



THE MIXING MIDDLE COMPETITION

IMAGINING MIXED-USE NEIGHBOURHOODS



URBANARIUM
FOR SMART CITIES

PUBLISHED BY

Vancouver Urbanarium Society and University
of British Columbia School of Architecture and
Landscape Architecture

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Editor

Shirley Shen, Travis Hanks

Graphics and Design

Lukas Ewing, Summer Xia Liu, Nancy Luo, Yang Yu

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ABOUT THE URBANARIUM

Urbanarium provides Metro Vancouver with a platform
for the discussion of ideas and issues about the planning
and design of communities: how our urban systems and
the forces acting on them work, what urban futures
might happen and what we can do to affect those
outcomes. We create competitions, debates, studios,
talks, maps and tours that help us discover more about
ourselves and our cities.

Our intention is to become a respected place for advanced
urban conversation and reliable information without
political or ideological bias.

Vancouver Urbanarium Society is a registered charity
led by an 18–person Board of Directors made up of
architects, landscape architects, planners, developers,
community organization leaders and other professionals
who are passionate about city building. As well, there are
12 distinguished individuals on a Board of Advisors and
100 plus energetic and committed volunteers.

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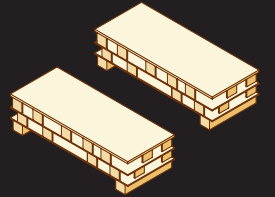
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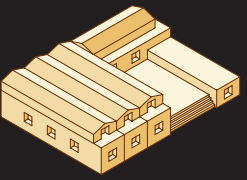
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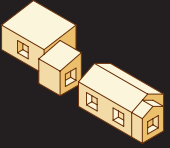
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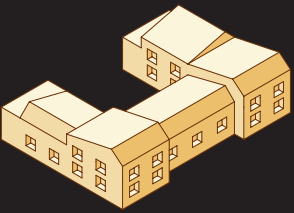
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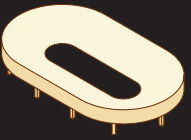
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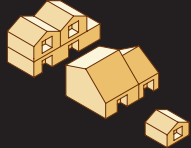
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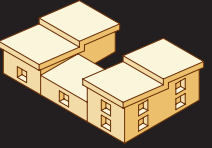
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LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Vancouver Urbanarium Society acknowledges that we are uninvited guests on the unceded, traditional and ancestral territory of the xwməθkwəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səlíl̓wətaʔt (Tsleil- Waututh) and the kwikwəł̓səm (Kwikwetlem) Nations. The Mixing Middle Competition, anchored programming, policy impact proposals and other outputs from the competition will work to reflect and honour Indigenous perspectives and elevate respectful approaches to land use and land rights planning, policy, practices and governance.

FOREWORD

As chairman of the **Vancouver Urbanarium Society**, it gives me enormous pride and pleasure to witness the completion of this publication, the documentation of our second design ideas competition.

In the first competition, the winner of both the overall competition and the Planners' Prize was Haeccity Studio Architecture Inc., a small and diverse collective of people who are passionate about creating meaning and connection. Headed by Principal and Co-founder Travis Hanks, Architect, AIBC and Director and Co-founder Shirley Shen, Architect Washington, the firm received wide and well-deserved recognition, and they became natural candidates to be jury members for this current Urbanarium Mixing Middle Competition. After the first competition was over, Travis and Shirley took on the task of compiling and editing a publication of the winning schemes. We are grateful that they again stepped forward to perform the same task for this competition.

It has taken a large number of talented committed individuals to develop a competition of this nature. I would like to recognise and thank the Competition

Committee led by Catherine Alkenbrack, Director, Facilities Planning, UBC, Marta Farevaag, Principal, PFS Studio, and Sara Stevens, Associate Professor UBC SALA, and Professional Advisor John Hemsworth, Architect, AIBC.

They and the other members of the committee worked tirelessly with our Executive Director, Amy Nugent, for over a year to perform and coordinate the many individual tasks that needed to be completed. It should be noted that the idea for this competition came from Marta Farevaag whose finger was on the pulse, issue-wise, pointing to the many pandemic-induced, life-style changes occurring in our community, especially in terms of the relationship between living and working.

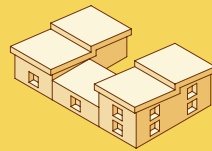
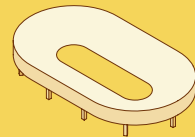
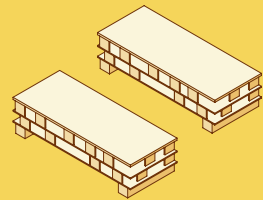
We congratulate the approximately 157 individuals on 44 teams from across the country and beyond, including submissions from Iran, India, Australia and the U.S., who so generously shared their ideas in thoughtful and beautifully-presented presentations. They represent a generation whose competence and leadership will be needed in the years to come in shaping our built environment.

Richard Henriquez
Founding Chair, Vancouver Urbanarium Society

I would like to especially acknowledge and thank the Main Jury members and the municipal officials from the Cities of Coquitlam, North Vancouver, Surrey and Vancouver and our eminent adviser Dr. Gary Hack, Dean Emeritus, Graduate School of Design at the University of Pennsylvania, who made up the Planners' Advisory Panel. Theirs was not an easy task but in the end there was almost perfect alignment of the winners chosen by the Jury and Planners' Panel. Special Technical Advisors also played an important part in making this competition a success, and my thanks go to them.

And finally, the Urbanarium is enormously grateful to our Competition Presenting Sponsors: Wesgroup and Peeter Wesik and Scotiabank, our Competition Partners: AIBC, BC Housing, Microsoft, Rethink and UBC SALA and our 21 Supporting Sponsors that made this competition possible. Their financial support, as well as the faith that they have shown in the Urbanarium is gratifying, and encourages the many of us who work on programming such as this, mostly as volunteers, to carry on this important work.

INTRODUCTION

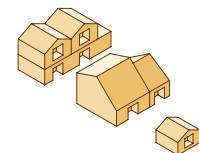
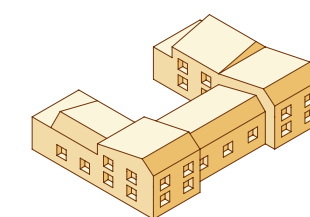
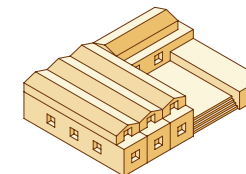
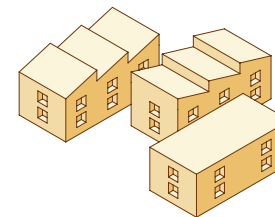


In 2018, the Urbanarium held The Missing Middle Competition to invite explorations of ideas to address Metro Vancouver’s housing affordability and social well-being challenges – then and still at crisis level in most Lower Mainland urban settings – and to increase density incrementally on sites of one or two standard residential lots. One of the keys here was the potential for incremental growth in housing units, and therefore density, on small sites with the proposed infill at a scale physically and socially compatible with existing single family neighbourhoods. However their density met that of larger scale land assembly developments. Using Vancouver as a case in point, this was already a good strategy with genuine promise had the City of Vancouver not cancelled City Plan’s evolution in 2008.

Enter The Missing Middle Competition, which included mixed-use in the program of gentle densification. Conceived in the midst of the COVID 19 pandemic, the changes to the way people lived in their neighbourhoods and worked from their homes made evident the many ways that residential zoning might be adapted to support and enhance these changes and bring shops, services, and jobs within short walkable trips from homes. The competition set out to explore some of these new possibilities to enhance community vitality; the generation of ideas through the competition is intended to show the public, and demonstrate to the municipalities, what may be considered possible and to build on lessons learned from life while working from home.

One of Missing Middle’s attributes is that the term ‘Missing Middle’ itself is now almost ubiquitous in the Lower Mainland; a concept on which the City of Vancouver is now building a framework for Making Home policy, entailing zoning updates and development guidelines. Hopefully City of Vancouver planning leadership will authentically include Missing Middle and Mixing Middle findings on the value of incremental infill in implementing the Vancouver Plan as well. Vancouver Planning Together QUICK START ACTIONS (2021) offers a tentative start to support neighbourhood grocery stores (NGS) within specified residential zones. Historically, until the Bartholomew Plan of 1929, neighbourhood stores and services proliferated in Vancouver, most often on street corners. The Bartholomew Plan recommended the separation of land uses and

the location of all retail uses on commercial high streets, classifying commercial uses as ‘intrusions in residential neighbourhoods’. The thinking of the time was that this move protected residential property values. From 1930 on this use dwindled. In 2021 there were only 88 small scale commercial businesses under residential zoning in the city, 34 of which were NGS with approximately 20 associated residential uses and 96 existing NGS sites were deactivated. Existing city NGS support allows any deactivated NGS to re-open and new businesses will be considered an allowable use by the city, in specified residential neighbourhoods, but will remain subject to other provisions in those district schedules.



Mixing Middle concepts, in City of Vancouver planning documents include large 6 storey land assembly developments, sometimes towers, preferred by developers who seem to have the ear of city planning leadership. These developments are often major intrusions in context and scale in existing single family neighbourhoods, with increased rental or purchase prices above those of incremental development units due to larger project costs of land assembly and underground parking construction. Commercial uses such as grocery stores there are unlikely to have the local owners, small scale character and community comfort found in corner stores of the 34 present types in the city. These preferred types are possible as part of 4plex and 6plex infill projects on smaller lots that produce equal density to larger land assembly projects.

Mixing Middle competition winners (and all entrants) successfully argued for the importance of mixed use in Missing Middle neighbourhoods. The competition’s planning panel awarded prizes in close agreement with the main jury findings and awards. The hope is that all 4 municipalities’ involvement in both competitions will encourage them to be brave and forge their testing of the winning Mixing Middle concepts at relevant locations in their cities, with an eye to eventually implementing new zoning and policy changes possible to make the marvellous Mixing Middle a reality!

Catherine Alkenbrack
Competition Committee Co-chair

THE BRIEF

Single use zoning was developed in order to eliminate conflicts that inevitably arise with the juxtaposition of perceived incompatible uses. The entrants were challenged to consider and propose mitigating design solutions to these issues.

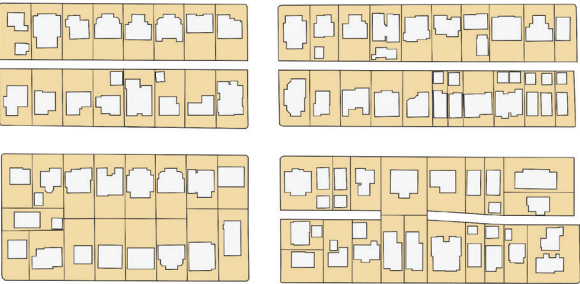
The brief also challenged entrants to conceive of imaginative new relationships among the myriad unplanned alternative uses that have cropped up in low density residential zones around the Vancouver region. They were asked to question whether this mixing will lead to lifestyles that integrate work with home in ways that are more satisfying, walkable, accessible, sociable, culturally inclusive, healthy and sustainable than single use zoning can provide. Entrants were also asked to consider how a finely grained mix of uses might alter the normal transportation and access needs of residents and to propose design solutions for the adjacent streets and public realm.

Four sites of four blocks were chosen in representative local municipalities: Vancouver, the City of North Vancouver, Coquitlam, and Surrey in areas of low density residential zoning near shopping areas and transit. Entrants were asked their preferences among sites and generally assigned their first or second choice. Within the assigned site, the brief required proposals that could be developed on one lot of a single homeowner or on two adjoining lots. They were also asked to imagine how their approach might be expanded, over time, to reshape the surrounding blockface and the full four-block competition site.

Entrants were provided with a framework for their submissions that included project data and urban design, social and economic rationale for the concept. Submissions were to suggest alterations to the local circulation network and public realm, to current zoning and design guideline provisions and to the planning approval process, and innovative legal mechanisms for ownership and financing

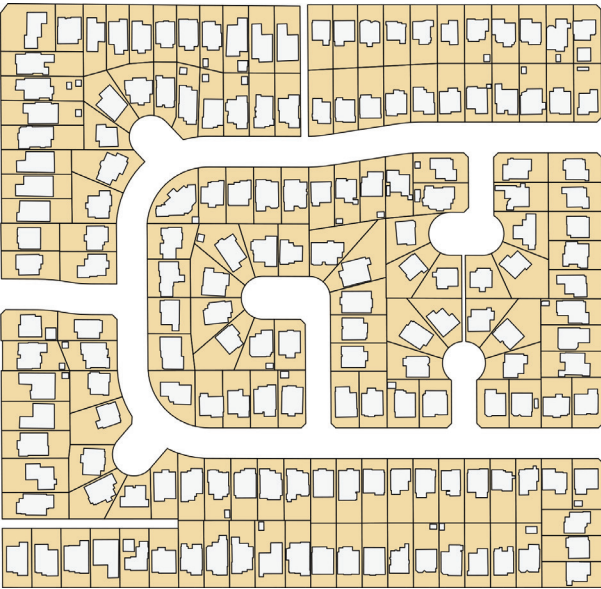
The Jury had discretion in the selection of prize awards considering criteria from the brief: creativity, practicality, implementability, anticipated improvement in neighbourhood amenity and diversity, potential to promote social engagement, access, and inclusivity, and potential to support walking and cycling/micro-mobility access.

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POSSIBLE POLICY IMPACTS

As a volunteer on the competition committee, I wanted to learn how low density single family zones could become communities that provide the necessary services and activities that allow its residents to thrive. The competition submissions highlighted an overarching lesson—as the world becomes ever more uncertain, the future of development is inherently mixed-use.

The **Policy Impact Proposal** reviews the learning and ideas brought forward by the Mixing Middle Competition and highlights common themes and recommendations for consideration by policy makers.

Zoë Acton
Competition Committee Member



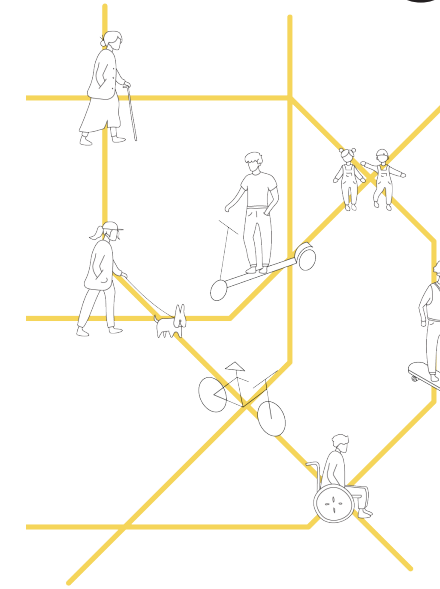
1 ALLOW A WIDER RANGE OF USES IN RESIDENTIAL ZONES

Imagine a new Neighbourhood Zone that actively places essential services (childcare, fresh grocer, health and fitness) where people live, while also creating inclusionary policies that accommodate all forms of urban habitation.



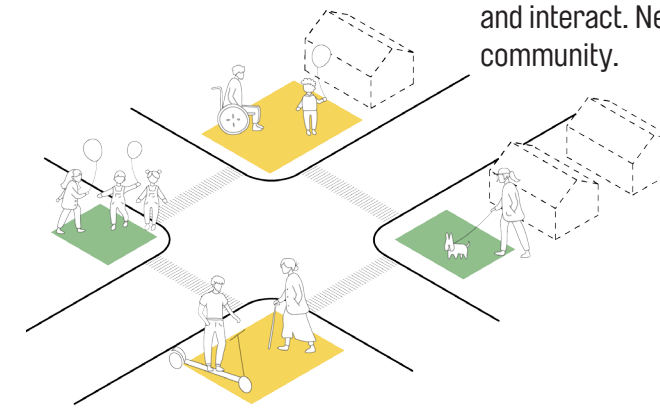
2 START SMALL WITH HOT SPOT CORNERS

Concentrate initial mixed-use density in a few key intersections that could demonstrate the success of diversifying the area. Locate community-oriented retail into neighbourhood nodes to encourage synergies of visibility, efficiency, and success.



3 ESTABLISH ACTIVE WAYS TO REDUCE CAR DEPENDENCE

Locate neighbourhood nodes along strong transportation networks that prioritize active modalities. Facilitate people of all ages and abilities to visit nodes by walking, jogging, bicycles, scooters, skateboards, and prams in order to support existing businesses and catalyse future developments.



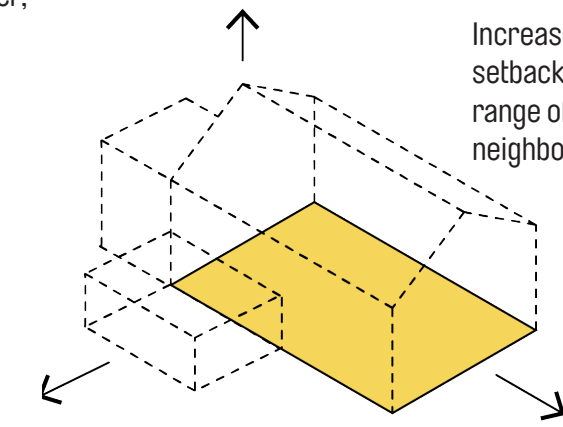
4 INCENTIVISE SOCIAL AMENITY SPACES

Plan for areas of socialization by creating sidewalk plazas and small public open spaces to encourage people to gather, linger, and interact. Neighbourhoods are built on community.



5 INCENTIVISE NATURE AMENITY SPACES

Look at Non-human uses (native species, geologies, and ecologies) and create bonuses / relaxations for the preservation of shared landscapes.



6 COMBINE WITH MISSING MIDDLE POLICIES TO CREATE COMPLETE NEIGHBOURHOODS

Increase flexibility in building massing, setbacks, and parking to facilitate a broader range of uses and innovation in residential neighbourhoods.

FIRST PLACE

LOTS IN COMMON

BY CONTINGENT

Nicole Sylvia, Roy Cloutier, Lorinc Vass

In the face of interlocking housing, ecological, and social crises, the nature of home and public space need a fundamental re-mixing. Lots in Common builds from co-operative housing precedents to propose a sharing network, re-framing domesticity by interweaving it with collective space. The project acts as a sponge, not an island—connecting into larger systems of ecology, mobility, livelihood, social exchange, and more. It harnesses underused zones of space—laneways, front yards, infrastructural and latent ecological corridors—and activates them with a shared network of collective activities.

Carefully-chosen incentives cluster development along new corridors, giving the sharing network a geography within the city. Its architectural principles provide a high quality of life by balancing layers of privacy and community, utilizing environmentally-conscious building technology and materials, and bringing vitality, activity, services, and habitat to the broader neighbourhood. Urban space is reframed via acts of sharing and solidarity: the denizens of the city find they have Lots In Common.



