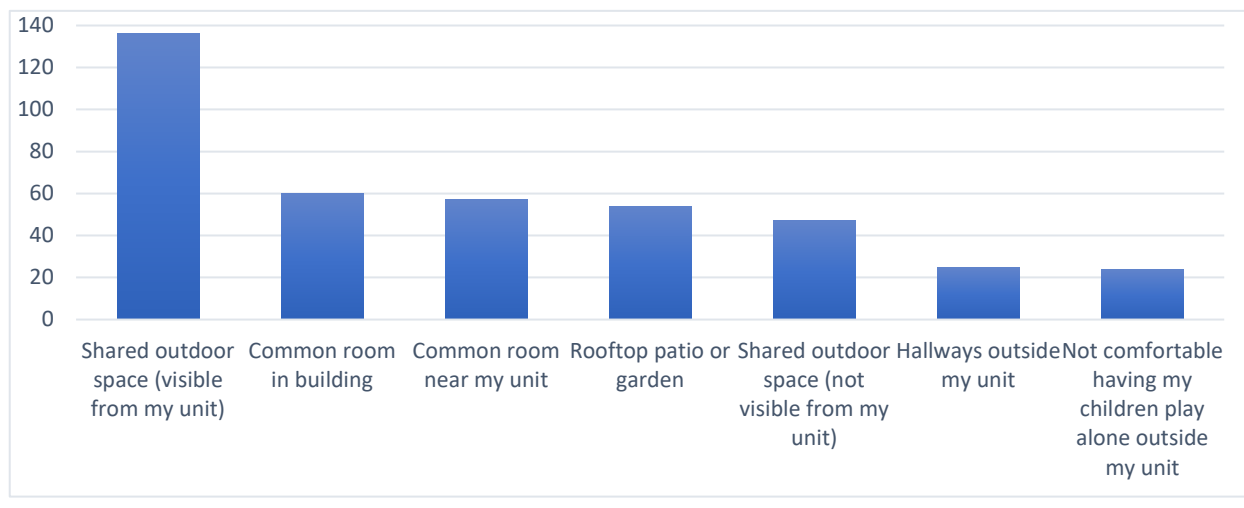
Features deemed not child-friendly were a lack of safe play areas, adult-only building and busy streets without sidewalks and bike lanes.

A common desire was for a safe outside play area, and the ability to see this space from within the home (Figure 16). Having homes placed around a courtyard was often mentioned as a desirable option. Having an on-site playground or “tot lot” was not a priority, especially if there are parks with playgrounds nearby.

You said:

- “ We are a block from two parks so we visit them often and meet up with people there.
- “ It's right next to a playground and very close to the rec centre and waterpark, I have realized how invaluable this proximity is in terms of getting kids out regularly.
- “ Kids are encouraged to dig in the garden, pick the strawberries and play yard games.
- “ The “open space” is too exposed and feels like it's supposed to be this pristine lawn. I expect the older residents to shout “get off my lawn” if I send my kid there to play.”
- “ I think big buildings should have a ground floor, ultra-soundproofed, monitored children's playroom where they can run around and yell on rainy days. (and like maybe musicians could practice their instruments there too?)”
- “ I am in an up down duplex. The house has great yard space but multi-family housing does a better job of bringing families and kids together.”
- “ There is a poorly maintained younger child small play area, but nowhere for my teen or myself to sit and watch my daughter while playing.”
- “ No outdoor play space, poor insulation so indoor activities disrupt others.”

Figure 16: Places where people feel comfortable allowing children under 10 to play (alone or with friends)



Age-friendly options

Seniors are looking for housing where they can “age-in-place”, with access to services (such as home support) should it become necessary. Having the ability to socialize with others in the building, and access to programs such as art and music therapy (in the building or nearby) is welcomed. Even where they live in “adult-only” buildings, respondents noted that it is nice to have child-friendly spaces when grandchildren come to visit. The *Esquimalt Age-friendly Assessment*⁷¹ identifies many opportunities to make the community more accessible.

You said:

- “ Answering as a grandparent. Fenced garden visible from my deck for young children.
- “ Have many ages in the building and have areas where kids and seniors are both comfortable in
- “ Being a senior, it is really important to know one's neighbours and feel you belong.



3.7.3. *Best practices*

- ♦ Provide larger (3 and 4 bedroom) units on the ground floor for families, and highly accessible smaller units for people with mobility challenges.
- ♦ Provide safe spaces for children to play, preferably where parents can watch them from their unit. A good option is to have homes designed around a central courtyard: a good place for kids to play and adults to meet.
- ♦ Provide child-friendly indoor spaces, such as a shared playroom or internal playground.
- ♦ Provide features such as carpeting that help to muffle sounds between floors.
- ♦ Consider the needs of less-abled people when designing the building and units. In addition to meeting accessibility standards, provide options such as walk-in baths or wheelchair accessible countertops. Features that support wheelchair accessibility are also important for people pushing strollers, bikes and other wheeled options.
- ♦ Provide suitable and secure storage space for wheelchairs and strollers either within or near the unit.
- ♦ Where activities are offered, include activities for older residents and appropriate gym equipment.

The City of Vancouver has developed “High-Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines”⁷² and a Housing Mix Policy⁷³ which offer some detailed concepts for encouraging family-friendly multi-family housing, including community plan targets of a minimum requirement or target of 25 percent family units in all new market housing and 50 percent family units in all new non-market housing.

3.7.4. *Recommendations and actions*

- **Encourage housing designs and models that promote intergenerational cooperation and connectedness.**
 - ❖ Develop design guidelines that promote intergenerational connectedness.
 - ❖ Develop regulations for Detached Accessory Dwelling Units.
- **Ensure that multi-family developments include appropriately sized units whenever possible.**
 - ❖ Conduct a housing needs assessment that includes an analysis of the number of family-oriented units with a sufficient number of bedrooms that are likely to be needed in future multi-family developments.
 - ❖ Consider exempting the third and fourth bedrooms in larger family-sized units from calculation of Floor Area Ratio (FAR).
 - ❖ Dedicate a portion of affordable housing units for low-income families through the use of Housing Agreements.
 - ❖ Encourage amenity zoning programs that include family-sized units.

- **In appropriate location, encourage developers to place family sized and accessible units on the ground floor.**
 - ❖ Consider height, Floor Area Ratio or density variances where family-friendly or senior-friendly units are located at ground level.
- **Provide safe outdoor spaces for children to play, preferably where parents and grandparents can watch them from their unit. A good option is to have homes designed around a central courtyard.**
 - ❖ Consider naturalized environments that stimulate a child's curiosity, in place of expensive playground equipment.
 - ❖ Consider the benefits of hard surfaced play areas when assessing development proposals.
- **Provide safe indoor spaces for children to play.**
 - ❖ Provide child-friendly indoor spaces, such as a shared playroom or internal playground.
- **Assess security provisions for outside children's play areas.**
 - ❖ Require a CPTED assessment of all outdoor children's play areas.
- **Consider the needs of less-abled people when designing the building and units. Features that support wheelchair accessibility are also important for people pushing strollers, bikes and other wheeled options.**
 - ❖ Create adaptable housing guidelines for development based on the principle of "visitability". This means that people's homes should be accessible to everyone, not just able-bodied people. It eases problems associated with isolation, and allows people with physical limitations to visit friends and neighbours and stay in communities where they have developed social ties.
 - ❖ Address storage needs on social well-being checklist. Entryways and hallways should be accessible to strollers and walkers and provide storage space for these just outside the unit.

3.8. Safety

3.8.1. Impact on social connectedness and well-being

People who feel safe in their community are more likely to spend time outside, interacting with the community and neighbours. They are also more likely to build trusting and meaningful relationships in environments that feel safe.⁷⁴

People also feel safer when they can see and feel connected to the street.

From the research:

- “ ...if residents live too far from public spaces to easily see what is happening in those spaces, they report feeling less safe. When the distance among people exceeds 25 feet, they start losing contact and familiarity with the people around them. People living on the higher floors of residential towers with little access to life in public spaces report feelings of isolation.⁷⁵*
- “ Feeling safe in our neighbourhoods after dark is strongly associated with social connectedness, indicated by increased likelihood of reporting community belonging (+81%) and having 4+ people to confide in (+59%).⁷⁶*

3.8.2. What we heard

Factors important in creating a sense of safety include:

- ♦ Visibility: landscaping that allows visibility, well used outdoor space and lighting, especially outside and in hallways.
- ♦ Knowing one's neighbours: Ample community events and frequent meetings/ social/activities, a bulletin board and a Block Watch program so you know your neighbours and can be comfortable around them.
- ♦ Having an onsite building manager to deal with problems.
- ♦ Having secure access: locked front door, security cameras, securely locked/separate storage lockers, camera buzz-in system, swipe cards to use elevators to secure floor, secure parking.

New and unruly tenants can create a sense of insecurity and lack of safety.

You said:

- “ The more you know your neighbours the more you feel safe; when tenants/owners change frequently, less safe as you don’t get to know them.*
- “ People who are familiar or known feel safe. Strangers and people who are not known feel unsafe. Get to know!*
- “ Building upkeep makes things feel safer; diversity of neighbours (age, etc.) helps.*
- “ Narrow corridors and windowless communal spaces feel claustrophobic.*
- “ Adequate corridor and night lighting are essential.*
- “ Good visibility and sightlines in parking garages feel safer, and lobby visible from street (large windows).*
- “ Very important to have building owner invested in safety aspects of the building and to have a building manager that is on site, or accessible, visits regularly. Bad tenants in a building can make life hell.*
- “ No control over who else lives in the building. We currently have several occupants that make me uncomfortable.*
- “ In my building I’m feeling unsafe now due to new tenants, and loud, uncomfortable activity.*

3.8.3. Best practices

- ♦ Design buildings and units so that people can see out onto the street.
- ♦ Provide elements that increase safety, such as windows that can be closed and secured, clear and direct escape routes in case of emergency, well illuminated common areas, and common area windows with clear views to the street.
- ♦ Design outside areas that are accessible and feel secure.
- ♦ Daylight parking spaces where possible to create a greater sense of safety.
- ♦ Encourage collective approaches that allow neighbours to protect and take care of the community together, such as shared landscaping or community garden projects.
- ♦ Encourage resident events and activities that enable people to get to know each other better.
- ♦ For rental buildings, have a building manager on site and a system for vetting potential tenants.
- ♦ Follow Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)¹ guidelines for safe buildings.

¹ Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a multi-disciplinary approach to deterring criminal behaviour and nuisance activity through environmental design. CPTED strategies rely upon the ability to influence decisions that precede criminal acts and nuisance activity through proper design, effective use and maintenance of the built, social and administrative environment.

3.8.4. Recommendations and actions

- **Ensure safety is considered in development proposals. Develop a social well-being checklist that addresses:**
 - ❖ Well-lit common areas, hallways and entryways.
 - ❖ Natural surveillance from residences onto the street.
 - ❖ Security measures such as fob entry, cameras and swipe cards, noting that these are good in moderation but can also lead to unsafe feelings (e.g., heavy fire doors, locking stairwells) and make the building inaccessible to children.
 - ❖ A clear point of contact for safety concerns (e.g., building manager).

Figure 17: Provide natural surveillance

Design courtyards so that neighbours can easily keep an eye on them from their homes.



 Happy City

Image: Matt Gibbs

Image from Happy Homes Toolkit, Matt Gibbs

3.9. Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges in multi-family housing include issues and preference among residents, such as whether smoking or pets are allowed, if noise levels are acceptable, and whether there are age or other restrictions.

Other challenges come from the neighbourhoods into which new multi-family developments are placed (concerns about density, loss of views, traffic and parking) and concerns from developers about the cost of providing social amenities.

3.9.1. Impact on social connectedness and well-being

In a multi-family building, getting along with (and liking!) your neighbours makes for a happier experience than the stress of fractious or uncomfortable relationships. Some people love to have children and pets around; others worry about the associated noise, or have allergies to pets. Affordability is important for residents, and for the developers who provide the housing: some people want the higher-end features while others just need a roof over their heads.

Proximity to noisy environments such as busy roads or industrial sites cause sleep disturbance and fatigue.⁷⁷

Traffic and parking are important issues. Not having to own a vehicle is a benefit (financial and social) for those who have options such as carpooling, car-sharing, walking, cycling or transit for their daily needs. But many people still need to own a car, and this too factors into social connectedness and well-being. Providing ample parking works against affordability, as the cost to a developer of providing parking is tens of thousands of dollars per space, a cost passed on in the sale or rental price.

From the research:

- “ Under certain circumstances, compact growth has been associated with unintended consequences such as increased personal exposure to air pollutants and noise.⁷⁸
- “ High levels of noise exposure can result in sleep disturbance, fatigue, and other mental and physical health problems.⁷⁹
- “ Buildings that promote social connectedness for the sake of building community do so at their own cost because they care, and this type of programming does not create a strong financial return.⁸⁰
- “ Social connections and friendliness are not considered “Selling Features”. Property managers and developers assume that buyers and renters are more attracted to physical amenities than the idea of a strong community.⁸¹

3.9.2. What we heard

Not everyone wants the same thing. Some people want to be able to smoke in their home, some want total ban on smoking on a property, others suggest a designated smoking area. Pet-friendly options are essential to some, others cite allergies and noise as reasons for preferring a pet-free building. Some people prefer an adult-only building; others prefer a diversity of ages and family types.

Longer-term residents of Esquimalt worry about the impacts of additional higher-density developments, citing fears about traffic, parking, noise and loss of open space. Some people noted the need to counter the fears with good information, including the benefits of multi-family housing.

Parking was raised by many as a challenge, with no clear “best” option.

- ♦ Some would like to see the provision of parking reduced, especially where buildings are close to amenities and options such as car share and frequent transit are available. Others felt that, especially for families, cars are still the only practical way to get around and that it is important to have sufficient parking space provided.
- ♦ Some favour providing underground parking to reduce on-street parking (suggesting that this is unsightly and makes it hard for people to find parking space). Others feel unsecure in underground parking lots. Developers noted that underground parking can be prohibitively expensive.
- ♦ Ground level parking (with living area above) makes for taller buildings (not popular with neighbours) and leads to a disconnect from ground for residents.
- ♦ Surface parking uses a great deal of land (adding to expense and taking away from potential usable outside space).
- ♦ Many would like to see plugs for EVs and bike share/car share options on site.

You said:

- “ *I think it's important to have sectioned living - one for seniors/singles and one for families so that noise can be regulated.*
- “ *Diversity (in all meanings of the word) in neighbourhoods is important.*
- “ *I think it's very important to be part of a multi-age and multi-income community with mixed buildings.*
- “ *Any social areas developed need to be inclusive to teenagers, as they are often overlooked.*
- “ *I think multi-family buildings should be very diverse - ages, ethnicity, family size.*
- “ *Put the cars on the perimeter and have the front doors facing into central area so people leave homes & interact.”*
- “ *Design for people, not cars.*

3.9.3. *Best practices*

- ♦ Provide a diversity of building options to create choices, e.g., some adult-only buildings, some all-ages buildings, some buildings that are pet-friendly (and some not).
- ♦ Disconnect parking from the rental or purchase price. Residents can have a dedicated parking space as an optional extra and pay a monthly fee for parking.
- ♦ Continue to provide residents with ample opportunities to comment on proposed developments.

3.9.4. *Recommendations and actions*

- **Ensure that developments in Esquimalt provide diverse housing options.**
 - ❖ Adjust expectations of others to participate.
 - ❖ Provide a balance of areas for both social connection and privacy.
 - ❖ Continue to provide opportunities for the community to gather and get to know each other.
- **Provide a range of housing options.**
 - ❖ Balance the provision of housing amenities with maintaining affordable options through market and non-market housing.
- **Ensure infrastructure is keeping up with development.**
 - ❖ Undertake a development capacity analysis to assess the physical, social and environmental development capacity of Esquimalt. The assessment will include an analysis of gaps in existing infrastructure and facilities based on future growth projections.
 - ❖ Complete and update the infrastructure and asset inventory.
 - ❖ Develop an asset management strategy and plans.
- **Continue to provide opportunities for residents to provide local knowledge and expertise to development projects, and continue to ensure that increased density respects the existing neighbourhoods and residents and increases quality of life for all in the Township.**
 - ❖ Add gentle density to single family areas through the introduction of policy and regulations for detached accessory dwelling units.
 - ❖ Measure social connectedness in the Township and monitor over time.
- **Develop a parking strategy including review and update of parking bylaw.**
 - ❖ Amend the Parking Bylaw to include requirements for bicycle parking.