NORTH
VANCOUVER



4 STOREY



FSR 1.5

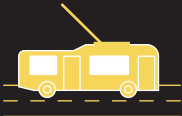


COMMONING
ECOLOGY
NETWORKS

TOTAL FLOOR AREA 32,796 SF



33% GREEN SPACE



8% TRANSPORTATION



13% COMMUNITY



12% COMMERCIAL



34% RESIDENTIAL

LOTS IN COMMON

Re-Forming Domesticity

Current attempts to address the housing crisis too often rely on conservative, nostalgic models of ownership—in turn largely failing to impact the interrelated problems of scarcity, homogeneity, unaffordability, unsustainability, and isolation. Rather, the very nature and meaning of home itself needs a more fundamental re-mixing: from homes in isolation to shared spaces held in common.

A diverse ecology of living sprouts forth, growing from the interstices of the formal city. It harnesses underused zones of space—laneways, front yards, infrastructural and latent ecological corridors—activating them with a shared network of collective activities. Instead of nostalgically recreating older modes of living and working based in static ownership of a singular space, this sharing network both decentralizes domesticity and weaves collective space into the domicile. The city's components shake loose from their traditional roles and distribute into the urban fabric, allowing them to be held collectively.

Lots, in Common

This evolving network of shared spaces hosts a multiplicity of activities impossible in isolation. Shared space proliferates throughout North Vancouver as a field of experimentation, in which collective social life is continually re-formed through everyday rituals. Urban space is re-framed via acts of sharing and solidarity: the denizens of the city find they have Lots In Common.

TENET 2: FROM 'COMMUNITY' TO 'COMMUNITIES'

True mixing pluralizes notions of community—no longer stopping at building inhabitants or immediate neighbors, instead incorporating a myriad of actants.

TENET 1: BE A SPONGE, NOT AN ISLAND

Each building reaches out beyond itself, weaving into larger networks: ecology, mobility, economy, political exchange, and more.

TENET 3: [INTER]FACING THINGS TOGETHER

Seams between programs are thickened and made inhabitable—growing into focal points for new communities and new types of commoning.

TENETS OF MIXING

Tenet 1: Be a Sponge, Not an Island

Integrate building into larger networks. entanglement with trans-scalar systems of ecology and livelihood

The failure of current housing policy is, first and foremost, a failure to understand how individual projects relate to larger networks of economy and ecology. Instead, *Lots In Common* is networked at its core. It builds from a commoning platform of collective ownership, using the processes of collective self-governance to negotiate larger economic and ecological networks. True local democracy starts in the home: with collective control and equity.

Tenet 2: From 'Community' to 'Communities'

Distribute across a common ground. massing and landscape as a collective platform

In lieu of the monoculture of single-family homes and laneway houses with near-identical massing, the ground plane is freed up to serve a broader, more-than-human array of communities via courtyards, landscaped strips, and public spaces. This is achieved via two-lot land assembly (via a land bank or by individual groups of commoners), which maintains neighbourhood continuity while allowing for a significantly more flexible and nuanced approach to how to integrate communities (human and non-human alike) into the projects.

Tenet 3: [Inter]Facing Things Together

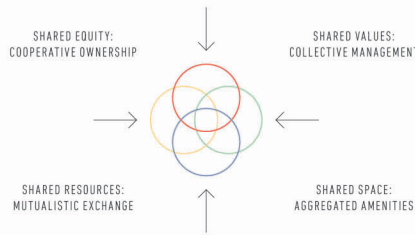
Mediate between different habitats. architectural & landscape interfaces filter distinct zones and practices of inhabitation

Architectural surfaces are, ironically, often overlooked when addressing larger questions of ecology and sociality—or at best, treated generically in codes. Instead, *Lots In Common* embraces architecture's role in mediating and accommodating difference: using spatial devices to transform potential conflicts into spaces of togetherness and delight. An interface-based code turns density into conviviality.

Lots in Common is a series of spatial protocols rather than a rigid, standardized building prototype. Its deployable design moves can adapt to varied scenarios, using them to weave together the many systems and inhabitants of the sites. These design moves harness the diversity of the site's inhabitants, livelihoods and needs—encouraging convivial and synergistic relationships.

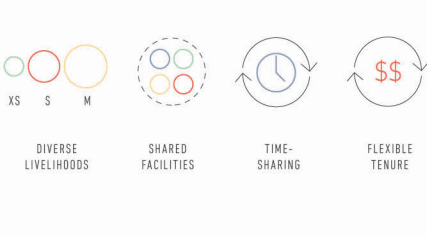
1A COMMONING

Allow small-scale lot assembly towards cooperative ownership and make space for connection-building through shared activities and synergetic relationships.



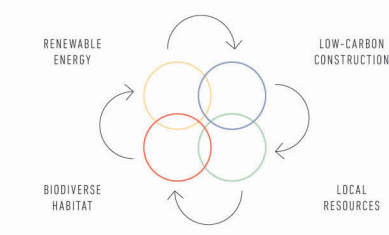
1B DIVERSE ECONOMIES

Accommodate mixed-use programs across a range of scales, tenure types and space needs to support a variety of livelihoods, such as micro-retail, craft workshops or shared workspaces.



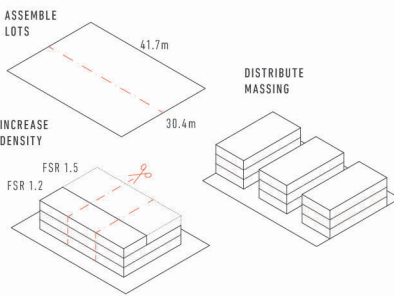
1C ECOLOGICAL COUPLINGS

Integrate environmental systems & provide habitat for more-than-human residents.



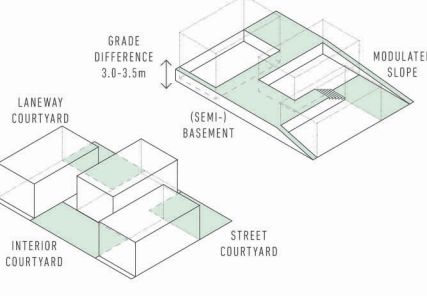
2A DISTRIBUTED DENSITY

Break up building mass into multiple volumes to optimize access to light, ventilation and views, and minimize impact on neighbours.



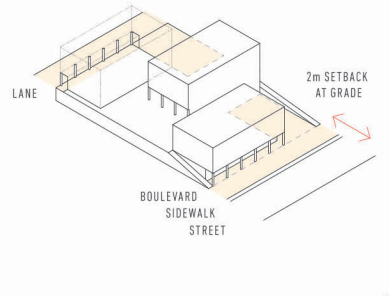
2B POROUS GROUND PLANE

Open up the ground plane with courtyards of varying degree of intimacy and modulate it in response to topography.



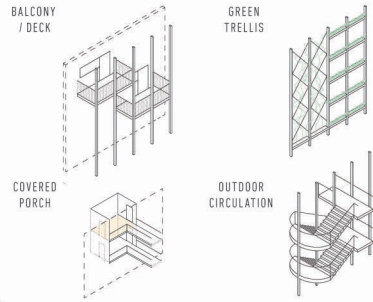
2C ACTIVATED BLOCKFACES

Reduce setbacks, create visual transparency at grade level and program the street boulevard.



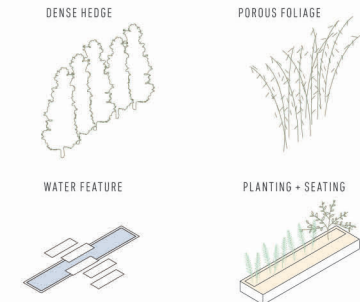
3A INHABITED FACADES

Activate interior-exterior relationships by animating the vertical envelope with circulation, balconies, covered porches or trellises.



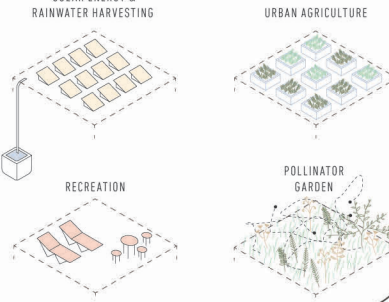
3B LANDSCAPED THRESHOLDS

Create intermediary zones between public and private spheres using landscape elements such as hedges, planting or water features.



3C MULTIFUNCTIONAL ROOFTOPS

Activate rooftops with recreational activities, urban agriculture, extensive planting or rainwater harvesting.



SPATIAL PROTOCOLS FOR THE BLOCK

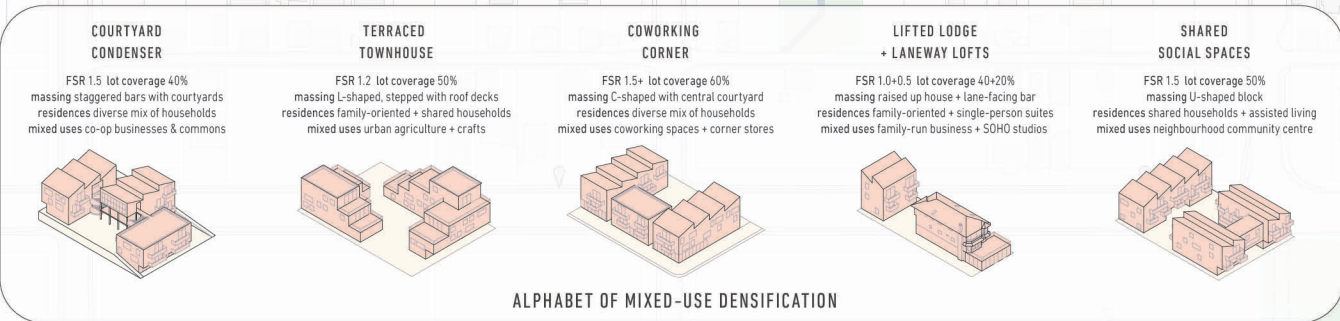
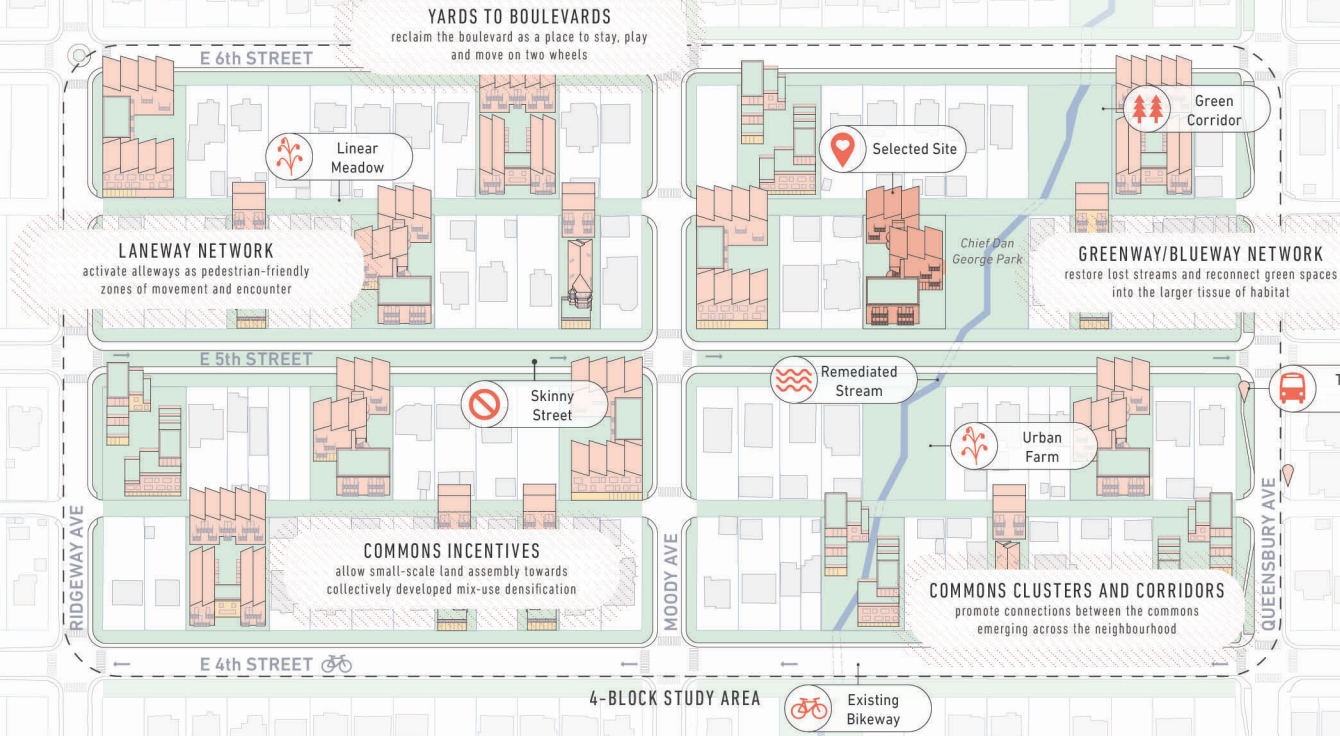
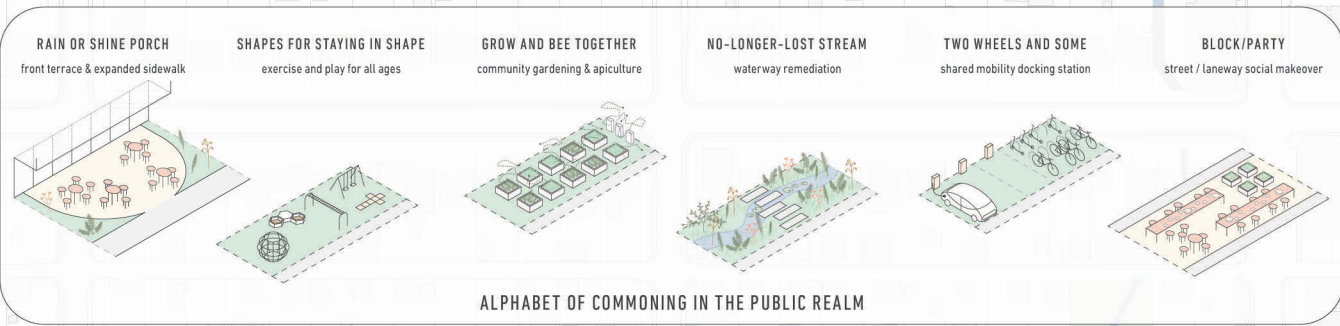
Urban Design Gestures

In response to (and incorporating) the five key principles of Missing Middle 2018, *Lots in Common* proposes five additional urban design and planning principles underlying this sharing network:

- Commons Incentives** relax zoning codes for groups of citizen-owners creating commons-oriented buildings that are generous to the community.
- Yards to Boulevards** recasts the space of the street edge, front yard, and municipal easement as a multifunctional zone for living, making, and growing.
- The **Laneway Network** renews the space of the lane as it densifies, using it as the new centre of informal, shared neighbourhood activities.
- Greenway/Blueway Networks** use ecology to drive urban form, creating pedestrian and habitat corridors linking parks or along daylighted streams.
- Commons Clusters and Corridors** incentives encourage new commons-oriented development to cluster along these corridors — encouraging individual commons projects to aggregate into a larger network of commoning.

Towards a Network of Commoning

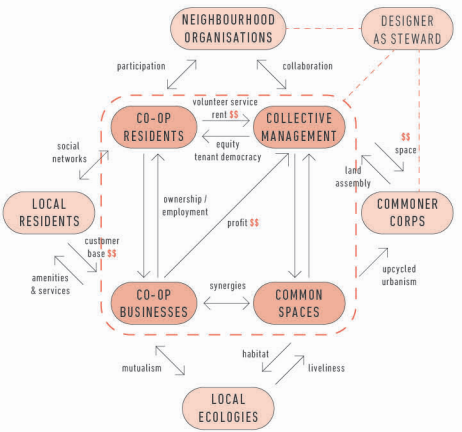
Via bridging institutions such as a prospective 'Commoners Corps', individual groups of commoners are able to harness resources and receive expert guidance through the process of development. As these projects combine into a larger system of common space, a diverse ecology of living sprouts forth at the block and neighbourhood scale. Paired with membership access or a digital overlay, neighbors could partake in the latest happenings in the network. The whole becomes more than the sum of its parts.



MIXING AS ENTANGLING
ASSEMBLING A PROJECT

Drawing Together
Commons-focused projects entangle themselves into existence, growing by weaving together the networks into which they are tied (social, biophysical, ecological, economic). This illustrative example began when Amélie heard about *baugruppen*, a German co-housing model, and thought it sounded like something she and her friends should explore. Through their social circles (friends, neighbors, coworkers, extended families), they assembled an interested group to take advantage of the city's new Commons Incentives. After a few months of planning with help from the community land bank and Commons Corps, they formed a cooperative, found a site and hired a consultant team to work through the design. The Commons Corps sold them the lots pre-assembled at slightly below market value, with the co-op in return selecting amenities that filled gaps in the Common Space Exchange Network and offering future, reciprocal access once completed.

The Business of Exchange
As the design developed, they began to better understand their new neighbors and work them into the design — neighbors (broadly construed) that include raccoons and rain, mass timber and migratory birds, bike commuters and bumblebees, among myriad others. The co-op they formed acted as an institution of commoning, becoming a go-between that mediates the many ecological and economic exchanges of the project's communities. Pottery was sold, habitat restored, rents and equity reallocated, amenities negotiated, newcomers fêted, sidewalks chalked, vegetables brought to market.



From the balcony a lace of reflection obscures the renewed life in the unearthed stream. The threads weave into the mountains beyond, knotted up with the stream of goods that feed the city: lumber, water, salmon.

While the route rarely changes, the sights always do. A jaunt through the network of lanes provides a glimpse into neighbours' varied lives. It's a chance to see familiar faces and watch gardens grow. This assemblage of life—of shared activities, spaces, and memories—provides the foundation for a convivial community.

A larger lattice of mobility supplants the homogeneity of the street grid. Foxes warily amble beneath bushes pruned to the tops of their ears. Pollinators flutter and flit between clusters of vibrant flowers. Milled wooden shutters stutter in the wind, sheltering both humans in the loft and bats in the eco-jamb.

Along the block, backyards become speckled with infill structures, creating a space that is both fragmented and continuous: wood-working abuts a fire-pit platform for coffee roasting and barbeques, which opens onto another neighbor's lavish greenhouse. Elderly retirees like to have breakfast here, playing cards and garnishing their eggs with the fresh herbs in reach as conveniently as salt and pepper shakers.

Teacher:
Afternoons of accounting and laborious yet meditative time at the wheel are the mainstays of a pottery hobby-turned-small-business. Leading an evening wheel-throwing class brings in extra income, but sharing skills with others and helping them grow is what makes the time sing.

Student:
Little hands cupped in larger (though hardly more skilled) hands press on the spinning clay. A day of work and school culminates in one more class where both parent and child are students.

TEST FIT:
COURTYARD CONDENSER

Harnessing Found Potential
After locating their North Vancouver site and consolidating two parcels under the commons-incentive plan, the first order of business was to embrace the slope of the site. The buildings step downward in height following the slope, creating a varied roof-line and a series of terraced gardens. Site specificities fuel architectural expression.

Yards to Boulevards
The front edge of the site reclaims underused space from former yards and municipal easements, thickening it into a boulevard. Multiple uses combine in this strip: cafe seating, parking, rainwater gardens, street trees, parklets and more.