- ❖ Consider relaxing parking requirements for medium density developments close to transit stops.
- **Ensure new developments have adequate access to electric vehicle charging units.**
 - ❖ Investigate options for requiring EV charging with all new parking spaces.
- **Encourage the provision of car share services.**
 - ❖ Investigate options for providing car share parking within new developments.

4. Conclusions and Next Steps

Input gathered through this community engagement have helped us to develop recommendations for social connectedness in multi-family housing. This information provides important considerations as the Township densifies.

Following presentation of this report to Council, staff intend to:

- ♦ Develop draft Design Guidelines for Development Permit Areas (for review with Council)
- ♦ Create a Social Well-being Checklist (for review with Council)
- ♦ Public engagement on the proposed Development Permit Area guidelines
- ♦ Presentation of final Design Guidelines and Checklist to Council
- ♦ Amend Official Community Plan as required.

Figure 18: Rendering of future West Bay Quay Development



Summary of Recommendations

What we heard	Recommendation	Actions
<p>Items marked * indicates an existing strategy in Strategic Plan 2019-2023</p> <p>Items marked # were rated as important by at least five people at the open house</p>		
Building Location and Neighbourhood		
People want to be near amenities, but noise from busy streets is annoying and a safety issue with younger children. A quiet location, on a non-arterial road is important to many.	Locate multi-family housing, especially those with larger units, on quiet streets wherever possible.	<p>Review land use designations in the Official Community Plan for multi-family to ensure it is distributed on quiet streets as well as busier roads.#</p> <p>Require multi-family buildings that are located on non-arterial roads to incorporate some larger units for families and family-friendly amenities.#</p>
People want to live close to amenities such as shops and restaurants.	Ensure enough space is zoned to meet the commercial needs of future residents.	<p>Undertake a commercial needs assessment to determine the amount and type of commercial space that will be required to accommodate Esquimalt's future population.#</p> <p>Consider the principles of the 20-minute neighbourhood when assessing rezoning applications for multi-family developments.#</p>
People want to live close to greenspace.	Ensure that all residents are within reasonable walking distance of a park or greenspace.	<p>Conduct a gap analysis of existing park infrastructure.</p> <p>Create a target for walking time from any residence to the nearest park space.#</p> <p>Consider adding contribution to public park space to amenity list for bonus density.</p> <p>Seek opportunities to replenish Parkland Acquisition Fund.</p>

What we heard	Recommendation	Actions
<i>Items marked * indicates an existing strategy in Strategic Plan 2019-2023</i> <i>Items marked # were rated as important by at least five people at the open house</i>		
People value creativity and individuality in the design of multi-family buildings and the public spaces around them.	Encourage place-making activities such as public art, little free libraries or tool libraries.	Require developers to incorporate public art in the public realm adjacent to their development. Develop an Esquimalt-themed street furniture program, including benches, bicycle racks, lighting and garbage receptacles.#
Unit and Building Size		
People are looking for variety in housing types in forms such as rowhouses and townhouses.	Promote a wide range of housing forms in residential neighbourhoods currently zoned for single-family homes.	Fast-track rezoning projects that include mixed-use, mid-density developments.#
Flexibility of space is important for growing families and seniors who are downsizing. This allows people to stay longer in their homes, where they already know their neighbours and have social supports.	Encourage designs which would allow people to add bedrooms for growing families, rent out unneeded space as children move out, or create an in-law suite to accommodate aging parents.	Address space flexibility in the social well-being checklist.
Adequate and secure storage space is essential.	Encourage designs that provide adequate storage space.	Address storage in the social well-being checklist.

What we heard	Recommendation	Actions
<p><i>Items marked * indicates an existing strategy in Strategic Plan 2019-2023</i></p> <p><i>Items marked # were rated as important by at least five people at the open house</i></p>		
Energy efficiency helps with affordability	Accelerate the construction of highly efficient, carbon-free housing.	<p>Consider implanting higher levels of the BC Step Code.</p> <p>Develop incentive programs and/or financial tools to accelerate residential retrofits for energy efficiency and fuel switching.</p> <p>Continue supporting third party certified green building programs such as Passive House, Built-Green and LEED through rezoning process.</p> <p>Utilize existing Development Permit Area for Energy Conservation and Greenhouse Gas Reduction to leverage improvements in energy efficiency and low carbon fuel sources in residential housing.</p>
Building Design		
The perception of crowding in multi-family housing can damage and corrode interactions with neighbours and others in the community.	Encourage developers to limit the number of households sharing a main entrance and/or the number of clusters in townhouse/rowhouse developments.	Develop design guidelines for clustering and entrance design in multi-family developments.
Multi-family homes should be designed to include privacy, natural lighting, welcoming spaces, and the ability to personalize space.	Encourage developers to include these items in their designs for multi-family buildings.	Address design issues in the social well-being checklist.
Soundproofing is very important especially in buildings with children. Good soundproofing can help prevent the stress of living in close proximity to others.		Address soundproofing in the social well-being checklist.#

What we heard	Recommendation	Actions
<i>Items marked * indicates an existing strategy in Strategic Plan 2019-2023</i>		
<i>Items marked # were rated as important by at least five people at the open house</i>		
Social Amenity Spaces and Community Building		
A balance between privacy and social connection is important.	Encourage developers to include these items in their designs for multi-family buildings.	Address privacy in the social well-being checklist.
People value social spaces within their building or complex; such as communal hobby space, common rooms, communal kitchens and picnic areas.		Address social spaces in the social well-being checklist.
Rooftop gardens and decks are a popular way to achieve open space on constrained sites.		Address rooftop gardens/decks in the social well-being checklist.#
Pet friendly policies and spaces enable people to keep and interact with pets.	Ensure that at least some multi-family housing developments are pet-friendly.	Address pet-friendly options on social well-being checklist.
A building manager or volunteer social organizer can help create a sense of community.	Continue to provide opportunities for the community to gather and get to know each other.	Address building managers/ social coordinators in the social well-being checklist.
Building-only social media help residents know about events planned or building news to share.		Address the use of social media in the social well-being checklist.
Open Space		
Trees and greenspace are very important to residents, especially as density increases and access to personal greenspace diminishes.	Ensure that high quality streetscapes are provided along with new development.	Require developers to provide street trees for all new multi-family developments, and protect existing trees where possible.# Continue with urban forest program.
The preferred form of open space for multi-family housing is passive space with seating and space for eating, reading or quiet activities.	Ensure that landscaping in multi-family housing offers residents quiet, peaceful spaces and abundant greenery.	Create design guidelines for open space required in new multi-family projects that includes trees and seating requirements.

What we heard	Recommendation	Actions
<p><i>Items marked * indicates an existing strategy in Strategic Plan 2019-2023</i></p> <p><i>Items marked # were rated as important by at least five people at the open house</i></p>		
Multi-family units should include both private outside space and shared open space.	<p>Provide a mix of open space types: smaller private areas for a conversation with a friend, and larger open spaces for family games.</p> <p>Include open spaces both for interaction and for privacy.</p> <p>Ensure that both quality and quantity of soft landscaping is addressed for multi-family housing projects.</p>	<p>Review landscaping design guidelines for multi-family development permit areas.</p> <p>Create design guidelines for landscaping requirements for multi-family housing projects.</p> <p>Address landscaping on the social well-being checklist.</p>
Residents prefer their own gardening space over communal gardening space. Patios and balconies are important to those who like to grow plants for a hobby.	Encourage multi-family developments to include garden plots.	<p>Continue supporting community garden program (with individual plots) in public parks and look for potential to increase as density increases.#</p> <p>Address garden plots on the social well-being checklist.#</p>
Open space (in sufficient quantity) on very dense projects is difficult to achieve.	Continue to provide a diverse system of public parks and open spaces, while recognizing needs may increase with additional population density.	<p>Consider adding contribution to public park space to the amenity list for bonus density.</p> <p>Continue with opportunity to replenish Parkland Acquisition Fund.*</p>
Encouraging Physical Activity		
People prefer public amenities such as parks, trails, recreation centres and active transportation routes over in-building fitness equipment.	Provide a diverse system of parks and open space.	Have a system of parks and public spaces that include a mix of children's playgrounds, pet-friendly spaces, picnic areas, natural spaces and community gardens.
Good transit, cycling and walking options reduce the need for a personal vehicle, increase fitness and increase potential for social interactions.	Support active transportation (transit, cycling and walking).	<p>Develop an Active Transportation Plan for completion by the end of 2020.*</p> <p>Continue to support BC Transit to increase frequency of transit and develop routes to and from</p>