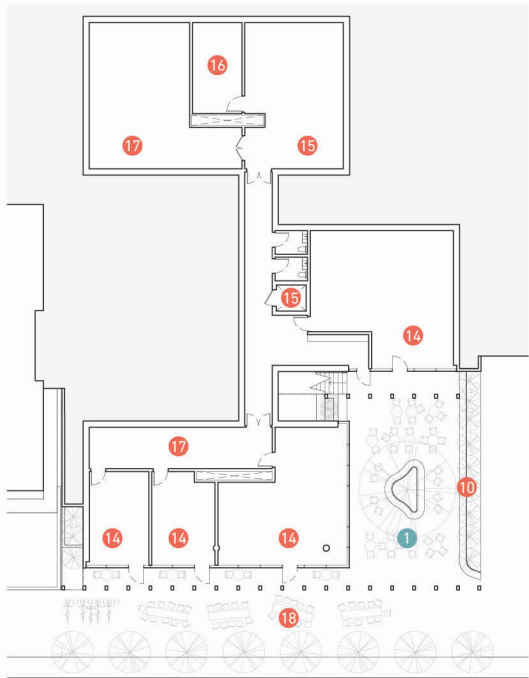
Business In The Front, Party In The Back
The three courtyards of the project similarly tie into the larger boulevard, laneway, greenway, and blue-way networks. Their design and programming embraces the wide range of communities that traverse these networks:

- The **street-facing courtyard plaza** gives space for Simon to get tea with Anupreet when she's biking by on her way back from work.
- The **lane-facing neighbourhood courtyard** hosts Theresa's parties or Natalie's yoga classes, while neighbourhood passersby (human and animal alike) drop in from the park for a visit.
- The **inner common courtyard** lets Dakota run wild with their friends, while their parents work from home upstairs.
- All three courtyards are scaled, oriented, planted, and programmed to buffer adjacent buildings when needed, while also opening out to embrace fortuitous connections with context.

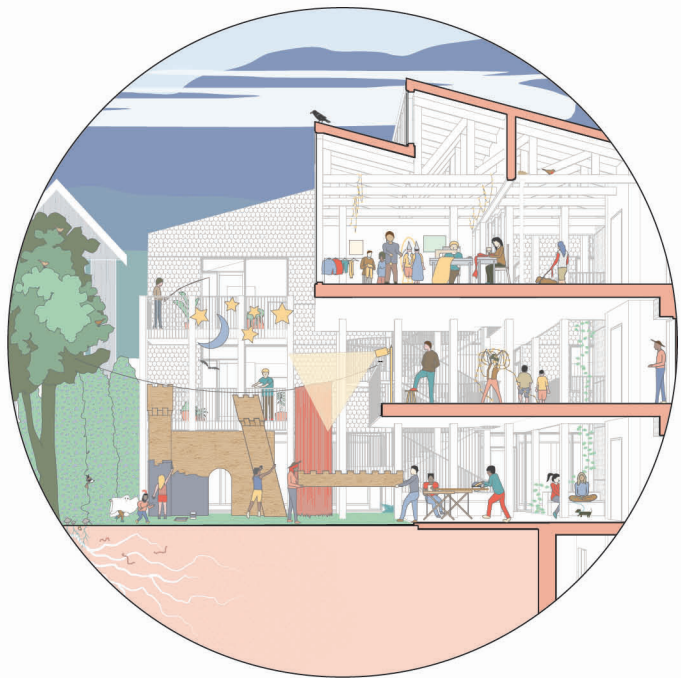
1. street courtyard (1600 ft²)
2. common courtyard (2000 ft²)
3. lane courtyard (1600 ft²)
4. shared porch (4 @ 160 ft² each)
5. common spaces at courtyards (x2, 2400 ft² total)
6. common spaces at upper levels (x2, 930 ft² total)
7. roof terrace + garden + solar PV + meadow (2300 ft²)
8. colonnade screen interface
9. vegetated screen interface
10. connections to park
11. 1 bedroom unit (6 @ 600 ft² each)
12. 2 bedroom unit (6 @ 900 ft² each)
13. 3 bedroom unit + courtyard access (1 @ 1200 ft²)
14. small-format work / commercial space (x4, 2860 ft² total)
15. common services, laundry, elevator, storage (900 ft²)
16. bike lockers (250 ft²)
17. mechanical (1500 ft²)
18. boulevard w/ rain gardens, parking, seating



LEVEL 2 (LANE)
1:550



LEVEL 1 (STREET)
1:550



COMMON COURTYARD



LANE COURTYARD

TEST FIT:
COURTYARD CONDENSER

All Up In Your [Inter]Face
The mix of conditions is mediated by a system of architectural interfaces: screens, balconies, colonnades, hedges, planters, bleacher-stairs, and more. The challenges of proximity are transformed into sites for interaction, juxtaposition, and delight.

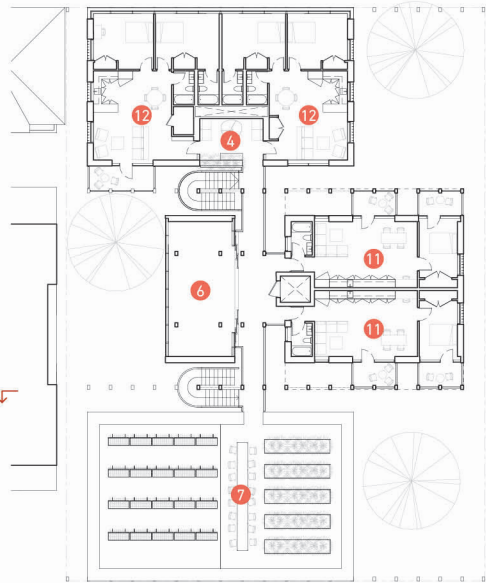
Thickening the Surfaces
Rather than merely passive objects, building and site elements are treated as *productive surfaces* within systems. Migratory birds refuel in the roof meadow; bees and mushrooms inhabit hedges; stored carbon inhabits mass timber elements; thick envelope walls wrap it all in a cozy insulating blanket.

Scales of Commoning
As the residents worked through the design with their architect, they sought out a richly-varied network of common spaces:

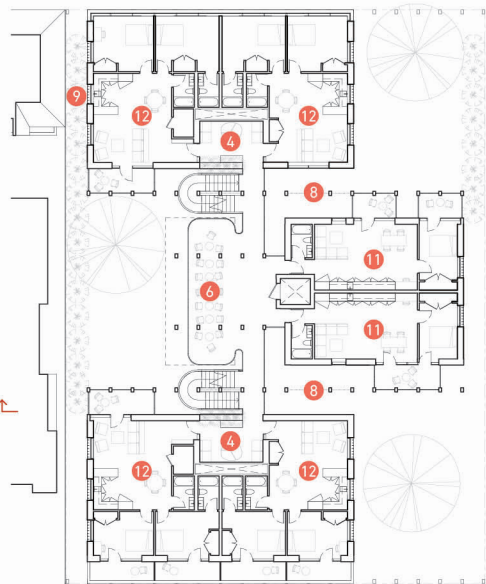
- Ground-floor shared spaces allow residents with mobility limitations to join in with ease.
- Shared porches give a space for neighbors to sit, chat, play board games, and entertain visitors outside.
- Open, canopied terrace balconies and exterior corridors overlook the courtyards—often hung with props when the daycare stages a play.
- The indoor common space on the top floor floods with indirect natural light from clerestory windows during morning art class and glows with golden sunset light during parties.
- The harvest table on the rooftop terrace hosts communal meals for the entire building, complete with very local veggies (travel distance: three feet).

Project Data: FSR: 1.50 Lot coverage: 38%
Setbacks: 1.6m at sides Typ height: 10m

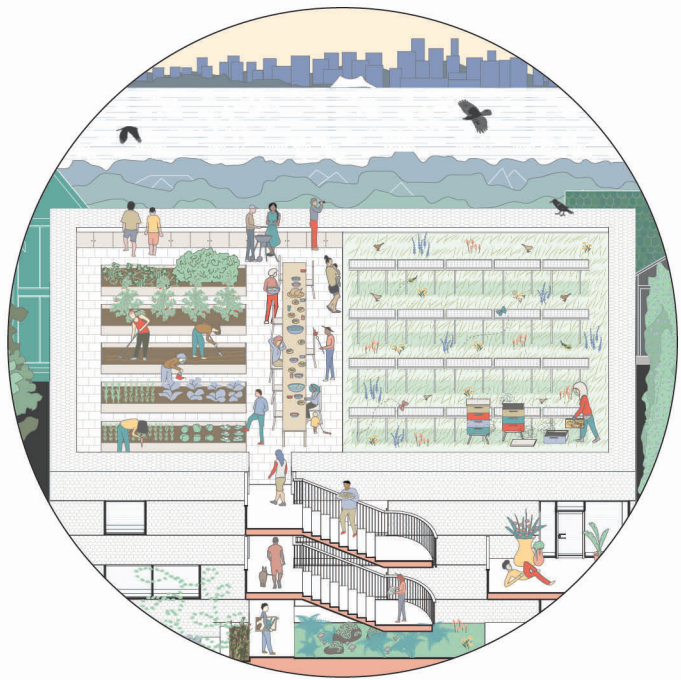
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14. small-format work / commercial space (x4, 2860 ft² total)
15. common services, laundry, elevator, storage (900 ft²)
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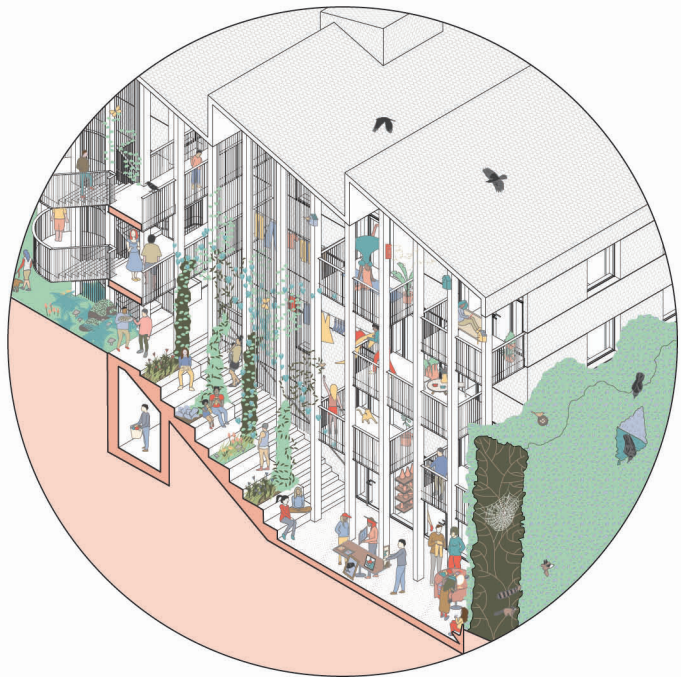
LEVEL 4
1:550



LEVEL 3
1:550



MULTIFUNCTIONAL ROOFS



INTERFACES AND INHABITED FACADES

JURY
STATEMENT

For the First Prize, the Jury was looking for the total package, with a singular vision that could connect the many aspects connected to the Mixing Middle: Lots in Common fit the bill and went beyond just checking the boxes. The Jury praised this community-centred entry for its willingness to confront the idea that individually-owned land is best, offering a fundamental challenge to a basic tenet of our cities. Jurors admired how it handled the context and building typologies that addressed different parts of the neighbourhood. Rather than pretending that one-size-fits-all, the entry offers flexibility and a kit of parts in response to its context. The three open spaces offer a gradation between private and semi-public areas that work well with the mixed-use street frontages. Their interlocking works well together and creates further opportunities for flexibility. The proposal is thoughtful in its consideration of habitats, and offers a bold and forward-looking diagram that includes the consideration of other beings in the city.

Technical Advisor John Madden noted that this entry deserves shining marks for its approach to sustainability. The entry impressed by challenging the privatization of space and offering alternative models for ownership, centered on inclusion and spaces for social engagement. Everyone here is part of a larger community, where the communal sense of use, not just ownership, shapes everyday life.

SECOND PLACE & PLANNER'S PRIZE

CO-LIVING QUADPLEX

BY ALTFORMA ARCHITECTURE
Cedric Jacques Yu, River Hughes

This mixed-use, corner-lot proposal offers a contrast to the kind of density and urbanism we often find on fast, linear, arterial streets in Vancouver. By quadrupling the density from 1 unit to 4 units and providing a versatile commercial corner, programmatic synergies create the potential for local neighborhood clusters to re-emerge even in quiet parts of residential neighborhoods. Cafes, office space, artist studios, and light retail are all imagined here.

A new cross-section of the street occurs at selected nodes encouraging and enhancing pedestrian and cycling pathways in the city. Traffic calming measures, abundant parking, textured sidewalks, and an amphitheatre tie into the existing edge of the architecture to create new possibilities for public space and community gathering in the neighborhood while supporting a walkable “10 minute” city.

With landscaped elements spilling into the architecture, the form and expression of the buildings are familiar and modest. The office space is shared by residents and pulled away from the residential form offering residents in a work-from-home era a suitable place to conduct business with psychological and physical separation between work and home.



COQUITLAM



3 STOREY



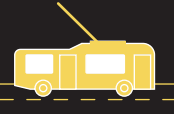
FSR 0.9



CO-LIVING
COMMERCIAL NODES
CORNER LOT



38% GREEN SPACE



15% TRANSPORTATION



6% COMMERCIAL



41% RESIDENTIAL

TOTAL FLOOR AREA 16,300 SF



Principles & Goals

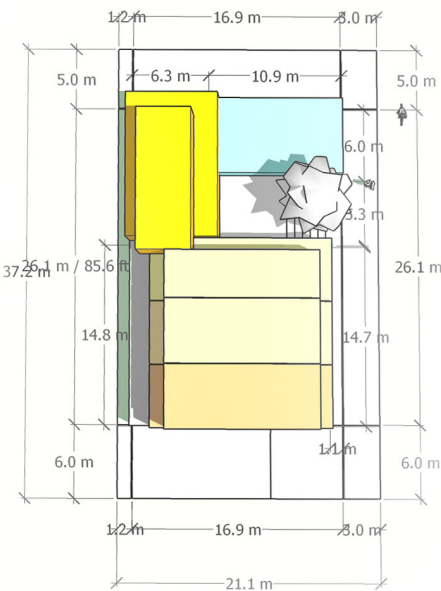
1. Quadruple occupant density from 1 family to 4 families
2. Provide a separate dedicated office for the 4 families to share.
3. Provide private 2 stall parking garages to each resident so to not burden public street parking
4. Provide ample high quality outdoor social space for residents and the community
5. Offer a nodal model of development for pedestrian focused urbanism (10 minute city)
6. Leasehold bargain - Owners can sell land to municipalities in exchange for bonus density and financing partnerships. Landowners maintain 100 year leases on properties.
7. Potential for Coliving and Cohousing variations

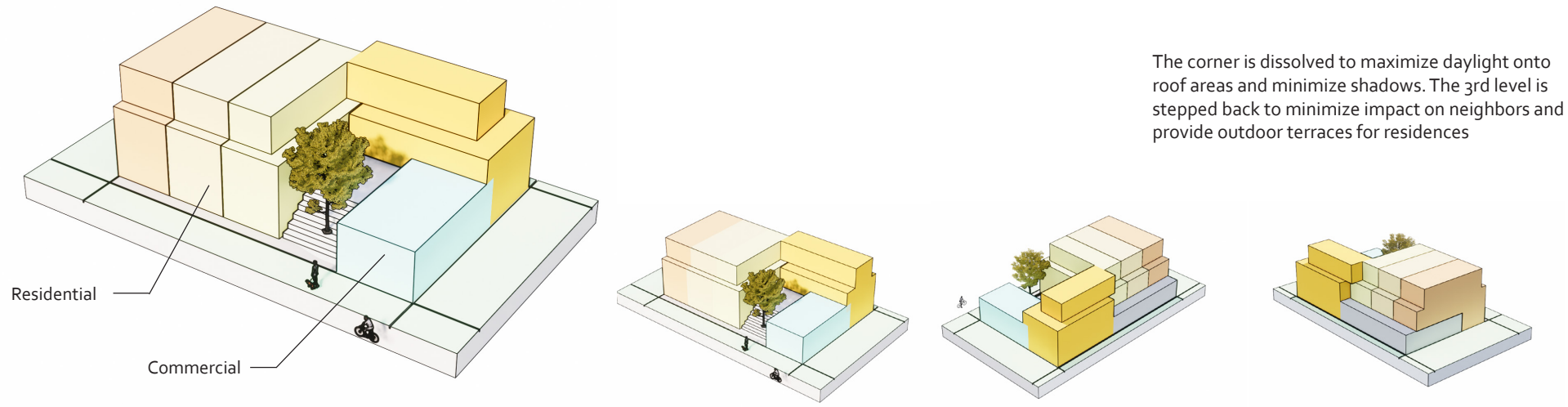
Site Area: 8444 Sf
Zoning: RT-1 (Neighborhood)
Allowable FAR: 0.5 (Up to 0.75 w/ parking excl.)
Setbacks: Front 5m
Rear 6m
Side 1.2m
Street side 3.0m

Proposed Area: 7600 Sf
Proposed FAR: 0.9 FAR
0.75 Residential + 0.15 Commercial Bonus

Unit 1 (4 bed): 1610 sf
Unit 2 (3 bed): 1350 sf
Unit 3 (3 bed): 1350 sf
Unit 4 (3 bed): 1350 sf

Commercial: 850 sf





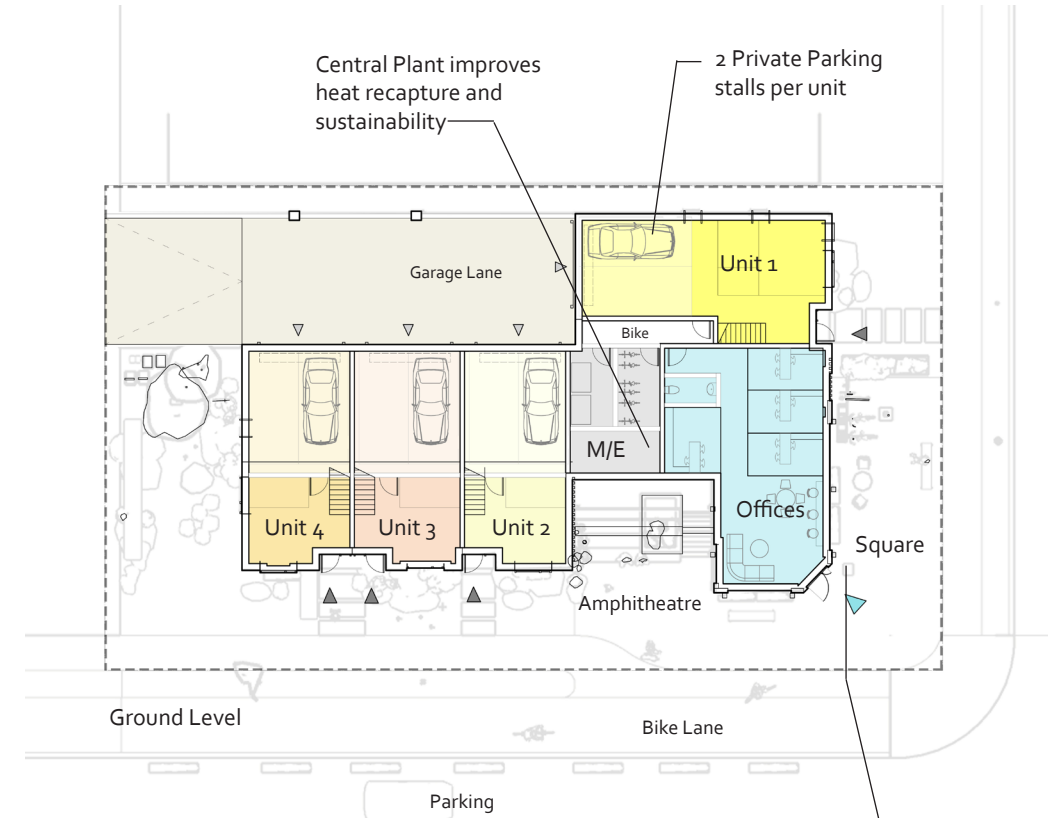
Material shift helps reduce scale

3 Stories and residential form to integrate with neighboring buildings

Pocket Park for community use

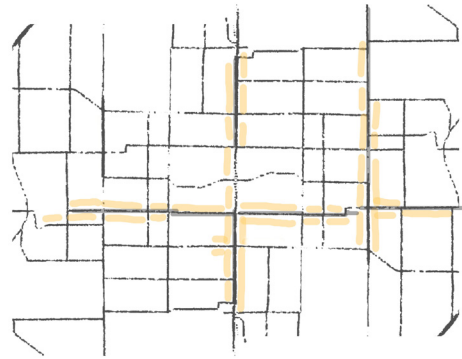
Rooftop Terrace

Office Space for Residences



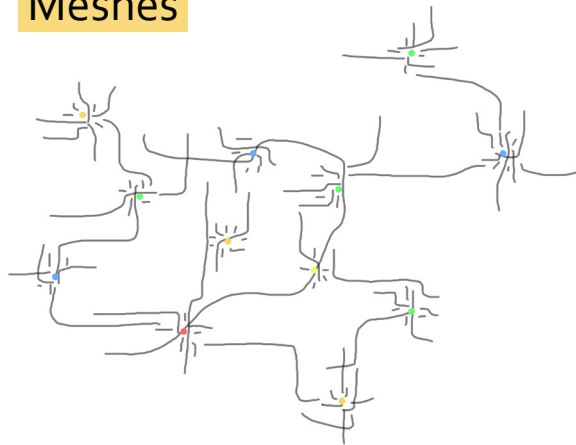


Grids



- Car Centric
- Linear Street Retail
- Arterial Development
- Fast City
- Creates community barriers
- Big businesses

Meshes



- Pedestrian Centric
- Nodal Development
- Slow City
- 10 minute city
- Promotes community encounters
- Local businesses



Coquitlam Nodes

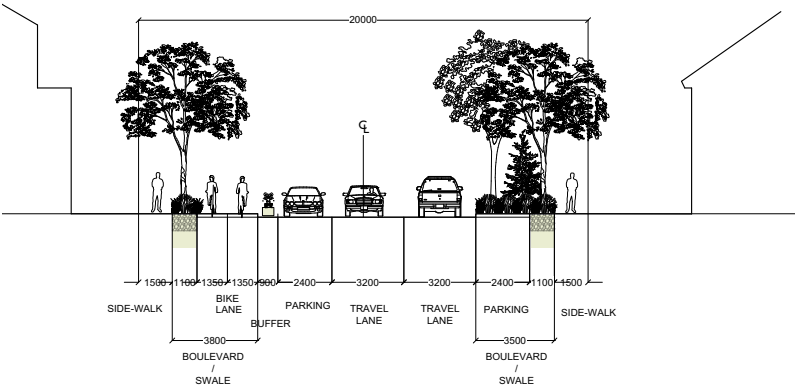
To supplement the gridded city this proposal offers a secondary network of pedestrian urbanism linked by walking and biking. The white rings represent 10 minute walking distance from each node

Like pearls strung along a necklace these nodes act as local community hubs for neighborhood commerce and community. This proposal serves as one potential example of such nodal corners

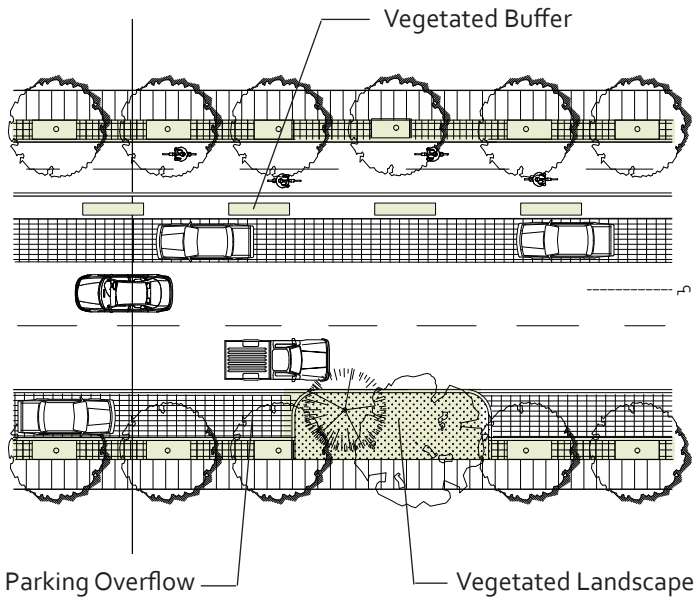


New pedestrian oriented streets weave through the neighborhood.

The ratio of parking to vegetation can be varied depending on the street design requirements.



Modified Street Section to support pedestrian and cycling modes of movement. This design proposes a dedicated bike lane with vegetation buffer within the node block. Within the commercial "mixed" node overflow parking is provided in exchange for vegetated landscape



JURY STATEMENT

The Jury appreciated how Co-Living Quadplex captured both the Mixing Middle and the Missing Middle's core ideas, considering the surrounding spaces and studying policies that could create more inclusive neighbourhoods and transportation. It delicately balances the mix of uses by activating the corner sites with just the right amount of commercial uses, allowing much of the block to remain in residential, though densified, use. The mix of uses is flexible and could be put to different purposes, and the connections across the corner's nodes is modest but a very thoughtful response. The entry handles the human scale very well, with softer edges, where you can imagine the social aspects of the project to be very successful. The Jury also noted that the scheme is very compatible with the existing fabric and surrounding houses, and appreciated how it integrated private and open spaces, semi-private and semi-public, at different heights to take advantage of the grade change.

SECOND PLACE & PLANNER'S PRIZE

MIXING MODAL

BY VIA: RE+DISCOVER

Anne Lissett, Catherine He, Claire Schumacher, Stephanie Coleridge, Bonnie Vahabi

Inspired by the Hillcrest Bikeway, which passes through the site, Mixed Modal proposes making the route car-free to enhance safety and increase its appeal to people using scooters and bikes, as well as pedestrians. Thus the bikeway becomes an active-way and the prime vector for neighbourhood-integrated commercial development. Located along this route, businesses are more visible to the neighbourhood and to active commuters passing through.

This proposal examines how co-operatively owned properties adjacent to active-ways can combine small-scale, ground level commercial spaces facing the active-way, with residential apartments and live-work townhouses. Mixed Modal wraps these elements around a vibrant communal courtyard along to maintain the appeal of ground-oriented housing. Space-hungry garages are replaced with flex-spaces surrounding the courtyard, creating room for hobbies or extra storage including for bikes.

With Mixed Modal, small commercial nodes integrate into existing residential areas and residential density increases, all in a bold form that maximizes the potential of the typical Vancouver residential block.



VANCOUVER



3 STOREY



FSR 1.5

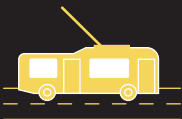


ACTIVE-WAY
CO-HOUSING
COMMUNITY PLAZA
COURTYARD

TOTAL FLOOR AREA 11,669 SF



9% GREEN SPACE



4% TRANSPORTATION



4% COMMUNITY



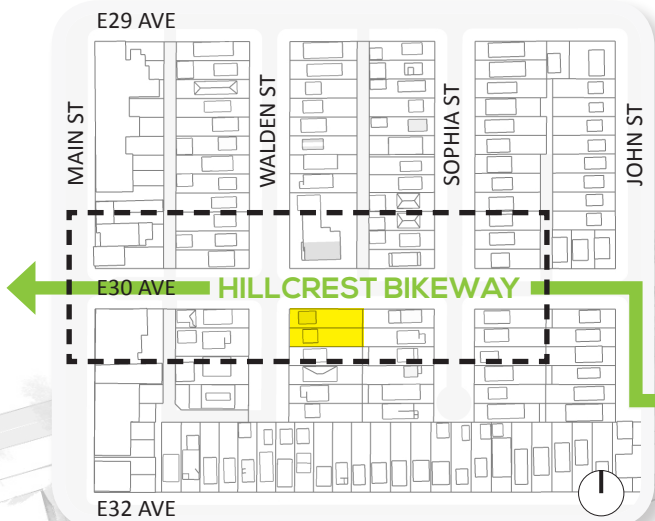
21% COMMERCIAL



62% RESIDENTIAL

MIXED MODAL

CO-HOUSING | CO-WORKING | CO-ACTIVE



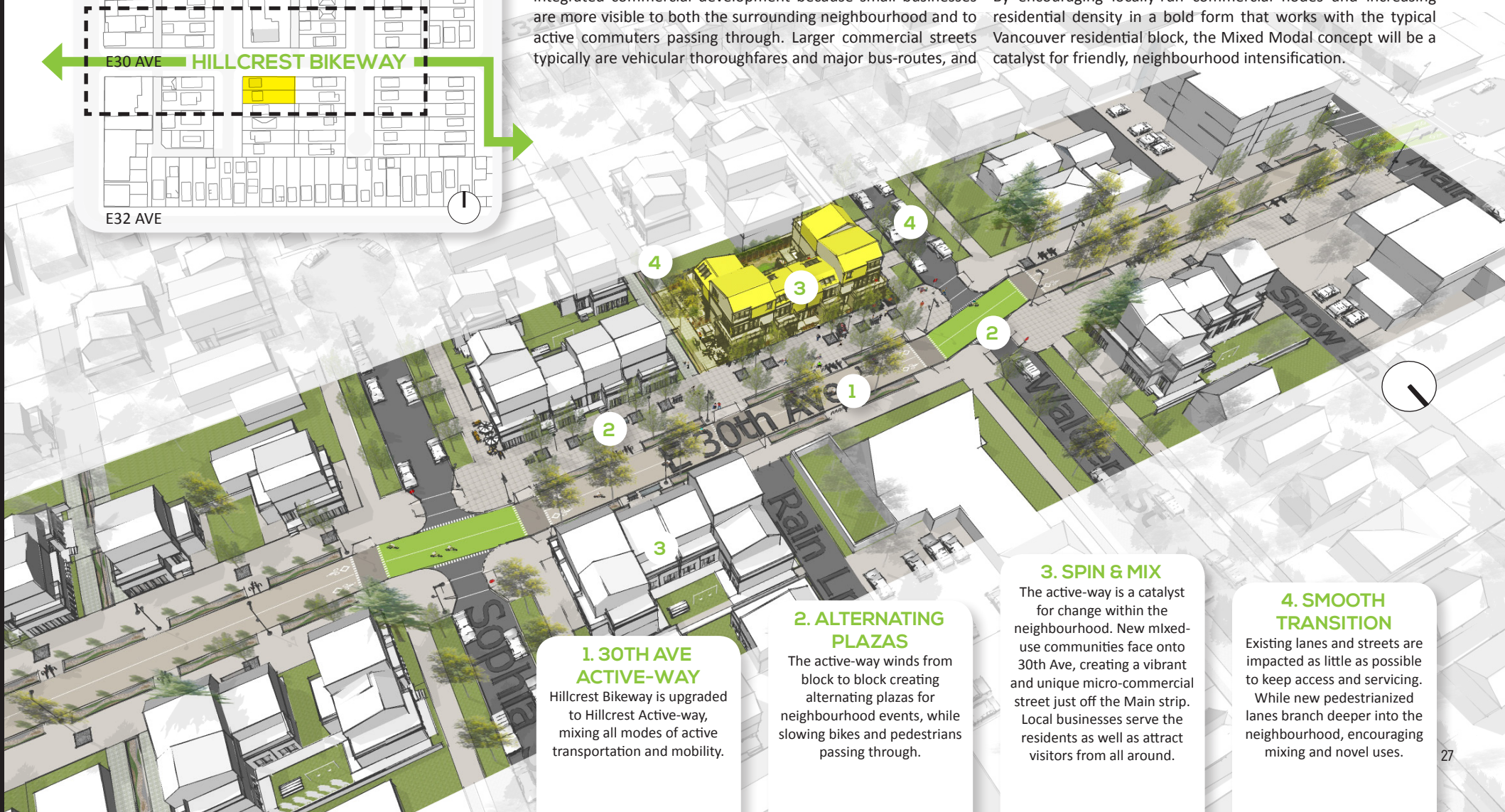
The future of mobility in Vancouver will be active. Designated active-mobility ways already permeate the city; with bikeways connecting parks, commercial streets, community centres, work centres, schools, and residential neighbourhoods efficiently and safely for non-car users much of the year. These routes discourage vehicular traffic, except for local use.

Mixed Modal takes its cue from the Hillcrest Bikeway, which passes through the site and seeks to eliminate car circulation on this route to further enhance safety and increase the appeal to a variety of people using scooters, bikes, hoverboards, and skateboards, as well as pedestrians. By slowing the speed of travelers, this route becomes the prime vector for neighbourhood-integrated commercial development because small businesses are more visible to both the surrounding neighbourhood and to active commuters passing through. Larger commercial streets typically are vehicular thoroughfares and major bus-routes, and

can lead to noisy, polluted, and congested spaces for people. Whereas activated neighbourhood streets can be green, quiet, and inviting spaces for people to walk their dog and get a coffee, cyclists to pause on the way home for a few groceries, and for scooter-riders to grab a drink with friends on a patio.

This proposal looks at how properties adjacent to active-ways can combine small-scale, ground level commercial spaces with residential use above and live-work townhouses, all wrapping a vibrant communal courtyard. Alongside a redesigned, car-free active-way, small commercial spaces can be creatively integrated into existing residential areas.

By encouraging locally-run commercial nodes and increasing residential density in a bold form that works with the typical Vancouver residential block, the Mixed Modal concept will be a catalyst for friendly, neighbourhood intensification.



1. 30TH AVE ACTIVE-WAY

Hillcrest Bikeway is upgraded to Hillcrest Active-way, mixing all modes of active transportation and mobility.

2. ALTERNATING PLAZAS

The active-way winds from block to block creating alternating plazas for neighbourhood events, while slowing bikes and pedestrians passing through.

3. SPIN & MIX

The active-way is a catalyst for change within the neighbourhood. New mixed-use communities face onto 30th Ave, creating a vibrant and unique micro-commercial street just off the Main strip. Local businesses serve the residents as well as attract visitors from all around.

4. SMOOTH TRANSITION

Existing lanes and streets are impacted as little as possible to keep access and servicing. While new pedestrianized lanes branch deeper into the neighbourhood, encouraging mixing and novel uses.

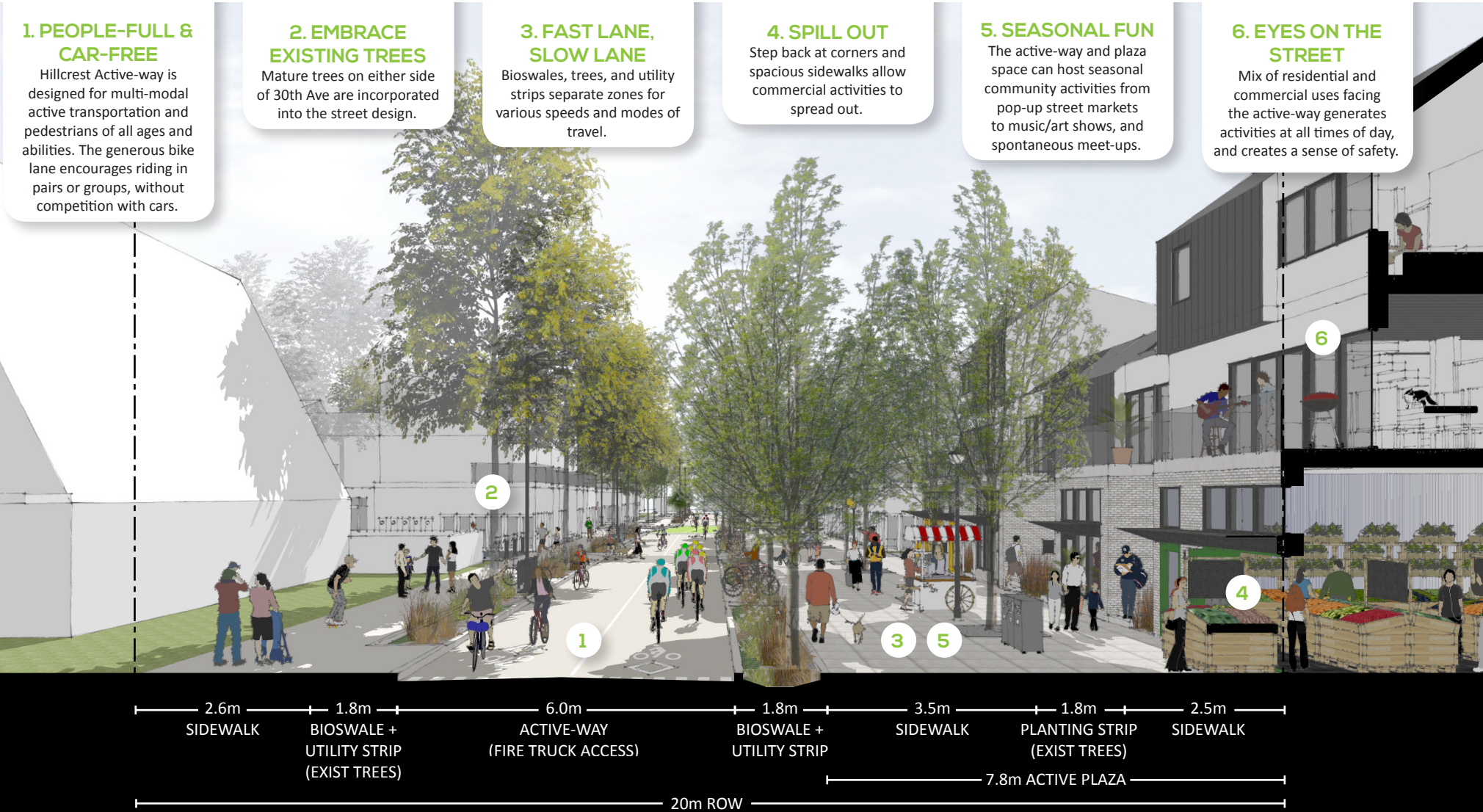
URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

The established Hillcrest bike route along 30th Ave is transformed from a car-lined, narrow bike street, into a car-free, dedicated active-way. Within the proposed street section, existing mature trees are preserved and more planted, further enhancing the street’s microclimate by providing shade on hot days and improving overall air quality.