What we heard	Recommendation	Actions
<p>Items marked * indicates an existing strategy in Strategic Plan 2019-2023</p> <p>Items marked # were rated as important by at least five people at the open house</p>		
		<p>key locations within and outside the municipality.</p> <p>Support active transportation measures when new infrastructure is developed, or existing infrastructure is replaced.</p> <p>Encourage or require transportation demand measures such as bus passes, car share memberships and vehicles with all developments.</p> <p>Research and consider best practices for multi-modal traffic initiatives and strategies.*</p> <p>Create a high-quality network for active transportation throughout the municipality; require the dedication of Statutory Rights of Way along property frontages to create wider pedestrian spaces and bicycling infrastructure.</p> <p>Review parking bylaw to include secure parking and storage of bicycles, electric scooters and alternate modes of transportation.</p>
An open stairwell that people want to use is good for health and socialization.		Address user-friendly staircases on the social well-being checklist.
Ample, secure and convenient bicycle storage is a necessity for encouraging active modes of transportation.		Address bicycle storage on the social well-being checklist.
Convenience is important for encouraging physical activity.		Address on-site facilities (gyms, outdoor playspaces) on the social well-being checklist.

What we heard	Recommendation	Actions
<p><i>Items marked * indicates an existing strategy in Strategic Plan 2019-2023</i></p> <p><i>Items marked # were rated as important by at least five people at the open house</i></p>		
Multi-generational Living		
People are very interested in living situations where there is a high level of intergenerational cooperation and connectedness.	Encourage housing designs and models that promote intergenerational cooperation and connectedness.	<p>Develop design guidelines that promote intergenerational connectedness.#</p> <p>Develop regulations for Detached Accessory Dwelling Units.#</p>
Families want to live in multi-family housing for affordability and social connections with other families, but have difficulty finding units with sufficient numbers of bedrooms and with suitable amenities for children.	Ensure that multi-family developments include appropriately sized units whenever possible.	<p>Conduct a housing needs assessment that includes an analysis of the number of family-oriented units with a sufficient number of bedrooms that are likely to be needed in future multi-family developments.</p> <p>Consider exempting the third and fourth bedrooms in larger family-sized units from calculation of Floor Area Ratio (FAR).</p> <p>Dedicate a portion of affordable housing units for low-income families through the use of Housing Agreements.</p> <p>Ensure that amenity zoning programs work to encourage family-sized units.</p>
Families and some older adults prefer units on the ground floor to increase accessibility to the outdoors and for stroller/walker/wheelchair access.	Encourage developers that are including family-sized and accessible units to place them on the ground floor.	Consider height, FSR or density variances where family-friendly or senior-friendly units are located at ground level.#

What we heard	Recommendation	Actions
<p><i>Items marked * indicates an existing strategy in Strategic Plan 2019-2023</i></p> <p><i>Items marked # were rated as important by at least five people at the open house</i></p>		
<p>The noise of children playing is not always welcome to all residents.</p> <p>Onsite playgrounds are a low priority, especially if there are parks/playgrounds nearby.</p> <p>Not all outdoor play space needs to be lawn. Children benefit from having a safe paved surface to learn to ride bikes, skateboard, play street hockey, use sidewalk chalk or similar activities in a car-free or low car use zone.</p>	<p>Provide safe outdoor spaces for children to play, preferably where parents and grandparents can watch them from their unit (e.g., homes designed around a central courtyard).</p>	<p>Consider naturalized environments that stimulate a child's curiosity, in place of expensive playground equipment.#</p> <p>Not all outdoor play space needs to be lawn. Children benefit from having a safe paved surface to learn to ride bikes, skateboard, play street hockey, use sidewalk chalk or similar activities in a car-free or low car use zone.</p>
	<p>Provide safe indoor spaces for children to play.</p>	<p>Provide child-friendly indoor spaces, such as a shared playroom or internal playground.</p>
<p>Most parents feel comfortable letting their children play outside without supervision as long as the play area is visible and accessible from family's unit and is fenced for safety.</p>	<p>Assess security provisions for outside children's play areas.</p>	<p>Require a CPTED assessment of all outdoor children's play areas.</p>
<p>Residents may wish to stay in their units as they age or become disabled, but their units are no longer appropriate. Moving away from friends cuts the social ties they have developed over a long period.</p> <p>Homes should be accessible to everyone, not just able-bodied people.</p>	<p>Consider the needs of less-abled people when designing the building and units: features that support wheelchair accessibility are also important for people pushing strollers, bikes and other wheeled options.</p>	<p>Create adaptable housing guidelines for development based on the principle of "visit-ability".#</p>
<p>Families require additional storage space as well as extra living space.</p>	<p>Entryways and hallways should be accessible to strollers and walkers, and provide storage space for these just outside the unit.</p>	<p>Address storage needs on social well-being checklist.</p>

What we heard	Recommendation	Actions
<p>Items marked * indicates an existing strategy in Strategic Plan 2019-2023</p> <p>Items marked # were rated as important by at least five people at the open house</p>		
Safety		
<p>Well-lit common areas, hallways and landscaping make people feel safer. Long corridors with identical doors discourage casual interactions and are more difficult for children and some seniors to wayfind. Building upkeep and maintenance also contributes to perceptions of safety.</p> <p>Natural surveillance from residences and businesses increases feelings of safety.</p> <p>Security measures such as fob entry, cameras and swipe cards are good in moderation but can also lead to unsafe feelings (e.g., heavy fire doors, locking stairwells) and make the building inaccessible to children</p> <p>An onsite building manager to deal with problem tenants and to contact in times of trouble is a good safety measure.</p>	<p>Ensure safety is considered in development proposals.</p>	<p>Address safety issues on social well-being checklist.</p>
Challenges and Opportunities		
<p>People have diverse needs and desires, especially related to privacy, pet-friendly buildings, age-restricted buildings, smoking and more.</p>	<p>Ensure that developments in Esquimalt provide diverse housing options</p>	<p>Adjust expectations of others to participate.</p> <p>Provide a balance of areas for both social connection & privacy.</p> <p>Continue to provide opportunities for the community to gather and get to know each other.</p>
<p>Developers told us that providing some of these amenities will raise the overall cost of housing</p>	<p>Provide a range of housing options.</p>	<p>Balance the provision of amenities with maintaining affordable options.</p>
<p>As Esquimalt grows, residents are concerned about whether</p>	<p>Ensure infrastructure is keeping up with development.</p>	<p>Undertake a development capacity analysis to assess the</p>

What we heard	Recommendation	Actions
<p><i>Items marked * indicates an existing strategy in Strategic Plan 2019-2023</i></p> <p><i>Items marked # were rated as important by at least five people at the open house</i></p>		
infrastructure needs (particularly transportation) are keeping up		<p>physical, social and environmental development capacity of Esquimalt. The assessment will include an analysis of gaps in existing infrastructure and facilities based on future growth projections.</p> <p>Complete and update the infrastructure and asset inventory.*</p> <p>Develop an asset management strategy and plans.*</p>
Change in the form of additional density can create fear and resistance among some residents.	<p>Continue to provide opportunities for residents to provide local knowledge and expertise to development projects.</p> <p>Continue to ensure that increased density respects the existing neighbourhoods and residents and increases quality of life for all in the Township.</p>	<p>Add gentle density to single family areas through the introduction of policy and regulations for detached accessory dwelling units.*</p> <p>Measure social connectedness in the Township and monitor over time.</p>
It is very common for parking requirements to become dominant in the discussion about added density and what amenities are added to a building.	Develop a parking strategy, including a review and update of Parking Bylaw.* #	<p>Amend the Parking Bylaw, including requirements for bicycle parking.#</p> <p>Relax parking requirements for medium density developments close to transit stops as part of the parking bylaw review.</p>
People with EVs want to be able to plug in at home.	Ensure new developments have adequate access to electric vehicle charging units.	Investigate options for requiring EV charging with all new parking spaces.
Car shares are an increasingly popular option.	Encourage the provision of car share services.	Investigate options for providing car share parking within new developments.