The active-way shifts within the right-of-way, from block to block, with textured paving at pedestrian crossings to mediate the speed of commuters passing through. Generous sidewalks

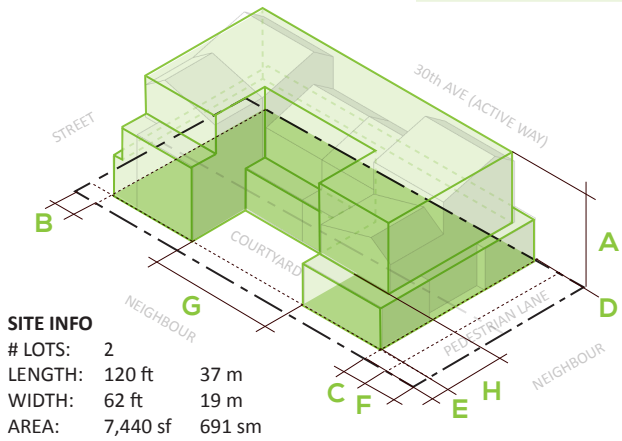
allow walkers, joggers, and meanderers, to pass each other while respecting personal space. Bike racks and other public amenities are provided in the breaks between trees.

Where existing houses turn away from 30th Avenue, new commercial and mixed use interventions address it. Setbacks along the active-way are eliminated, bringing patios and retail displays into the sidewalk to further animate the street. Shaded, green, safe, and attractive, the active-way encourages the emergence of novel, mixed-use developments within the block.

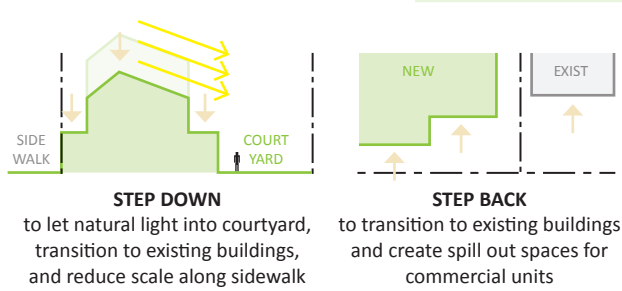


PROPOSED ZONING

	CURRENT ZONING	PROPOSED ZONING
	RS-1	MX-1
FAR	0.6	1.2-1.5
TOTAL UNITS	2	10
RESIDENTIAL UNITS	YES	YES
LIVE/WORK UNITS	NO	YES
COMMERCIAL UNITS	NO	YES
PARKING	ON SITE PARKING ALLOWED	DESIGNATED CAR-SHARE STREET PARKING



	CURRENT ZONING	PROPOSED ZONING
	sf sm	sf sm
MAX FAR	0.6 4,464 415	1.5 11,160 836
BLDG COVERAGE	- NONE -	55% 4,464 383
	% ft m	% ft m
A HEIGHT	- 35 10.7	- 37 11.3
B FRONT SETBACK	20% 24 7.32	5% 6 2.1
C REAR SETBACK	40% 48 14.63	5% 6 2.1
D ACTIVE WAY SETBACK	10% 6.2 1.89	0% 0 0.0
E SIDE SETBACK	10% 6.2 1.89	10% 6.2 1.8
F LANE SETBACK	- NONE -	- 9.8 3.0
G COURTYARD	- NONE -	- 40 12
H COURTYARD	- NONE -	- 20 6



VIEW OF DEVELOPMENT FROM 30TH AVE ACTIVE WAY MID-BLOCK CROSSING

ECONOMIC STRATEGY

Two neighbours, looking to downsize and create affordable homes and commercial spaces in their neighbourhood for their younger, like-minded friends, decide to build a modest, sustainable, mixed-use co-housing development on their combined properties. They sell their land to the co-housing entity they have created at the cost of the BC 2021 Assessment. After construction, the development will operate on a strata structure, as this will be well-recognized by lenders.

Development revenues are increased and construction costs lowered by replacing on-site parking with increased sellable space. Grants from BC Hydro and other organizations further reduce costs. Units are sold at \$850/sf, comparable to nearby listings. Flex spaces could also be rented to outside entities if desired. Revenue from commercial units is calculated over 15 years on the assumption that a longer construction loan period can be secured by the group. Ongoing operational expenses would be covered by strata fees.

COSTS			
COST TYPE	DESCRIPTION	UNIT COST	COST
LAND	4604 Walden	2021 Assess.	\$2,006,000.00
LAND	4622 Walden	2021 Assess.	\$1,797,800.00
LAND COSTS SUBTOTAL			\$3,803,800.00
BUILDING	8,744 sf	\$270/sf (AVERAGE)	\$2,359,600.00
SITE IMPROV.			10.50% \$247,758.00
HARD COSTS SUBTOTAL			\$2,607,358.00
SOFT COSTS	Permits, Fees, Etc.	30%	\$782,207.40
	Arch/Eng. Fees	7.0%	\$182,515.06
	Loan Interest	4%	\$256,446.32
	Grants		-\$75,000.00
SOFT COSTS SUBTOTAL			\$1,221,168.78
TOTAL PROJECT COSTS			\$7,557,326.78

REVENUE			
UNIT SALES *	RESIDENTIAL	4 @ \$850/sf	\$4,278,050.00
	LIVE/WORK	2 @ \$835/sf	\$1,589,500.00
LEASE **	COMMERCIAL	3 @ \$60/SF/YR	\$2,009,535.75
TOTAL REVENUE			\$7,877,085.75

* each unit includes at grade flex space @ \$680/sf
** 3 5-yr commercial leases w/ adjustment for inflation

DESIGN RATIONALE

Mixed Modal proposes to combine appealing pedestrian-oriented commercial units and family-friendly residential density in an articulated form which fits sensitively with the surrounding residential scale.

Implenting a 1.2 FSR massing distributed between two- and three-storey volumes wrapped around a shared residential courtyard on two standard-size properties, the concept could be increased in scale to 1.5 FSR as the neighbourhood grows denser.

UNIT #	LIVE SF	FLEX SF	BALC SF	UNIT TYPE
01	1060	135	296	2 BED
02 + 03	914	-	-	COMMERCIAL
04	1500	140	140	3 BED
05	850	140	220	1 BED LIVE/WORK
06	850	140	220	1 BED LIVE/WORK
07	1500	140	140	3 BED
08	610	-	-	COMMERCIAL
09	732	110	200	JR 1 BED
10	418	-	-	ACCESSIBLE STUDIO / COMMERCIAL



LEVEL 2



LEVEL 1



LEVEL 3

MIXING | PUBLIC

The taller forms marking the corners of the building identify the ground level retail spaces such as grocery shops or cafes, and contain family-sized residential townhouses above. Setback between the corner massings are a pair of two-storey live-work spaces suited to artist studios and independent professionals.

Residential entrances alternate between the commercial and workspaces, stepped back and up from the street frontage to create a physical separation from the sidewalk. To maintain human-scale storefronts, allow for more daylight, and create

private outdoor space, the second level steps back from the property line along 30th Avenue. As the building transitions toward the adjacent single family homes, the form steps again with a smaller two-bedroom townhouse over commercial facing Walden Street and a single storey one-bedroom over a small commercial or accessible residential unit facing the new pedestrian-only lane. These upper units enjoy generous private terraces to the south as they are set away from the neighbouring property. This stepback also brings sunlight into the communal courtyard.

VIEW OF UNIT & COURTYARD ENTRY FROM WALDEN ST



1. RAINY RIDE

Jessica is renting the ground floor to Rainy Ride, but next year plans to convert it into a wheelchair accessible studio so she can live with her brother.

2. CLOUDY DAY GAME CAFE

Owners Sam and Melville live in their 3 bedroom unit upstairs, with their family of 2 dogs and 1 cat. Sam works from home as a financial consultant while Melville runs the cafe.

3. FOG SOFTWARE LTD

Hip new startup run by Sunny and Brad, partners in business and in life, out of their 1 bedroom live/work loft, with plenty of patio space for entertainment.

4. CALM CO.

Jyoti's day job is a graphic designer but her passion is massage therapy. She runs her burgeoning business on evenings and weekend from her 1 bedroom live/work loft.

5. PLAZA DAYS

Pop-up shops, markets, and even neighbourhood garage sales take over the plaza space every other week.

6. SUNSHINE MARKET

A mom and pop and daughter shop. Home is just upstairs, with mom and pop in the 2 bed unit, and their daughter's family of four in the 3 bedroom unit.

MIXING | PRIVATE

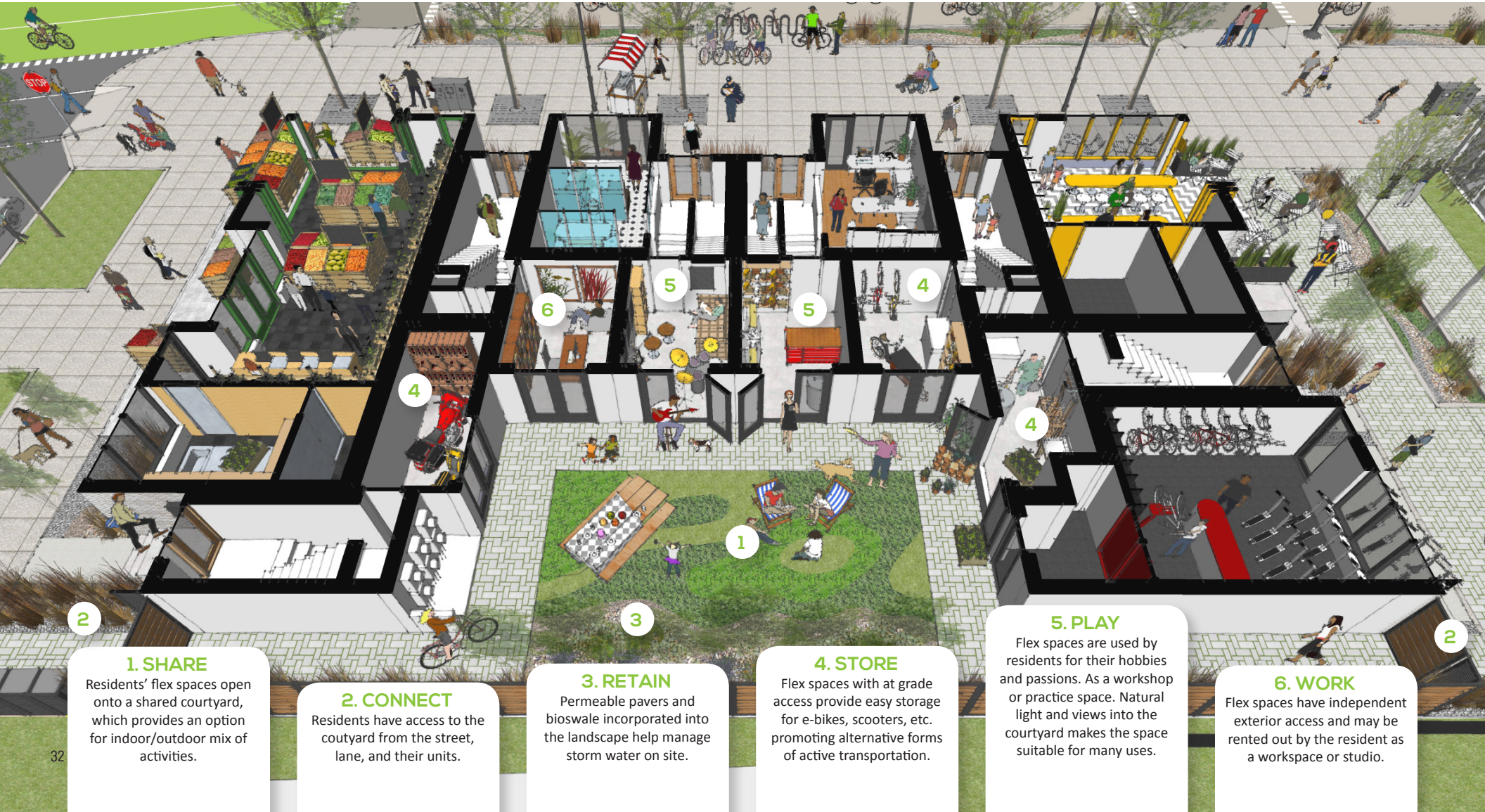
The courtyard is shared between the residential units, to provide at grade green space in addition to the private outdoor terraces and balconies on level two. Gates at the east and west sides of the property lead to the central space, where permeable paving surrounds a garden space which could be planted for children to play on or used as a vegetable garden. Rainwater is able to infiltrate the ground through the rain garden at the south side.

Access from the living space is through the residential units' flex spaces. There is one for each residential unit surrounding the

courtyard, and these could be used as workshops, art or music studios, private offices, or bike and other storage. Thus, messier or noisier activities can occur with some physical separation from the other spaces, but also can become opportunities for impromptu conversations and collaborative projects between neighbours. Patio doors and transom windows bring in ample light.

Recycling and other services continue to be picked on Walden Street, as no lane served the properties previously.

VIEW OF COURTYARD & FLEX SPACES



2

1. SHARE

Residents' flex spaces open onto a shared courtyard, which provides an option for indoor/outdoor mix of activities.

2. CONNECT

Residents have access to the courtyard from the street, lane, and their units.

3. RETAIN

Permeable pavers and bioswale incorporated into the landscape help manage storm water on site.

4. STORE

Flex spaces with at grade access provide easy storage for e-bikes, scooters, etc. promoting alternative forms of active transportation.

5. PLAY

Flex spaces are used by residents for their hobbies and passions. As a workshop or practice space. Natural light and views into the courtyard makes the space suitable for many uses.

6. WORK

Flex spaces have independent exterior access and may be rented out by the resident as a workspace or studio.

JURY STATEMENT

The Jury applauded *Mixed Modal* for responding to the brief in total and for communicating an elegant solution in a clear way. The connections this scheme makes to Riley Park, Hillcrest, and the cemetery were very compelling in their specificity. With the proximity to Main Street, the scheme leverages the commercial viability through a thoughtful design that serves as a magnet—attractive as a destination to the surrounding neighbourhood and thoughtfully rendered as a spine of active transportation. The Jury praised the small flex spaces that ring the building's courtyard, and thus are more oriented to the residents, against the larger commercial spaces that benefit the wider community. The scheme responded to the brief's request to address the block faces, and developed the streetscape quite convincingly.

THIRD PLACE

SIMPLE SMALL THINGS FIRST

BY TEAM C-R
Taylor Castañón-Rumebe, Vince Castañón-Rumebe

Conventional development predicts community needs, often leaving little room for the adaptability required for bottom-up change. This project aims to provide families with the flexibility to evolve, diversify and strengthen their community over time through an incrementally phased process.

Simple, lower cost and achievable interventions should be incentivized by cities to diversify communities. This proposal provides homeowners with the tools to combine different uses (e.g commercial & residential) or to simply increase density on their lot in a way that suites their needs, while also improving the connectivity through the local neighborhood that could expand beyond.

The first step introduces a new Neighbourhood Zone “NZ” zone which removes the focus from residential to mixed-use with restrictions to gently introduce new typologies.

The goal is to maintain the family focused character of the neighbourhood, while allowing alternate living and working options in the community while providing agency and autonomy to the inhabitants.



SURREY



3.5 STOREY



FSR 1.5

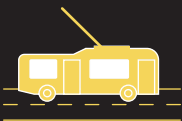


FLEXIBLE ZONING
INCREMENTAL CHANGE
COMMUNITY-INITIATED
DEVELOPMENT

TOTAL FLOOR AREA 11,760 SF



13% GREEN SPACE



4% TRANSPORTATION



5% COMMERCIAL



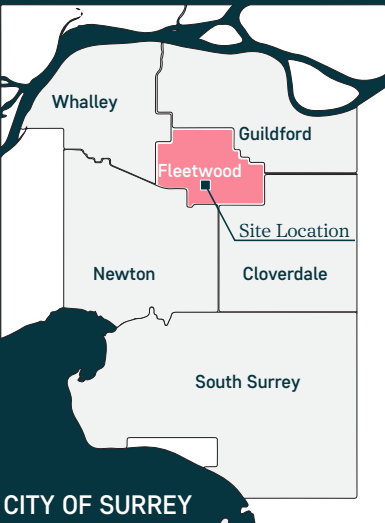
78% RESIDENTIAL

SIMPLE SMALL THINGS FIRST

A global pandemic can be the catalyst that challenges the traditional way of living-forcing most to adapt to new habits, routines, jobs and social interactions.

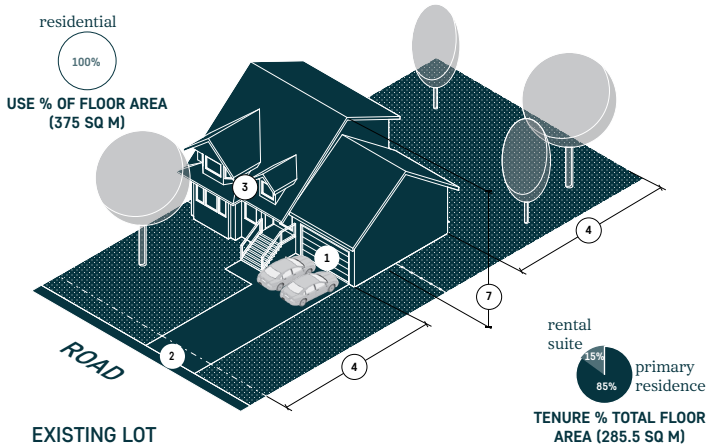
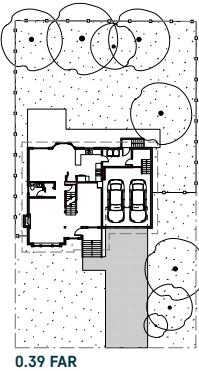
This project provides families with the flexibility to evolve, diversify and strengthen their community over time through an incrementally phased process. By incentivizing the simple, small thing first, it can capture the imagination of the community to make growth possible.

Conventional development predicts community needs, often leaving little room for the adaptability required for bottom-up change. This project proposes a new Neighbourhood Zone “NZ” zone which removes the focus from specific building use to mixed-use and introduces new typologies. Rezoning from Single Family Residential zone to NZ would be expedited for properties meeting a specific criterion.



PROJECT DATA SUMMARY

Location Surrey within Fleetwood	Existing Dwellings 293 total dwellings (170 single family homes + 123 secondary suites)	Proposed Dwelling Up to 1020 dwellings (4 dwelling units per lot + 2 secondary suites)	Storeys 3.5 storeys
Project Area 16.5 ha [40.5 acres]	Existing Density Ratio 17.7 dwellings per ha	Proposed Neighbourhood Commercial Up to 170 NCU (neighbourhood commercial unit)	Finance Rent-to-own, Equity Loans, Co-ownership
Lots 170 existing lots		Proposed Density Ratio 61.1 dwellings per ha	Tenure Ownership + Rental



EXISTING LOT CHALLENGES

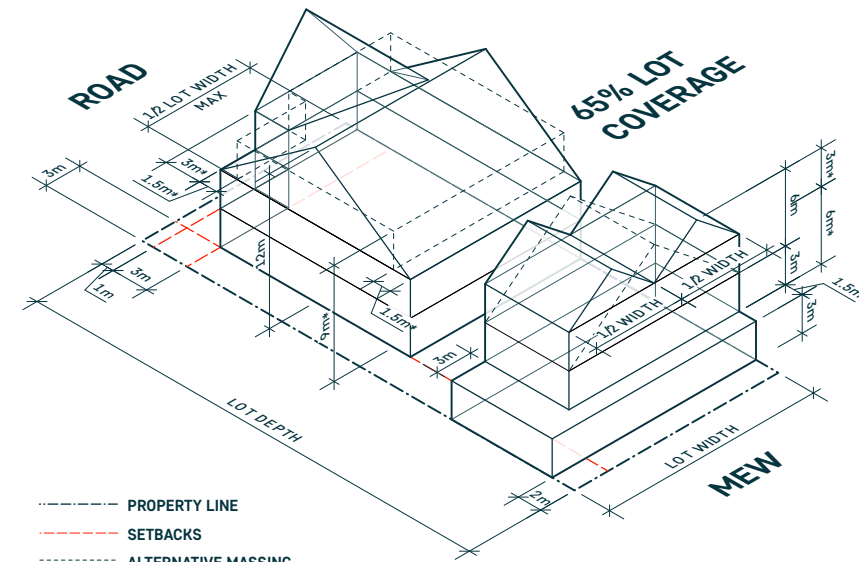
- 3 vehicle parking minimum, with no requirements for bike storage.
- Not all streets have sidewalks, but all have driveways that are 8m wide (min) with an opportunity to increase to 53% of either front or side yard. This increases the hazard for pedestrians on the street.
- There is a lack of safe and easy access to non-residential amenities. This results in the need to venture outside the community for basic needs. Auto-dependant neighbourhoods discourage pedestrian or cycling mobility – which in turn isolates those unable to drive, resulting in low autonomy.
- Deep front yard, and backyard setback (7.5m), with a requirement for only 40% lot coverage.
- Back to back lots without lanes, makes adding density to backyards currently challenging.
- Use of private fences at property line, discourages friendly neighbourhood interactions
- Building height, no higher than 9m (7.3m if sloped less than 1:4) – therefore 2.5 storeys.

1 STEP. ONE.

remove barriers for change

Remove the barriers that make having a family oriented, amenity rich, connected local community possible.

- 1 Create a new Neighbourhood Zone 'NZ'. It enables owners whose primary residence remains in the neighbourhood to rezone their lot from any Residential zone to the Neighbourhood Zone.
- 2 Once rezoned, it gives homeowners the flexibility to incrementally adapt their property to suit the needs of their community without re-engagement with the City, which removes red tape and encourages small-scale incremental change.
- 3 Remove parking minimums – encourage alternative modes of travel, by removing a requirement for parking. Most projects will still want to have parking – however it does not need to be a requirement.
- 4 Where surface parking is created, the parking pad or surface must be permeable paving. This ensures that open space on the lot isn't covered in asphalt and remains natural in aesthetic.
- 5 Create a 2m rear yard setback - when lots are mirrored, this creates a mew up to 4m wide to be used for pedestrian and cyclists. These well-lit paths improve safety, mobility and connectivity through the block.



GARAGE CONVERSION



NEIGHBOURHOOD ZONE "NZ"

Principal Use
Up to 4 ground oriented residential dwelling units on each lot + 2 accessory units

Height
3.5 storeys
[12m sloped roofs]
[9m flat roofs]

Lot Coverage
Max. 65% lot coverage

Floor Space Ratio [FSR]
1.5 FSR

Surface Parking
Permeable paving

Accessory Use
Ground-level locally owned commercial space that directly serves the immediate community. Is no more than 25% of the principal use.

Setbacks
Front - 1m + 3m
Side - 3m + 0m [or 1.5m each side]
Rear - 2m

Building Widths
Preference to break up large massing with 1/2 width offsets

Parking Requirements
Minimum [None]
Maximum [Three]

2 STEP. TWO.

encourage the smallest first step

Policy should encourage the smallest first steps before it can assume the next.

- 1 **Commercial Conversions**
By removing barriers in Step 1, homeowners have the liberty to convert portions of their existing home to spaces that contribute to a local neighbourhood community.

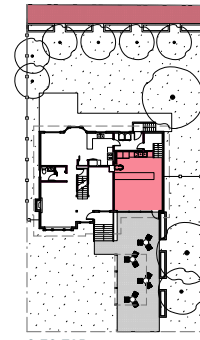
Financing + Tenure
The average value of homes in the neighbourhood is \$1.4 million. The simplest financing option is the use of an equity loan to complete the build-out of the conversion. Once complete, a new mortgage can be used for both the house and the loan for construction.

Homeowners can choose to rent the space themselves for their own business, or to another

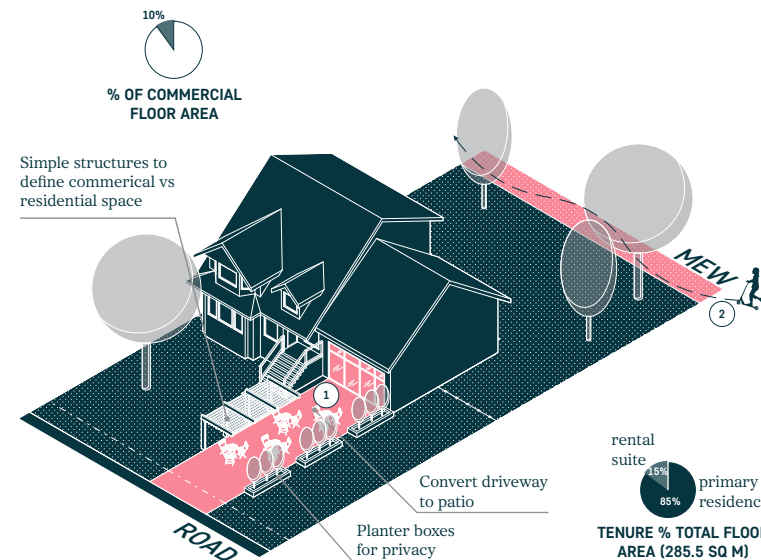
outside business, depending on their own needs.

- 2 **Encourage Mews**
The mews provides multi-modal routes that connect the community to each other and to amenities beyond. Mews are free from cars, so they ensure that the community has safe and convenient routes that encourage autonomy no matter of age, ability, or financial standing.

Policy
Provide property tax relaxation for homeowners who remove their rear yard fence and provide a 2m setback easements to create mews.



0.39 FAR



GARAGE CONVERSION

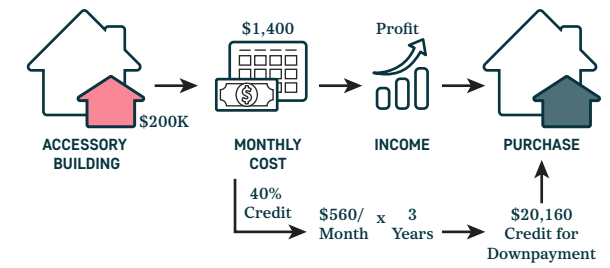
3 STEP. THREE.

develop a low risk solution as an additive process

The financing and building process for infill projects can be complicated and difficult, which acts as a barrier for community driven development. For homeowners who don't have access to additional capital or who haven't built enough equity in their home – entering into a lease agreement might be the best option.

It gives owners the chance to build an accessory building and purchase in the future at today's prices. It also reduces the risk of commitment to the purchase should it not work as intended.

LEASE PROGRAM



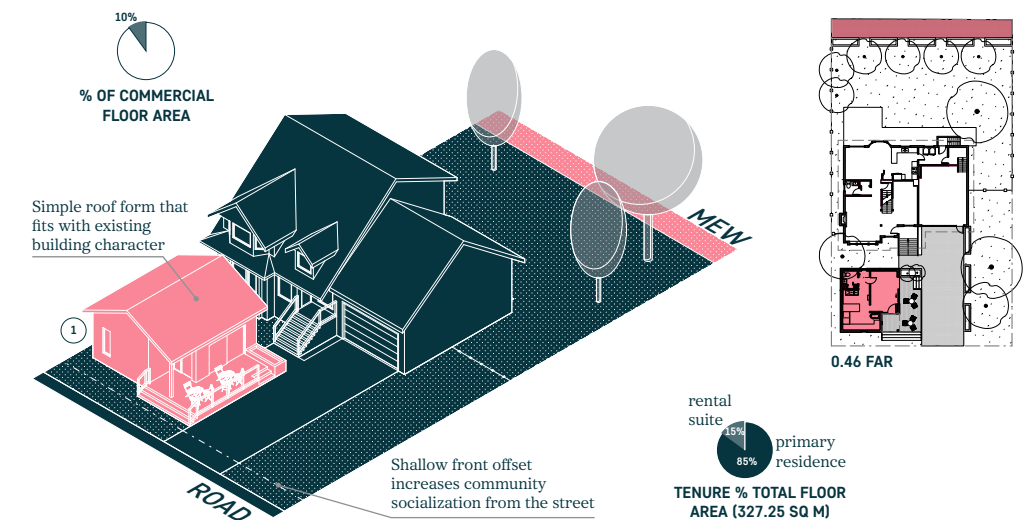
- 1 **Prefabricated Accessory Building Leasing Program**
Made possible by a Public-Private Partnership model, homeowners would have the option to enter into a lease agreement for a prefabricated accessory building that can effectively fit within the front and rear setbacks of the existing single family zoning requirements. The program would allow the homeowner to

occupy or rent the additional building for either residential use, or commercial use for a period of time before having the option to buy the structure or return it, where it could then be relocated to a different property.

- 2 **Simple Permitting Process**
With a prefabricated building (fitting within the current Single Family zoned front and

rear yard setbacks), processing at the city can be expedited.

- Initial collaboration with the city on the design of the building gives the city confidence for compliance.
- Simple design and layout means that only a site plan is required when submitting a building permit.



ACCESSORY BUILDING

4 STEP. FOUR. building on the progress

Over time, as property owners begin building more equity –in addition to increased rental and business income– the owners might decide to further invest their equity into their property and community.

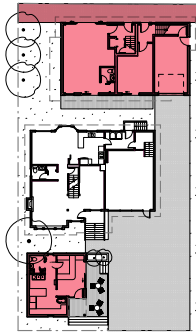
① Home Equity Loan Option

The average cost of homes in this neighbourhood is \$1.4 million, homeowners can use an equity loan to finance the cost of construction, then refinance the home + new addition together with a new residential mortgage.

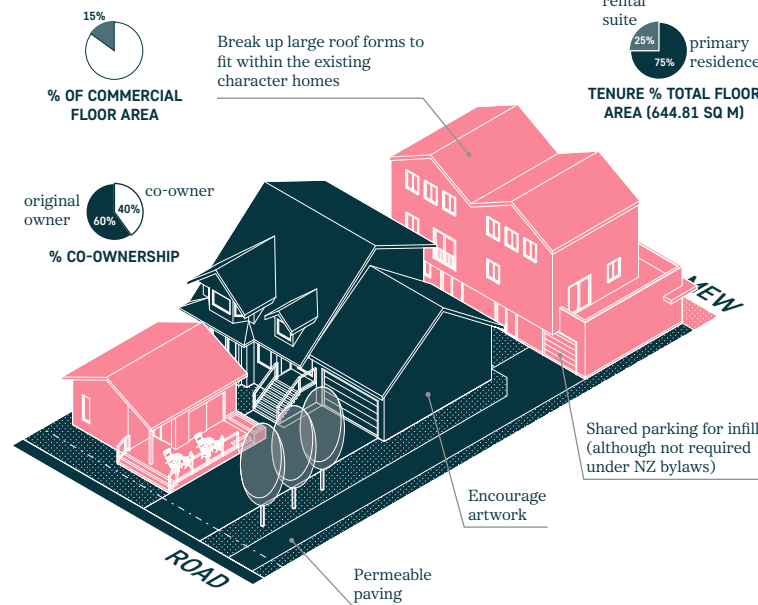
Residential mortgage will cover homes up to 4 units with no more than at least 75% primary use being for residential. Ensuring that the Neighborhood Zone does not trigger commercial loans makes financing simpler and less expensive for the homeowners– this is key!

Policy

In order to encourage bottom-up, small-scale development, an expedited building permit process should be available to existing homeowners occupying the property and who are (a) providing services directly to the immediate community (b) adding density in terms of ground-oriented housing options.



0.90 FAR



INFILL BUILDING

5 STEP. FIVE. sharing the costs

Replacing an existing single-family home that already has value, into something with increased density is a big ask for most homeowners. Traditionally, this requires homeowners to have a considerable amount of equity and capital to be feasible. This is why projects tend to

be financed by real estate investors or developers who have the capital ready.

This top-down and profit-driven process generally leads to projects that neglect to promote community building or improve livability.

① Co-Ownership

This project proposes co-ownership as a better model to redevelop existing properties. This incentivizes friends or family members to become co-owners of the property with percentage shares of the property and title to become “owners in common”. The benefits include:

- Combining greater capital to complete the project
- Work done to the property would increase the property value for the owners in common

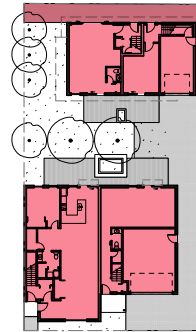
- Building a community for family and friends to live close by

- Sharing costs (maintenance, tax, utilities, etc.)
- Avoids high fees related to strata conversion

Policy

For small scale redevelopment completed by the occupying homeowner(s) where the number of dwellings reaches 4 units, the city will provide the following incentives:

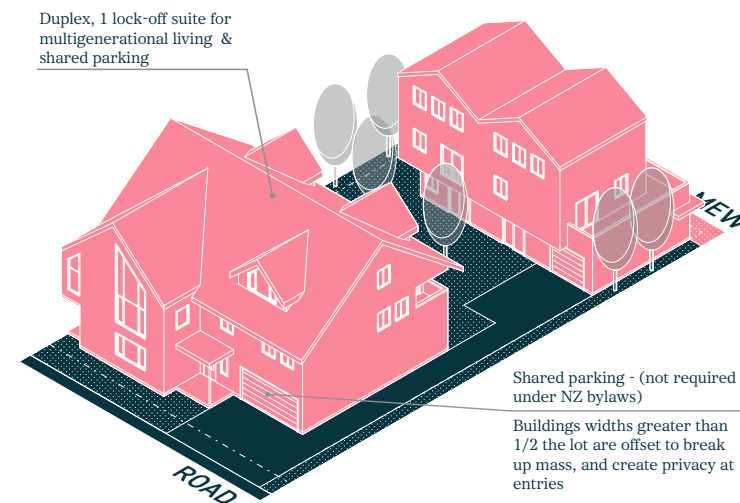
- Expedited building permits



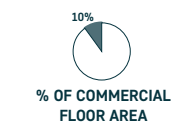
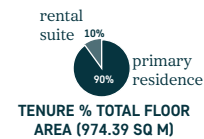
1.35 FAR

- Property tax relaxation for first year after build

The city will benefit by an increase in the number of property taxes following the redevelopment, as well as the overall infrastructure cost saving resulting from reduced sprawl.



LOT REDEVELOPMENT



ACCESS & AUTONOMY

What if kids had the autonomy to safely journey within their neighborhood? Although municipalities are slowly transitioning to pedestrian and cyclist friendly infrastructure, much of the existing road network is still primarily designed for vehicles. Instead of parents letting their kids walk with their friends to get some ice-cream, well-meaning parents might instead opt to drive their kids to the ice-cream shop to ensure a safe arrival.

Having a family friendly neighbourhood involves ensuring those of any age can travel to the places they need to on their own. Proximity is important; the first step is allowing community-focused commercial spaces within residential areas, though there are additional tactics that can be done within the public realm to increase access and autonomy.

The 4 main interventions proposed within the public realm are:

- 1.Reintegrate the Grid
- 2.Integrate the Cul-de-sac
- 3.Establish Mews
- 4.Connect Urban Parks

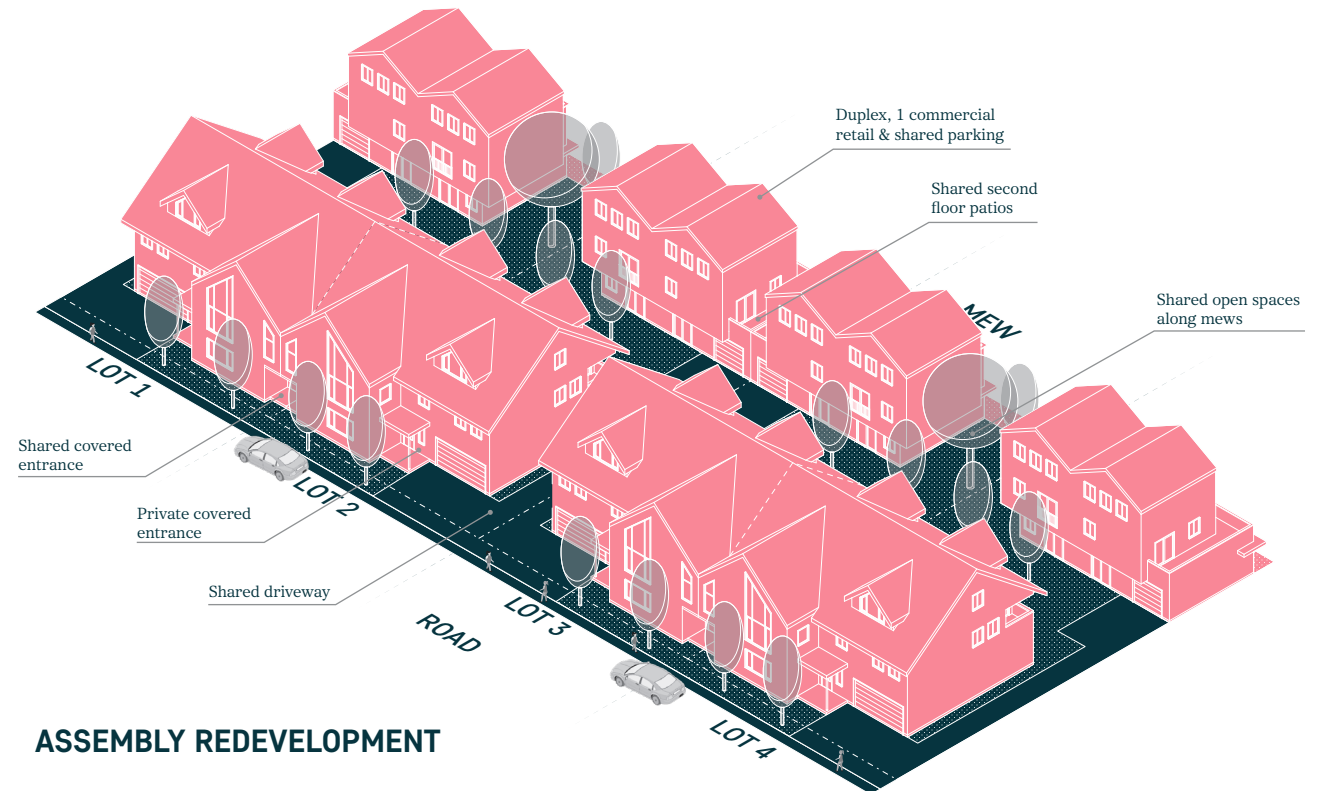
6 STEP. SIX. assemble together

Similar to Step 5 – the ability for large lot assembly redevelopment becomes even more financially difficult for small-scale developers or homeowners. It would require massive amounts of capital, resources and motivation. This is again – is why redevelopments by developers are so common.