Appendix A: Acknowledgements

Funders

Plan H

The Township has been fortunate to receive a 2018 Community Wellness Strategy grant from [PlanH](#) to fund this work. PlanH supports the provincial government's health promotion strategy and is implemented by [BC Healthy Communities Society](#).

Project Team

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Island Health (BC Ministry of Health)

- ♦ Jade Yehia, Regional Built Environment Consultant, provided advice and support throughout the project.

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Yvonne Blair	Greater Victoria Housing Society

Appendix B: Focus Group Results

Esquimalt MM Housing – Notes from Focus Groups February – March 2019

This paper summarizes the ideas that were put forward and discussed in a series of focus groups to look at ways to improve social inclusion in multi-family dwellings in Esquimalt. Participants included residents, developers and builders, people working with numerous different organisations and agencies, and individuals with diverse expertise in this area.

To everyone who participated, thank you!

Features that people want

In the living unit

Affordability

- ♦ Affordability of suite
- ♦ Townhomes with suite – makes it more affordable, space for young adults to stay on at home, can rent out as suite and take back if family needs more space
- ♦ Suites in townhomes desirable (with kitchenette) – good for renting to students, for aging parent living at home
- ♦ Lock off units – good idea but how does it work with strata, can you kick tenant out when you need the space, also challenges that this may mean increase in parking requirement

Design

- ♦ Design – when everyone's unit is the same floor plan it is depressing, no pride, individuality
- ♦ Place that is not gross and dingy
- ♦ Sunken ground floor not a good option – people passing by look down into your space. Better to have ground floor a few steps up – creates a separation from the street
- ♦ Size – overall size, if too small for families then crowded

Front doors

- ♦ Own front door
- ♦ Like to have own front door
- ♦ A front door where people can see you coming and going (means they get to recognise you as a neighbour)
- ♦ Doors designed to create spontaneous meetings as you enter your unit
- ♦ A real front door, that you can paint, express individuality, have your own plants
- ♦ Make it possible to personalise your front door – have a small alcove, have a chalk board on the door
- ♦ Doors that allow you to create a cross breeze

Avoid:

- ♦ Long hallways with doors that all look the same are a barrier to socialisation (not friendly space, kids don't know which is their door, no uniqueness)
- ♦ Intercom not a child-friendly option

Windows

- ♦ Windows you can look out of, preferably with something to look at
- ♦ Windows, light, a view
- ♦ Windows with a view – note that code permits only 20% window coverage
- ♦ Big windows (make it more like a SFH), high ceilings – but also makes it higher building which neighbours don't like

Bedrooms

- ♦ Has to have enough bedrooms
- ♦ Diversity – developments with variety of living space e.g., studio to 3 bedroom
- ♦ Having 3 bedroom option allows for multi-generational living
- ♦ 3 and 4 bedroom places – higher cost but essential for families
- ♦ Families need at least 3 bedrooms
- ♦ Bedrooms – easier to do 3 bedroom units in townhouses, expensive in apartments (unless very small)
- ♦ 1 bedroom units usually preferred over studios (we are used to having a bedroom)
- ♦ Seniors and singles – don't need a lot of space – but at least 1 bedroom (not bachelor)
- ♦ Have a larger bedroom that can be divided in two if you need more space
- ♦ Have smaller bedrooms and larger living space – bedrooms empty much of the time, put space where it is used
- ♦ Space between bedrooms – good to have living space in between
- ♦ Bedrooms not adjacent to each other

Privacy

- ♦ Privacy – the choice to be private or socialise
- ♦ People like to socialise in outside space, but want privacy inside – this includes soundproofing and no odours (e.g., smoking) from neighbours
- ♦ Need for inside privacy –soundproofing
- ♦ Modern building code helps with soundproofing

For Children

- ♦ Kid friendly building
- ♦ No age limits in buildings
- ♦ Soundproofing
- ♦ Cupboards that don't slam
- ♦ Kids bedroom in quiet area (not next to kitchen), on same level as parent's bedroom

For Seniors and Disabled

- ♦ Accessibility through open or L-shaped kitchen, turning radius for wheelchairs
- ♦ Accessibility – follow guidelines e.g., plan for grab rail in bathroom
- ♦ Seniors located in ground floor units
- ♦ Seniors – shared roof garden (glassed-in space), good social space
- ♦ Seniors happy to have kids around but don't want to hear them all the time
- ♦ Seniors living house – place that rents rooms, with shared kitchen/dining facilities
- ♦ Age-in-place (age in Esquimalt) options: In-home care for seniors, reasonable rent – way to move to assisted living and then complex care while staying in home community
- ♦ Places to age into
- ♦ Example of Chartwell in Toronto – seniors living in a community – central kitchen and living space but also private areas, also e.g., of Eden Gardens, Sooke Harbourside
- ♦ Adult day program as support
- ♦ Note many seniors aging in home but have lots of underutilised space in home – opportunity e.g., for students who can also support the seniors?

For Pets

- ♦ Pet friendly building
- ♦ Needs appropriate flooring, soundproofing

Other

- ♦ Good heating/cooling system that individual units can control
- ♦ Laundry in unit – stress free option for parents with younger kids
- ♦ Laundry in suite
- ♦ Dishwasher
- ♦ Balconies? There are pros and cons. More sociable to have smaller balconies, then outside shared spaces for picnicking and BBQs. Some places using Juliette balconies, at least provide place to get fresh air and see outside
- ♦ Deck space – allow this to encroach into setback to make better use of outside space
- ♦ North facing decks often used for storage, south facing well used, good extension of living space, big enough to eat outside or sit and drink coffee

In the building complex

Social make-up

- ♦ Mix of resident ages and backgrounds good
- ♦ Examples of buildings where retired parents and kids/grandkids live in same building (but each have their own unit)
- ♦ Good to create multi-generational, inter-generational living
- ♦ Good to have room for an aging parent to live at home, or for a child to stay at home longer
- ♦ Trend towards multi-generational housing, seniors not wanting to live alone – important for connection between generations
- ♦ Mix of ages

- ♦ Mix of ages good, don't segregate
- ♦ Good to have blend of incomes (diversity) – not just all low income – mixed socio-economic status
- ♦ Diversity of residents brings diversity of knowledge (will be someone who is Mr/Ms Fix-it, someone who can provide help in emergency, safe homes for kids to go to if they need help)
- ♦ Others around to help (e.g., if roof leaks)
- ♦ Friendly place
- ♦ Nice to have interaction with neighbours as you come and go
- ♦ Know your neighbours, feeling of “home”
- ♦ Sociable for kids
- ♦ Esquimalt has a good sense of community – knowing neighbours who can help if needed

Challenges:

- ♦ Lots of MFD is 19+, no good if you have kids
- ♦ People who don't like kids in their building

Design

- ♦ Design is critical
- ♦ Good design critical
- ♦ Design and placemaking important, creating a sense of home
- ♦ What do you see/hear/smell when you walk in?
- ♦ Design so that you get lots of end units
- ♦ Inside corridors with natural light nice (but challenge of waterproofing)
- ♦ Buildings that enclose a space, where people meet and see each other
- ♦ Units offset from each other
- ♦ Prefer staggered entryway for privacy
- ♦ House with good architecture (e.g., west coast design) much better than glass tower
- ♦ Eyes onto a common area
- ♦ Wherever the active zone is, have the kitchen face that so that you can watch kids
- ♦ Ex: Several multi-unit buildings on same site, each has shared driveway and own garage, small personal greenspace out back and large common area – provides safe place for kids to play, visible from unit, visitor parking, 3 bedroom units – requires lots of land to do but good example
- ♦ Artwork – used to remind everyone of shared motto of community living, “treat others as you want to be treated”
- ♦ Call it “apartment home” not “unit”
- ♦ Soundproofing important
- ♦ 40 % of households are singles (design for them!)
- ♦ Need to build for the future – duplexes not a sustainable model, change our thinking to being ok with having smaller footprint
- ♦ Guest suite in complex
- ♦ Heritage places – keep them, make them into shared living spaces

Avoid:

- ♦ Apartments buildings that are “cold”, no access to outside, once you are in you just stay in your unit

Social spaces

Places designed to support spontaneous meeting

- ♦ Good lobby – with couches, place to have coffee with neighbours
- ♦ Large lobby with mailboxes, seating area, coffee supplies
- ♦ Larger lobby with furniture, place to sit, have natural interactions, get to know your neighbours
- ♦ Mailboxes/mailrooms – also a place for sharing posters/information
- ♦ Mailbox area not good for socialising – need privacy when getting your mail
- ♦ Laundry room not good social space (don’t want to talk over underwear)
- ♦ Apartments – need friendly hallways, wider, features (e.g., piano in hallway), wide enough that doors from 2 apartments can both be open at same time
- ♦ Open stairwell that people want to use – good for health and socialisation
- ♦ Taking out recycling can be sociable
- ♦ Need for a balance between design that makes neighbours bump into each other, but also allows for privacy – choice as to whether you want to interact
- ♦ Want to feel safe – knowing your neighbours important

Avoid:

- ♦ In narrow hallways and elevators, space is small and people shut down, retreat into their own personal space (does not encourage interaction)
- ♦ Very hard to get privacy in marina

Common/shared spaces:

- ♦ Common room that can be booked for gatherings
- ♦ Common rooms often not aesthetically exciting; design common spaces so they invite people in
- ♦ Social space – not a closed room (which can be daunting for new person to go into), but open area off foyer so that people feel they can drop in
- ♦ Common areas also address needs – e.g., strollers in hallways
- ♦ Common spaces in complexes – tend to be used if there are kids, but often empty with older residents
- ♦ Common eating or cooking space
- ♦ Shared library/meeting spaces
- ♦ Kind of amenity space important – not dingy basement with old furniture
- ♦ Apartments generally less friendly – share a hallway but often no common area; townhomes tend to be more social

Hobby spaces:

- ♦ Workshop space
- ♦ Garage space also doubles as workshop space or hobby space – can have this as community space in complex
- ♦ Hobby space, workshop space

Recreation spaces:

- ♦ Roof top space, with BBQ
- ♦ Private rooftops decks, with community playground (combination of private space and community space)
- ♦ Rec room, pool table, gym
- ♦ Common area – but should be programmed
- ♦ Recreational facilities/spaces – e.g., ping pong, attractive space
- ♦ Work-live-play options (play includes gyms, playgrounds)

Creating social events and interactions, programming

- ♦ Socialisation space – easier where there is a building manager
- ♦ Someone to get the socialisation started, create sense of community – then others step up and help
- ♦ Regular events (not just a once a year)
- ♦ Strata events – often get the same 3 people every time
- ♦ Fall harvest dinner and similar social events to bring neighbours/complexes together
- ♦ Incentive and encourage social behaviour, create a culture
- ♦ Social media critical element for younger people (Facebook, Instagram) – used to check out places for rent before even going to see it, good way to meet people in the neighbourhood
- ♦ Building managers to proactively engage with tenants, if you do it well, people want to stay
- ♦ Residents need to be people who want to be part of a community
- ♦ Different amenity packages for older residents (not shuffleboard!) – different gym equipment, different graphics and languaging
- ♦ Private space and common kitchen, programs e.g., art and music therapy, having care available
- ♦ Examples:
 - ♦ Hotel conversion – aimed at 25 – 35 age group: community spaces (not amenity room); outdoor kitchen, gym on site; dog zones, pets allowed; outdoor space with different zones, different seating options (hard, soft, loungers), multiple BBQs (can have different events at same time), opportunity for small and large groups; planters with apple trees; dock with kayaks and paddleboards; pool; common laundry area combined with lounge; free events – hikes, BBQs; Facebook group
 - ♦ Swallows Landing example of creating good community
 - ♦ Ex of Bayview which has a seniors tower in all-ages complex
- ♦ Other shared projects that create neighbourliness – e.g., refugee family group, Buy Nothing group
- ♦ Would be good to have residents' associations in all Esquimalt neighbourhoods (funded as in Victoria)
- ♦ CFB community councils – great for social activities but no longer much in use, people don't have time to organise

Storage

- ♦ Place for stroller, bikes, Xmas decorations, camping gear – if lockers are large enough can cope with smaller living space
- ♦ Storage – could be centralised, then can have smaller living units

- ♦ Storage for strollers, near front entrance (so you don't have to lug them upstairs)
- ♦ Storage for strollers
- ♦ Storage in parkade
- ♦ Storage space – for recreational equipment (that helps you to lead an active lifestyle – bikes, surfboards)
- ♦ Safe place to lock bikes
- ♦ Enough bikes storage for the whole family (electric bikes too), secure locker that can't be broken into (e.g., rental pods, not cheap but secure)

Outside the complex

Landscaping and outside space

- ♦ Multi-family places are good, you avoid yardwork!
- ♦ Most of frontage maintained by strata (easy care)
- ♦ New buildings often created as large as possible, but this limits outside greenspace to just parking
- ♦ Shared greenspace
- ♦ Green commons
- ♦ More parks and greenspaces
- ♦ Units around a common courtyard with large green space in the centre
- ♦ How to build landscape areas that people can take ownership of (simple to maintain, can personalise)
- ♦ Connection to outside space and neighbours depends on type of building
 - Apartment can have rooftop space, ground floor patio
 - Townhomes can have front door facing street, can be placed near parks, create internal space (e.g., 2 rows of townhomes facing each other)

Private outside space

- ♦ Bit of your own backyard space
- ♦ Personal garden space
- ♦ Some garden space
- ♦ Not necessary to have high fences, but create illusion of privacy through vegetation between units
- ♦ Connections between yards – good model of having row of homes with a bit of fencing between to create private patios, then shared greenspaces behind where kids can run up and down

Gardening space

- ♦ Container gardening – flowers, veggies
- ♦ Want gardening space – can be shared space but with your own plot
- ♦ Community garden in complex or could be nearby – good space for mixing of age groups
- ♦ Need space to garden, to tinker
- ♦ Raised garden beds popular feature – shared space, included in disclosure statement, ongoing management through strata rules
- ♦ Garden clubs are popular

Sitting and social space

- ♦ BBQ space
- ♦ Shade trees, outdoor sitting space
- ♦ Upmarket – pool, hot tub, pods to lounge in
- ♦ Sociable – can talk to neighbours across the fence
- ♦ Creating outdoor space
- ♦ Lawn chairs out front – good for socialising
- ♦ Place to picnic

Kid friendly spaces

- ♦ Safe place for kids to play – space inside unit where you can keep an eye on them, space outside unit where they are safe to play alone (visible from unit)
- ♦ Kids need places where they can congregate, e.g., shared space in middle, places to rollerblade
- ♦ Space outside (front) that kids can use, studies show kids like to play in the street, people like to hear kids playing
- ♦ Not just tot lots, but place for older children as well
- ♦ Place for kids to learn to ride bikes/skateboard/play street hockey/sidewalk chalk
- ♦ Space out front for kids to ride bikes
- ♦ Safe outdoor play space, multi-use
- ♦ Spaces where kids can play outside and you can see them
- ♦ Turning streets into playspace – have car-free times
- ♦ Bike safety for kids
- ♦ Playground area for kids

Pet-friendly spaces

- ♦ Brings people together (getting to know each other), also companionship
- ♦ Dog parks create instant community (but not where kids play)
- ♦ Some places allow only small pets
- ♦ Patch of grass for doggy business
- ♦ Small fenced off leash area (including roof garden!)
- ♦ Close to dog park
- ♦ Place to wash pets
- ♦ Building ventilation (helps to avoid allergies – this is required by law)
- ♦ Challenge with pets of complaints from neighbours (barking), damage to rental units, people who have allergies to pets
- ♦ Vancouver has a pet policy where you can't exclude pets
- ♦ Esquimalt has ability to mandate pet friendly for low income units

Parking

- ♦ Garages
- ♦ People still want parking, important with kids to have a car

- ♦ Plug for EV
- ♦ Place to drop off stuff at front door but not park there
- ♦ Parking area away from front door – more likely to bump into neighbours on way to home
- ♦ Trying to get away from surface parking, but feeling of insecurity in underground parking
- ♦ Encourage bike share/car share options
- ♦ Having ground level parking with living area about makes for a taller building (not popular with neighbours), disconnect from ground for residents