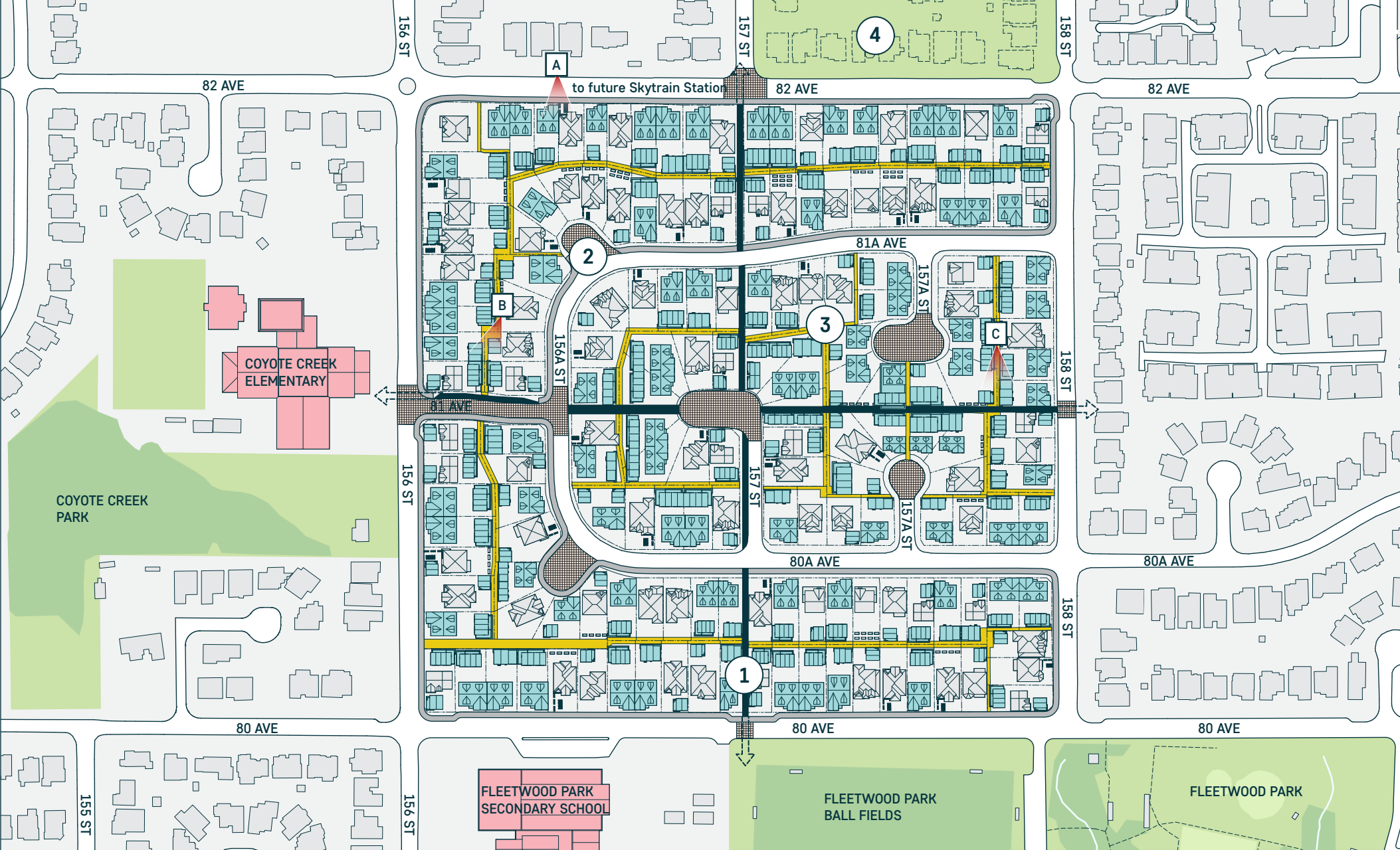
In order to make bottom-up change, smaller and simpler steps are preferred. Land assembly type redevelopments might be possible if the city allows each property owner(s) to work together.

Policy

Owners of adjacent lots can work together to redevelop, design, plan and submit an application for a single building permit while also saving on consultant fees and building permit fees.



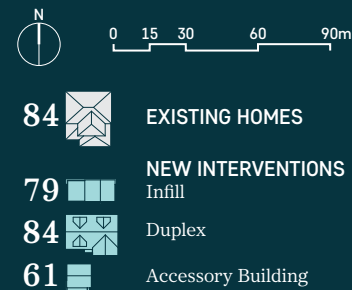
ASSEMBLY REDEVELOPMENT



- 1 Reintegrate the Grid**
Disrupt the meandering street grid, by creating direct car-free pathways North-South & East-West to connect to existing community amenities.
- 2 Integrate the Cul-de-sac**
Raised crosswalks and public plazas to reduce vehicular speed, increase safety and accessibility for pedestrians.



- 3 Establish Mews**
By-laws promoting mews and alleys between neighbouring rear yards. Space formed by homeowners to connect community focused commercial spaces for those to traverse, without hazards from vehicles.
- 4 Future Park**
Area outlined for future parks and open space in the Draft Fleetwood Plan.



JURY STATEMENT

The Jury appreciated *Simple Small Things First* for its incremental densification of the lot. Starting by adding new activities into an existing house, then expanding to an ancillary building, and eventually to full redevelopment, the proposal reimagines what can happen with a small piece of land over a longer time span. The scheme also successfully addresses the cul-de-sac and the durable problems that come with that urban form: it adds permeability and easements that criss-cross private spaces to connect the school and parks. Jurors praised how the scheme introduced a mews that adds another type of circulation into the fabric. The scheme proposed a new zoning designation that would put the municipality in the position to set the framework for redevelopment without determining its end, and could empower the community to become what it wants. The scheme is a solution that enhances community vitality through incremental and deployable design moves that are successful in their treatment of facades, landscapes, and thresholds.

HONOURABLE MENTION

MODULE X

BY HABITATELIER
Summer Xia Liu, Jerry Kuo

Module X reconfigures the typology of traditional dwelling units by inviting residents to design their homes' layout by mixing and combining modules to accommodate work, family needs and financial situations. Residents become pro-active makers of their own neighbourhood through collaborating together to develop and build resources. This complex brings adaptability for the working young, singles and elderly to size up or down within the co-op. By reclaiming the underutilized front and backyards, the single family lot is able to accommodate a commercial retail unit and a workshop to make the block more vibrant while generating revenue. The semi-private courtyard can be merged with the adjacent neighbour to provide a backdrop for chance encounters or planned activities. This user-centric approach promotes flexibility, social interaction and walkability with increased density to foster social exchanges between neighbours and build a resilient community that grow together.



COQUITLAM



3 STOREY



FSR 1.47



MODULAR LAYOUT
FLEXIBLE USES
LIVE-WORK CO-OP

TOTAL FLOOR AREA 18,564 SF



21% GREEN SPACE



2% TRANSPORTATION



27% COMMUNITY



6% COMMERCIAL



44% RESIDENTIAL

module x

a flexible live-work co-op
community for the future

Module X reconfigures the typology of traditional dwelling units by inviting residents to design their homes' layout by mixing and combining modules to accommodate work, family needs and financial situations. Residents become pro-active makers of their own neighbourhood through collaborating together to develop and build resources. This complex brings adaptability for the working young, singles and elderly to size up or down within the co-op. By reclaiming the underutilized front and backyards, the single family lot is able to accommodate a commercial retail unit and a workshop to make the block more vibrant while generating revenue. The semi-private courtyard can be merged with the adjacent neighbour to provide a backdrop for chance encounters or planned activities.

This user-centric approach promotes flexibility, social interaction and walkability with increased density to foster social exchanges between neighbours and build a resilient community that grow together.



Coquitlam, BC

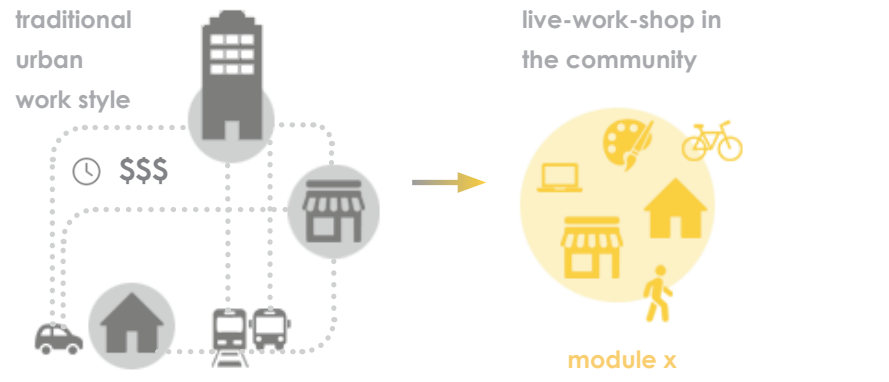
co-op housing
x 7 units

FSR
1.47

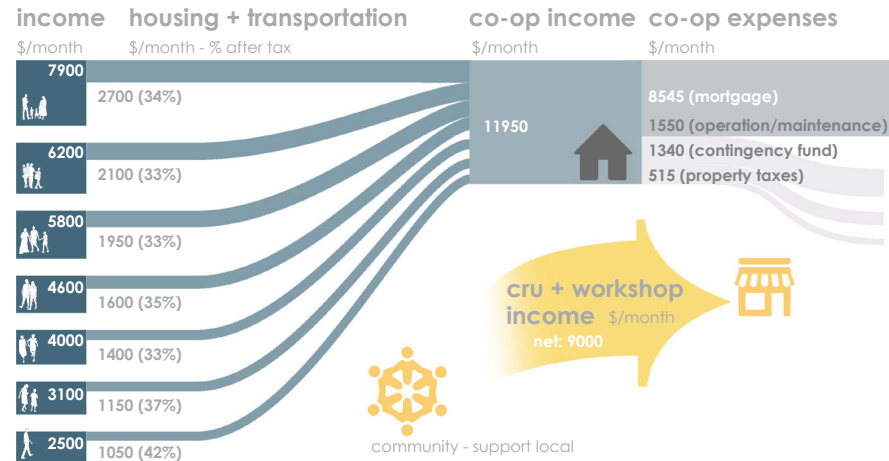
CRU
x 1

workshop/studio
x 1 → x

electric carshare
x 2



conceptual diagram



financial analysis

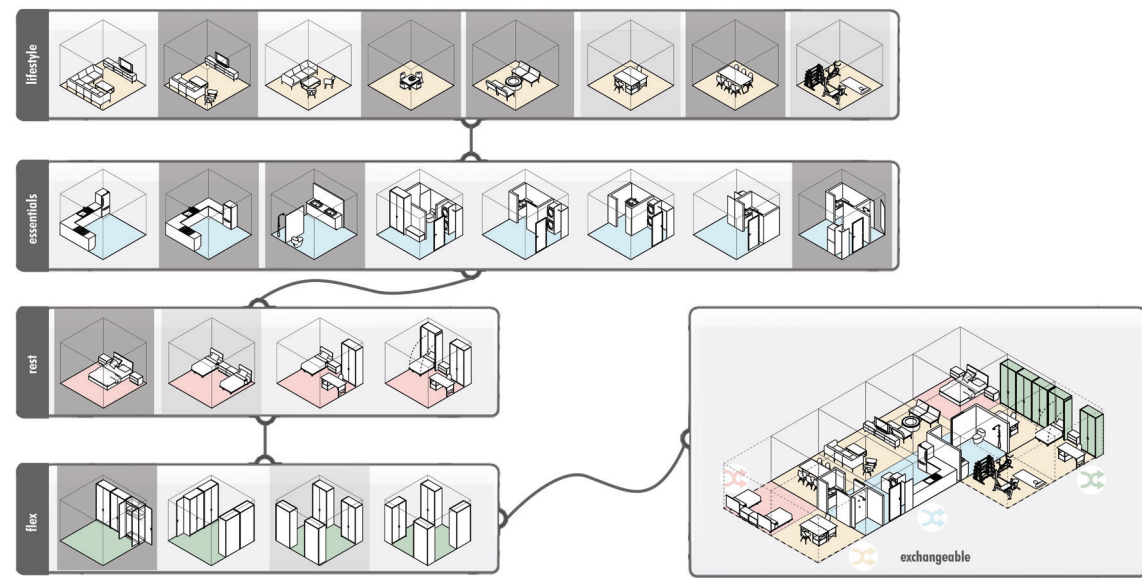
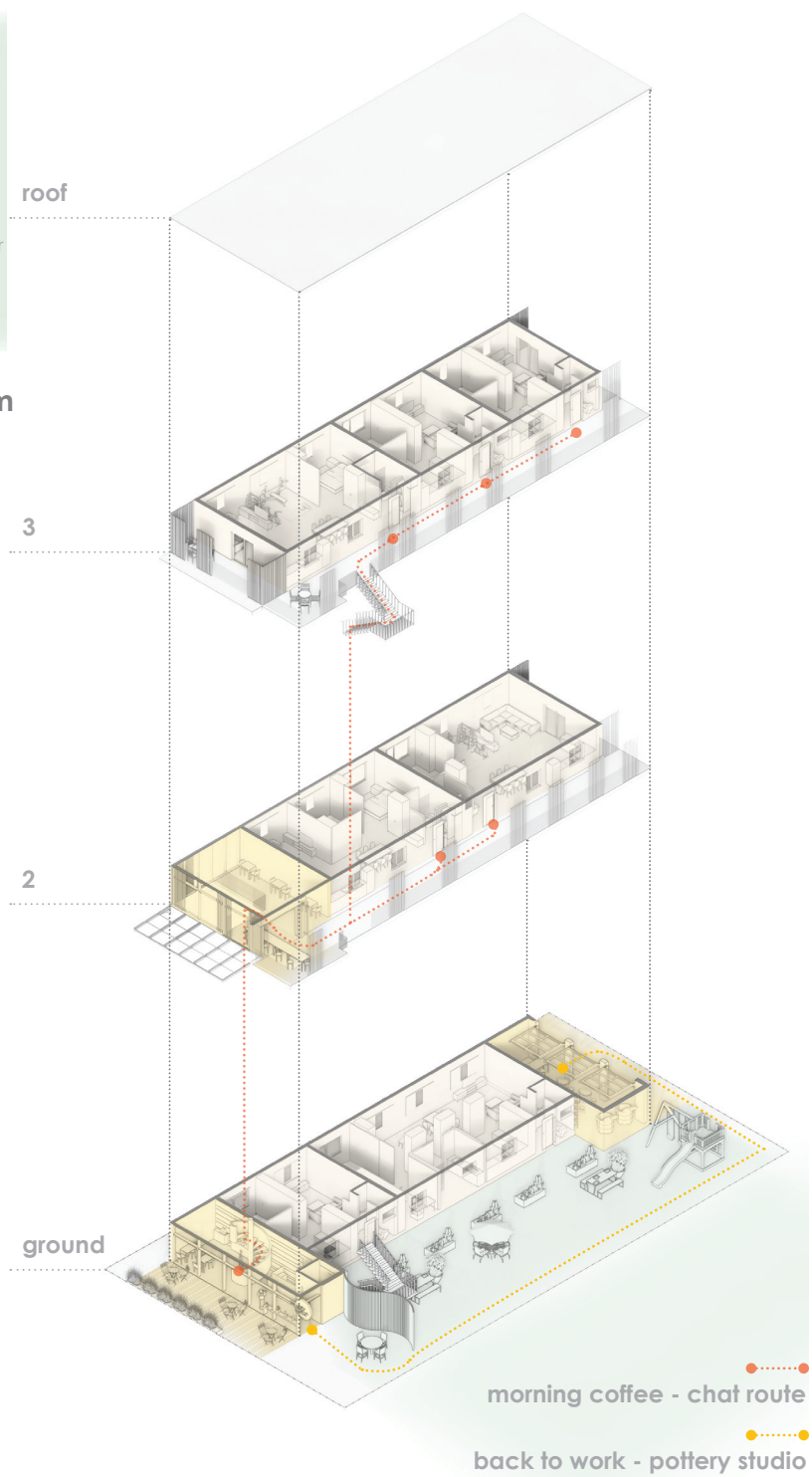


site plan

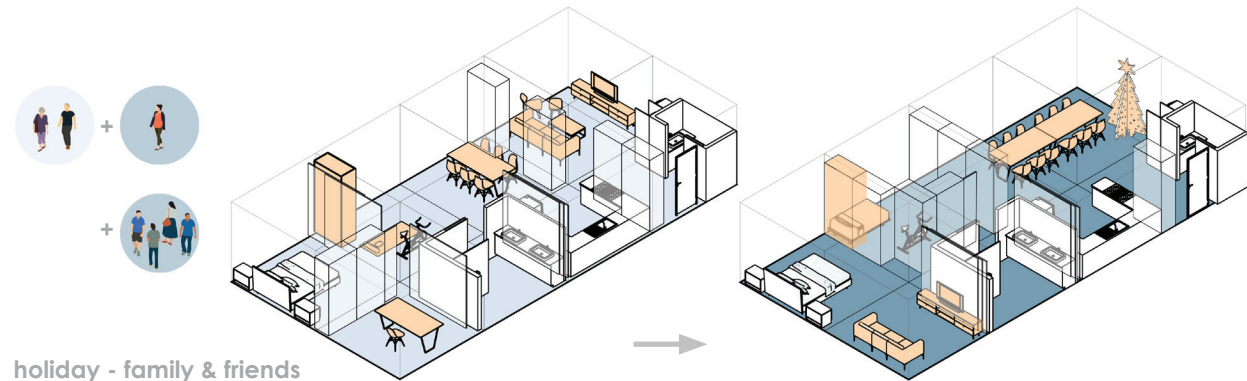
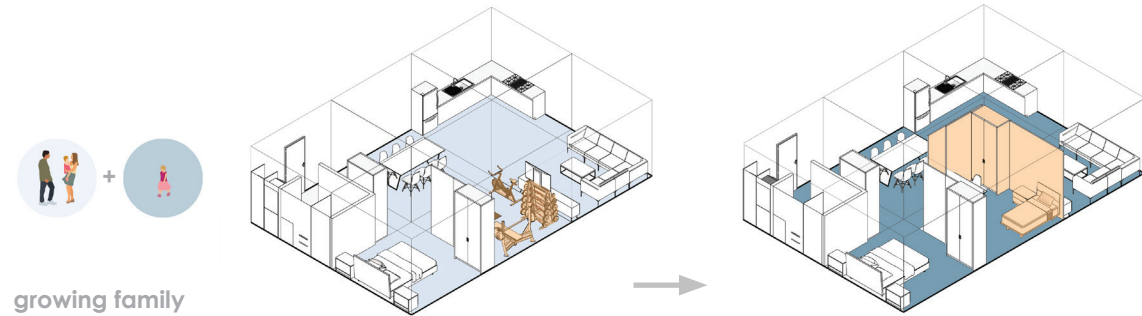
1:4000



program diagram



module X formula



3.66 m (12')

3.66 m (12')

1x module = 13.4 m²

Module X allows for flexibility and adaptability within the residential units. Residents are able to select from a variety of lifestyle, essentials, rest, and flex spaces to create a combo of 4, 6 or 8 modular units.