Other

- ♦ Ramps to front doors well used – not just for wheelchairs but also strollers, rollerblades, bikes
- ♦ When designing a development, ask the police about ways to make it CPTED friendly (hard to retrofit after)
- ♦ Key CPTED features include natural surveillance (eyes on street), access control, creating territoriality/sense of ownership, low maintenance (look)

In the neighbourhood

- ♦ Walkability and bike-ability
- ♦ Like walkability
- ♦ Walkability
- ♦ Close to core
- ♦ Want to be close to shopping/groceries, work, amenities
- ♦ Walking distance to school
- ♦ Walkability – depends on your ability to walk. In Denmark, considered walkable for kids at 500 to 800 m.
- ♦ Bus stops nearby – with frequent service that goes to convenient places!
- ♦ Close to daycare and school
- ♦ Want access to quality greenspace
- ♦ Greenspace and parks – put density around pocket parks -then they don't need yard space, especially where family oriented
- ♦ Access to nature (20 minutes in the trees reduces depression)
- ♦ Adult exercise parks nearby
- ♦ More open space in complex and in neighbourhood
- ♦ Parks nearby
- ♦ Put 6 storeys close to parks
- ♦ Often place density along arterials – but then not close to parks. Better to put this off the main arterial (less street noise and safer) and close to parks
- ♦ Recreational facilities – can be shared between schools and community
- ♦ Commercial space on ground floor? Challenge that may not be enough business, better to aim for commercial nearby
- ♦ Block Watch – brings community together
- ♦ Issues that bring neighbours together (like sewage!)

- ♦ Mini-library, good spot for conversations

Development Opportunities and Challenges

Community acceptance

- ♦ Fear of new MFD in neighbourhoods, especially if targeted at low income or mental health (“there goes the neighborhood”)
- ♦ Neighborhood acceptance (especially for the unfamiliar)
- ♦ Neighbours complain about street parking near MFH
- ♦ Suites in new developments – neighbours concerned about “not enough parking” but would create affordable space
- ♦ Public attitude to housing has changed (for the better) in recent years, less fear of “low income”
- ♦ Intergenerational living – young people living with roommates. Saanich is looking at rules for not more than 4 related people in home. This limits options for young people, Esquimalt should allow this.
- ♦ Community does not understand development economics (they don’t believe developers) – role for municipality to educate

Individual attitudes, needs, perceptions

- ♦ Marketers are pushing/influencing cultural norms
- ♦ Cultural norms – e.g., not having parents living with you (very different in some non-European cultures)
- ♦ Education of buyers – still sticking to ideal of single family, skewed pricing system
- ♦ Dynamics of families make living in MFH harder
- ♦ For families, car important, need space for birthday parties
- ♦ Seniors wanting gated community, perhaps safety fears
- ♦ Some people have had bad experiences with apartment living
- ♦ Seniors too proud, fearful of renting to students
- ♦ Young families don’t want to live in apartments (not seen as right space to raise kids)
- ♦ Changing behaviours and norms takes time
- ♦ Need more good stories about successful models
- ♦ Pilot project as examples – show good examples of MFH, point to successes, good examples in each neighbourhood.
- ♦ Edmonton study that showed core subsidises suburbs, we are creating an unhealthy environment

Cars and Parking

- ♦ If everyone parks on the street, this changes the nature/look of the street
- ♦ But most families find they can’t live without car
- ♦ Provide transit and encourage use but don’t ban all cars /parking
- ♦ Provide underground parking
- ♦ Car shares (Modo)
- ♦ Good, but challenge that not everyone uses, need to have enough nearby to guarantee will be a car when you want it.

- ♦ Increased density should support reduced car ownership
- ♦ Modo – need 2/3 vehicles on property to encourage use
- ♦ People with lower income can't afford or need parking space, need good transit and walkability
- ♦ Pushback from neighbours on parking – they want to see this onsite, not relying on street parking
- ♦ Make changes to parking bylaw
- ♦ Parking requirements (Saanich trying out unit with zero parking), challenge of neighbour concerns if not enough parking for units
- ♦ Market needs some parking
- ♦ Esquimalt needs to decide what it wants in 20 years – something much as now, with parking but even less affordable, vs progressive and more affordable
- ♦ Do we want to be urban hub with more transit and less parking, or as is with more parking?
- ♦ More young people do not want to own a vehicle – things will change with time

Building costs and affordability

Challenge of “making the numbers work” for building MFD

- ♦ Land cost
- ♦ Common space is expensive addition (no revenue for developer), land costs are high
- ♦ Upfront costs, land value affects density, developer ability to make reasonable profit
- ♦ SF homes sell for high price – so hard to make the numbers work for MM housing – if increased density required, need to go 4 – 6 storey to make profitable
- ♦ Example:
- ♦ Portland incentive – the more units you create, the larger the building envelope allowed – takes away incentive of building large SF home, makes the economics of MFH work better
- ♦ LA has a menu of diversity, make their policy clear and upfront – developers know what their costs are going in, can plan accordingly
- ♦ Financing development of “right” housing – how do we make this easier? Need to manage developers' risks, uncertainties
- ♦ Private/profit driven financing creates barriers – could encourage non-profit banking (e.g., Vancouver)
- ♦ Developers pay GST based on number of units – municipality can help by lobbying federal government for change to encourage more MFD
- ♦ Option to stack townhomes, lower the cost
- ♦ We need incentives to retain heritage homes and convert them to MFH
- ♦ Vancouver - working to enable duplex/triplex/quad units in SF neighbourhoods

Making it affordable for buyers/renters

- ♦ When 3 bedroom units are build, strong demand from 3 roommates may mean families are priced out
- ♦ Cost – people want the size and amenities but can't afford them
- ♦ Opportunity to lower cost – we don't all want/need luxury finishings – e.g., granite, include entry level options as well
- ♦ People's perception of what they need – we want stuff, high end, more bathrooms – but need to think about what we really need

- ♦ Example of complex with both rental and purchase options (allows time for renters to earn down payment)
- ♦ Affordability is about operating the home as well as purchase price – build energy efficient places
- ♦ Buildings in Esquimalt getting old – but then renovation and rising prices

Esquimalt planning process

- ♦ Flexibility and planning – how can it work in (xx) area/neighbourhood
- ♦ Zoning doesn't always permit creative approaches – need to encourage and allow this
- ♦ Zoning and land designations – prohibit MFH, needs or flexibility
- ♦ Examples
- ♦ Langford example of mix of 1 to 3 bedroom units
- ♦ 2 storey apartment units with in-home stairs – makes it feel more like a home. But also elevator access from both floors.
- ♦ 2 storey option way to make more room/add bedrooms
- ♦ Negative comments from DRC and APC can sink innovative developments
- ♦ Provide incentives to build MFH, e.g., density bonuses, investment from gov (fed or prov) – but needs to be sustained
- ♦ Faster process, go to front of the line (reduce cost)
- ♦ Reduced fees
- ♦ Dedicated planner to work with you
- ♦ Council support to help community understand benefits of MFH
- ♦ Suites in older homes – size restriction (90m³) – makes it hard to do 3 bedroom homes, works against affordability
- ♦ Market shift – mix and amount of housing stock has not kept up with demand, this information we are gathering needs to be shared with developers
- ♦ Pushback comes when not enough community engagement ahead of time (neighbours may find out late in process)
- ♦ Education of council and community, evidence based

Other

- ♦ Need to make sure that all other infrastructure is there as we densify (e.g., road capacity)
- ♦ Churches willing to partner on projects
- ♦ Availability – can't always find right type of MF place in neighborhood you want (e.g., Rock Heights)

Esquimalt should:

Make it clear that Esquimalt (Council and staff) supports and encourages new multi-family developments

- ♦ Consistency of OCP, design guidelines, council direction – stick to this, provide clear timelines (otherwise increased time and cost for developers)
- ♦ Provide consistency and clear direction to developers, certainty and reduced risk. Be clear and upfront – what are the goals, the rules, the fees?

- ♦ Checklist will help both developer and council, reduce work
- ♦ More MF housing options, rentals, tools e.g., opt-in process for height and density – take away risk and encourage rental
- ♦ Public process – supportive neighbours to new development
- ♦ Neighbours like development that ‘fits into’ neighborhood, similar scale
- ♦ Good reception by staff and council helps with public acceptance
- ♦ Reduce parking requirements for MFD, especially where located in walkable neighbourhoods
- ♦ Change parking requirements – depending on design
- ♦ Allow on-street parking (to allow for more designed space in building complex)
- ♦ Provide cash in lieu for parking requirements
- ♦ Allow for “direct to council” decisions for approaches that are outside zoning and other norms
- ♦ Need to have sharing of good practices

Identify areas where multi-family developments are encouraged

- ♦ Map out where to put high rise density, where to put gentle density
- ♦ Undertake capacity assessments for development, be clear about where development should occur
- ♦ Have area plans and clear plan development process
- ♦ Use of targets – target xx park space per capita, target xx% living within 5 minute walk to core services
- ♦ Balance long term planning – retain aesthetics and charm while increasing density in some areas. Keep Esquimalt’s character (different from Victoria) – not high rises
- ♦ Allow suites in townhomes/multiplexes (should be owner/occupied only)
- ♦ Make sure underground infrastructure can handle the density
- ♦ What does Esquimalt need as it densifies – do we know what services will be required (e.g., banks, clinics, recreational facilities, commercial) – and how do we encourage these to locate in densifying neighbourhoods to maximise walkability. (Role of Chamber of Commerce.)
- ♦ Take advantage of opportunity to “create Yaletown in Lampson Industrial area”
- ♦ Look to European model of densification – everything very walkable so you do daily grocery shopping not big weekly shop
- ♦ Provide lots of greenspace for re-creation/recreation
- ♦ Offer different size apartments with green space
- ♦ Look at co-housing

Encourage gentle densification in SF neighbourhoods

- ♦ Encourage gentle density in SF neighbourhoods (duplexes), not just tall buildings
- ♦ SF – allow them to have garden suites
- ♦ Allow gentle densification in SF areas
- ♦ Do more infill development, creative housing options
- ♦ Do smart density (gentle densification) over and over – as supply increases price will go down

Encourage the design of multi-family developments that support social inclusion and interaction

- ♦ Maintain variety – all ages and all lifestyles

- ♦ Wide spectrum of housing types
- ♦ Different people want different things – don't have a "have-to" policy, too rigid
- ♦ Increase walkability and transit, improve public realm
- ♦ Bring seniors in
- ♦ Provide welcome packages for people moving in
- ♦ Make places pet friendly and kid friendly – change bylaws to protect this as a right
- ♦ Provide a dog run with buildings
- ♦ Safety – need more health care options in community
- ♦ Have more, smaller community gardens (not just a few large ones)
- ♦ Systems collaboration group – how can organisations work together and help each other
- ♦ Ask kids what they want – go into schools, empower them to be part of the conversation
- ♦ Bring CPTED into all design – design stage of projects
- ♦ Make crime free MFH mandatory – not clear who to call when residents behaving badly, direction on how you want police to deal with this

Models from Elsewhere

- ♦ In Singapore, every development has to replace 100% of greenspace used for development
- ♦ Vancouver Guidelines for Families
- ♦ Intergenerational living
- ♦ Kelowna – seniors home, but students encouraged to live there too, have meals with seniors (The Lodge)
- ♦ The Happy Pad – homesharing, students living with seniors and helping out/keeping an eye on
- ♦ Saanich – APC just makes comments, development proposal can go forward to council with negative reviews (if the developer chooses)
- ♦ Row housing in UK – high density leads to decreased car use (no room for parking) – increases active transportation choices
- ♦ Victoria – minimum parking requirements in core areas
- ♦ Chilliwack example of well-designed units, lots of variety

Appendix C: Survey Questions

Multi-family Housing Design Survey

Please tell us what type of housing you live in currently.

- ♦ Single detached house
- ♦ Duplex
- ♦ Row house or townhouse
- ♦ Laneway house/Garden Suite
- ♦ Apartment or condominium building
- ♦ Suite in home
- ♦ Other (please specify)

We would like to know a bit about the ages of the members of your household. Please be sure to include yourself in these numbers!

- ♦ Age 0 - 12 years
- ♦ Age 13 - 25 years
- ♦ Age 26 - 64 years
- ♦ Age 65 and above

If cost was NOT a factor, which would be your most preferred form of housing? Choose up to three.

- ♦ Apartment/condo (5 storeys and higher)
- ♦ Apartment/condo (4 storeys or less)
- ♦ Row house/townhouse
- ♦ Duplex
- ♦ Single detached home
- ♦ Suite in home
- ♦ Laneway house/Garden suite
- ♦ Cooperative housing
- ♦ Other

If you did not choose apartment/condo or rowhouse/townhouse for any of your choices, can you tell us the main reason(s) you do not prefer this type of housing?

We know that cost is a major consideration when choosing housing. What OTHER factors (related to social health) are important to you when you are considering a new home? Please select up to five factors in order of importance.

- ♦ Number of bedrooms
- ♦ Location (neighbourhood)
- ♦ Space for children to play outside
- ♦ Pet friendly
- ♦ Accessibility
- ♦ Storage Space
- ♦ Amount of Parking
- ♦ Gardening space
- ♦ Privacy/Soundproofing
- ♦ Space for Hobbies
- ♦ Building Design/Appearance
- ♦ Ease of Maintenance
- ♦ Energy Efficiency
- ♦ Proximity to Workplace
- ♦ Proximity to Commercial Areas/Amenities
- ♦ Views
- ♦ Proximity to Schools
- ♦ Other

We would like to hear about your experience with well-designed multi-family housing. If you have ever visited, seen or lived in multi-unit housing that you thought was or would be an excellent place to live, can you tell us a bit more about it and why you liked it?

You answered that you currently live in a single detached house. The following questions assume that you live in multi-family housing. You are welcome to complete the survey based on your previous experiences with multi-family housing or your own preferences or you can exit out of the survey. Would you like to exit the survey now?

The Township of Esquimalt requires that open space be provided in new multi-family developments. If you were able to design this open space to suit your preferences, what would it include? Please select up to three options in order of importance.

- ♦ Shared gardening space
- ♦ Individual garden allotments
- ♦ Playground equipment for young children
- ♦ Outdoor BBQ and picnic area

- ♦ Pet run area
- ♦ Grassy open space
- ♦ Landscaped area with seating
- ♦ Native plant garden
- ♦ Natural play area
- ♦ Other

If your multi-unit building has existing open space or landscaping, how would you improve this space so that it would provide more enjoyment to you and others in your household?

What features of your building/neighbourhood would most encourage you to be active? Please select up to three options in order of importance.

- ♦ On-site gym or activity room
- ♦ Near to parks and trails
- ♦ Near to recreation centre
- ♦ Near to well-designed pedestrian and cycling routes
- ♦ Bicycle storage in building
- ♦ Easy walking distance to shops
- ♦ Easy walking or cycling route to work
- ♦ Close to transit stop
- ♦ Other, please specify

Children have different needs for their physical and social development. Does your current housing do a good job providing space for these needs?

Yes

- ♦ No
- ♦ In part
- ♦ Don't know/not applicable

Why or why not? Please explain

Finding space for children to play in multi-family buildings can be challenging. Would you be comfortable allowing your children (under 10) to play alone or with friends in any of the following spaces? (check all that apply).

- ♦ Not applicable/don't have children
- ♦ Shared outdoor space (visible from my unit)
- ♦ Shared outdoor space (not visible from my unit)
- ♦ Rooftop patio or garden
- ♦ Hallways outside my unit
- ♦ Common room near my unit
- ♦ Common room in building
- ♦ Not comfortable having my children play alone outside my unit

Comments

If you were hoping to have more interaction with your neighbours, which of these options would/do you find most helpful? Please select up to three in order of importance.

- ♦ Main floor common room/space for social interaction
- ♦ Common room on each floor
- ♦ Welcoming lobby area with comfortable seating
- ♦ Organized building social events (e.g., Christmas parties)
- ♦ Communal kitchen facility
- ♦ Communal hobby/workshop space
- ♦ Pet friendly spaces
- ♦ Not really interested in social interaction with neighbours
- ♦ Other

If "other", please describe

People are much more likely to feel part of, or interact within, a community that they perceive to be safe. Are there any particular aspects of multi-unit living that enhance your feeling of safety or conversely, make you feel unsafe?

Do you have any other comments about designing for social health in multi-family buildings?

You have completed the survey. Thank you! If you want to be added to an email list to find out about other opportunities for comment, and the results of the survey, please feel free to leave us your email address.

Appendix D: References and Further Reading

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