Flex closets act as storage units, partitions, and doors, that are move-able on wheels at 1.2m (4') modular lengths. Three of these can build a full partition wall, and two can build a wall with a sliding door. Depending if spaces need to be enlarged or reconfigured, residents can simply re-organize their Flex closets to adapt to any scenario, such as changing family size. Partition walls would only be used for areas requiring plumbing, and unit separation. All units strive towards barrier-free accessible design.

scenario 1

As the kid is growing up, the couple decided to convert the gym room to a bedroom with study spaces.

scenario 2

During festivities where families and friends come and gather, the unit can be reconfigured to accommodate a large dining space by moving the living area by the bedroom. The gym's murphy bed closet can be pulled out to accommodate relatives. If it's a couple, they could have two murphy bed closets.



ground floor
1:300

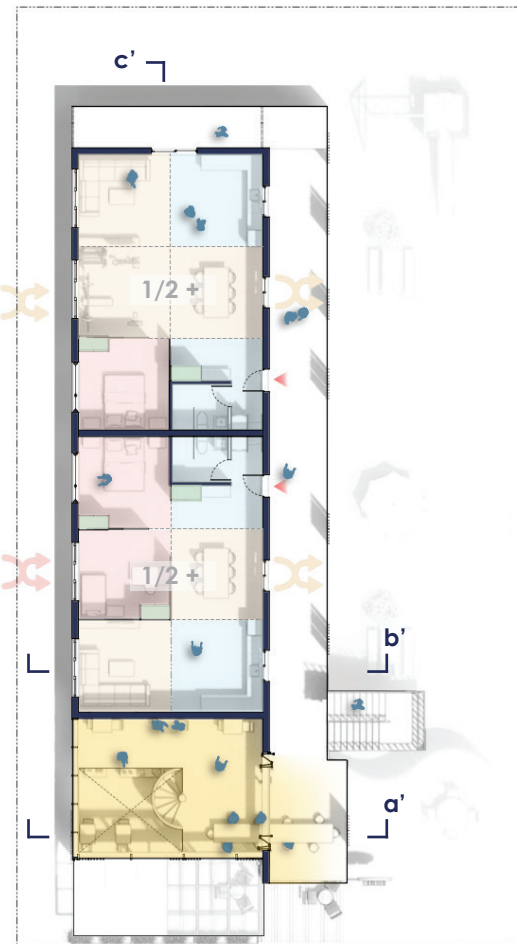
1+
53.6 m²

1-2+
80.4 m²

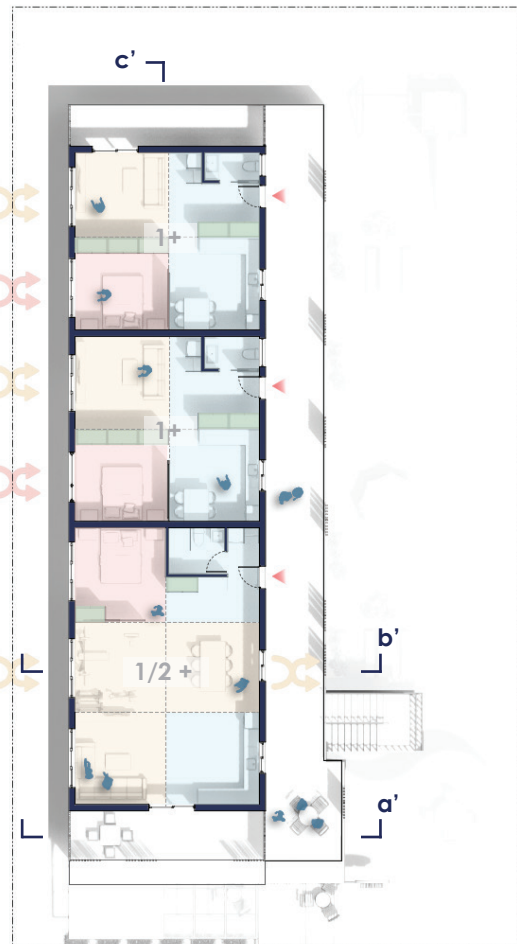
2-3+
107.2 m²

legend

- cru + workshop
- lifestyle
- rest
- essentials
- flex



second floor
1:300



third floor
1:300



cafe / gallery
front



section a'
1:150



section b'
1:150



pottery / ceramic studio
back



section c'
1:150

JURY STATEMENT

The Jury liked the approach to flexible and modular living designs that could accommodate different uses, family sizes and times. The scheme was well thought out, and offered a simple and appealing user-centred approach to design. It was clearly presented and easy to put oneself in the scheme. At the same time that it was attractive as a place to live, it also had a high potential for use and a practicality to it too.

HONOURABLE MENTION

RS-1 BIOPHILIA

BY AIR STUDIO
Inge Roecker, Robyn Gray Thomson, Yang Yang, Andrea Hoff, Jessica Chen

Set in the Riley Park neighborhood, Biophilia offers an alternative approach to building community resilience through powerful graphic storytelling. We envisioned a future in which communities are connected and living in a shared and nature-filled environment that enables such relationships. The proposed biophilic zoning combined with a Rs-1 land trust model allows for different housing and shared-space configurations to be co-created by owners, renters and community entrepreneurs. Such a blend of building configurations achieves:

- Ground-oriented living by allowing for multiple dwellings per site while equalizing access from the street and laneway.
- More flexible, affordable and dynamic housing options on each site.
- Courtyard typologies which make for cooler microclimates.

Ultimately, this project imagines how we may prepare our residential neighborhoods for the demographic and climate changes that were to come.



VANCOUVER



3 STOREY



FSR 1.5



LAND TRUST
SOCIABILITY + DIVERSITY
CLIMATE RESILIENCE



6% GREEN SPACE



6% TRANSPORTATION

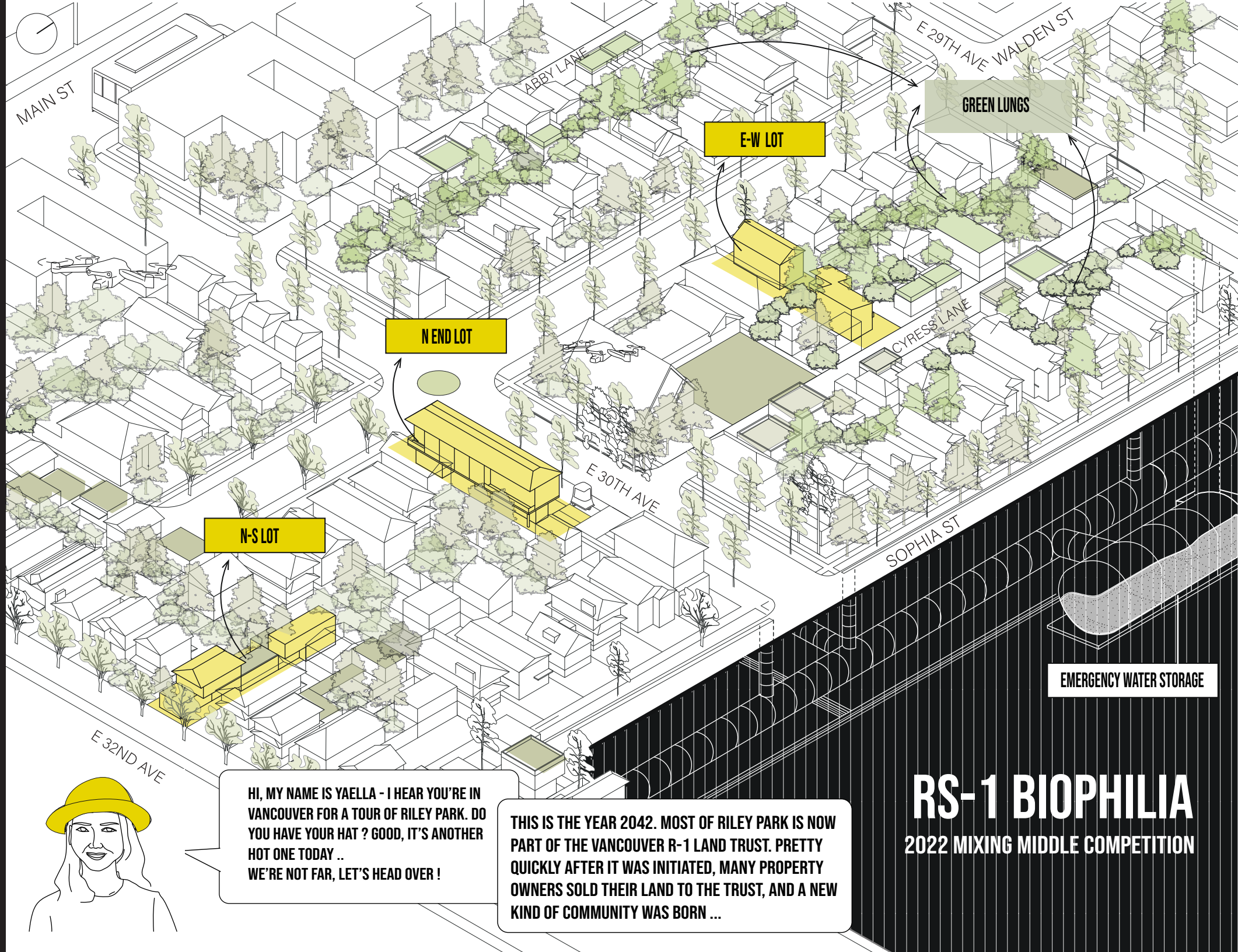


14% COMMUNITY



74% RESIDENTIAL

TOTAL FLOOR AREA 20,350 SF



HI, MY NAME IS YABELLA - I HEAR YOU'RE IN VANCOUVER FOR A TOUR OF RILEY PARK. DO YOU HAVE YOUR HAT ? GOOD, IT'S ANOTHER HOT ONE TODAY ... WE'RE NOT FAR, LET'S HEAD OVER !

THIS IS THE YEAR 2042. MOST OF RILEY PARK IS NOW PART OF THE VANCOUVER R-1 LAND TRUST. PRETTY QUICKLY AFTER IT WAS INITIATED, MANY PROPERTY OWNERS SOLD THEIR LAND TO THE TRUST, AND A NEW KIND OF COMMUNITY WAS BORN ...

RS-1 BIOPHILIA

2022 MIXING MIDDLE COMPETITION

BACK IN 2022, NEW DYNAMIC RULES WERE INSTIGATED TO ENCOURAGE DIVERSITY AND SOCIABILITY AS WE FACED CHANGES CAUSED BY CLIMATE CHANGE ...

RS-1 BIOPHILIC ZONING

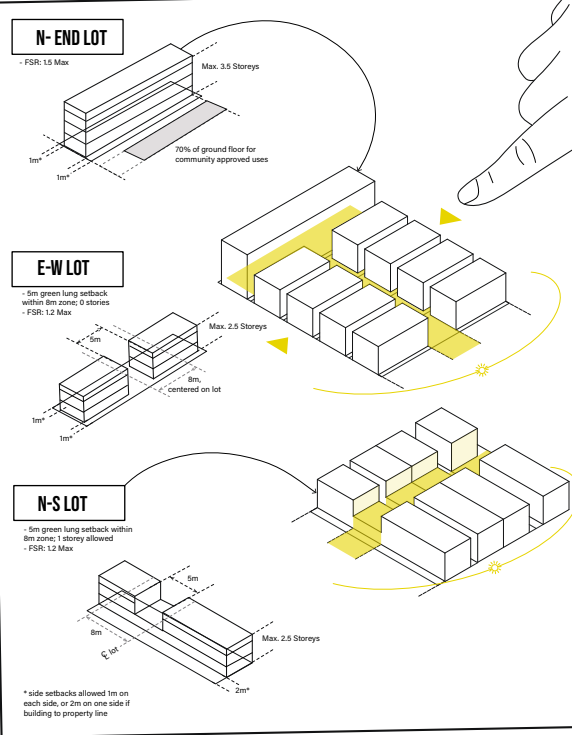
4.0 Green Lung Setbacks : Must leave 5m of green space within 8m setback area. Required space in E-W oriented lots is 0 storeys, and in N-S oriented lots is 1 storey.

4.4 Front / Rear lot setbacks: None

4.5 Side lot setbacks : Either 1m on each side, OR new construction is allowed to build to lot line on one side, and leave 2m on other.

4.7 Heights and FSR's: Maximum building height is limited to 2.5 storeys, with no height restriction; maximum FSR is 1.2 EXCEPT North End Lots (the most northern property on a street) can be 3.5 storeys and up to 1.5 FSR if at least 70% of the ground floor is for community approved uses.

Pre-approved community uses include : community hub, cafe, corner store, local food market, daycare, domestic services



Allowing multiple buildings per lot and equalizing access from the street and the laneway will allow for more ground-oriented living, something that I love about my home right now ..

.. and different lot orientations / sun exposures should mean different building configurations - we can simultaneously allow more flexible housing options on each site, while cultivating courtyard typologies that can make for cooler microclimates.

RS-1 BIOPHILIC PROGRAM

- 1 - New construction or expansions must try to use existing buildings (lift, build up, move, expand). If existing building(s) can't be used, owners must use 'un-builders'.
- 2 - All new construction must be carbon neutral.
- 3 - All lots must collect and use rain water from all non-permeable surfaces.
- 4 - Outdoor space that supports plant growth will be provided for all families on a lot; at least 10 sqm per residence, or 5 sqm per residence if at least 20 sqm of shared outdoor space is provided.
- 5 - Each residence needs proof of cross ventilation.
- 6 - Windows with southern or western exposure require proof of exterior shading in summer months.
- 7 - All buildings on site, including basements, become part of FSR.
- 8 - Residential and commercial uses are both allowed anywhere on any property, with at least 50% of floor area to be residential, housing a maximum of three families per lot.
- 9 - No more than 50% of the floor space of a residence may be located below grade.

Resilient Riley Park bringing residential into the future

- more affordable, diverse housing
- walkable community
- local businesses
- community spaces
- sociable spaces
- secure spaces for crises

Definitely - and be it for health, environmental, or social reasons, there is a need to build a sense of collectedness. Environmental justice and social justice go hand in hand.

KNOCK KNOCK

Sorry I am late... Oooo, it's so cool in here - such a relief !

... THE BIOPHILIC ZONING, COMBINED WITH THE FORMING OF AN RS-1 LAND TRUST, HELPED PREPARE OUR RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOODS FOR THE DEMOGRAPHIC AND CLIMATE CHANGES THAT WERE TO COME.

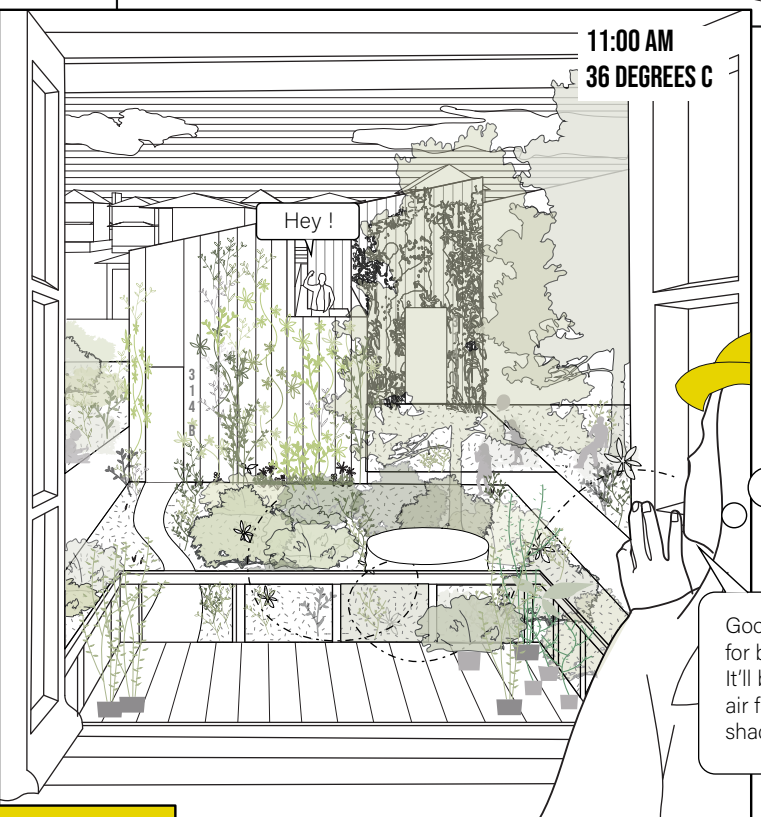
A LOT HAS CHANGED SINCE THEN, ALTHOUGH YOU CAN'T REALLY TELL FROM THE STREET - IT STILL HAS THE SAME ECLECTIC, RESIDENTIAL FEEL THAT BROUGHT ME HERE BACK IN THE '20'S.

Hey Yaella, your garden looks AMAZING ! Do you have your son helping you with it ?

This is my place ! It was our family home back when my kids were little - and a few years ago my son and his young family built a home and office on the laneway side of the property. I love having them here ...

My family
2 People

My son's family
4 People



11:00 AM
36 DEGREES C

Mmmm, the garden is looking good, isn't it ? Oh, looks like my son is taking a break from work ..

Good morning ! Do you have time for brunch in the yard ? It'll be cool down there with the air from the breezeway and the shade from the plants.

So what was your business plan ?

We built the house for him, his partner and their two kids, but have designed it to also work as two rental units when my grandkids move out.

Back in 2028 we sold our land into the R-1 Land Trust, and got money for the value of our land. We used part of this money to upgrade our property to th new Zoning, and add the house for our son on the lane side of the lot.

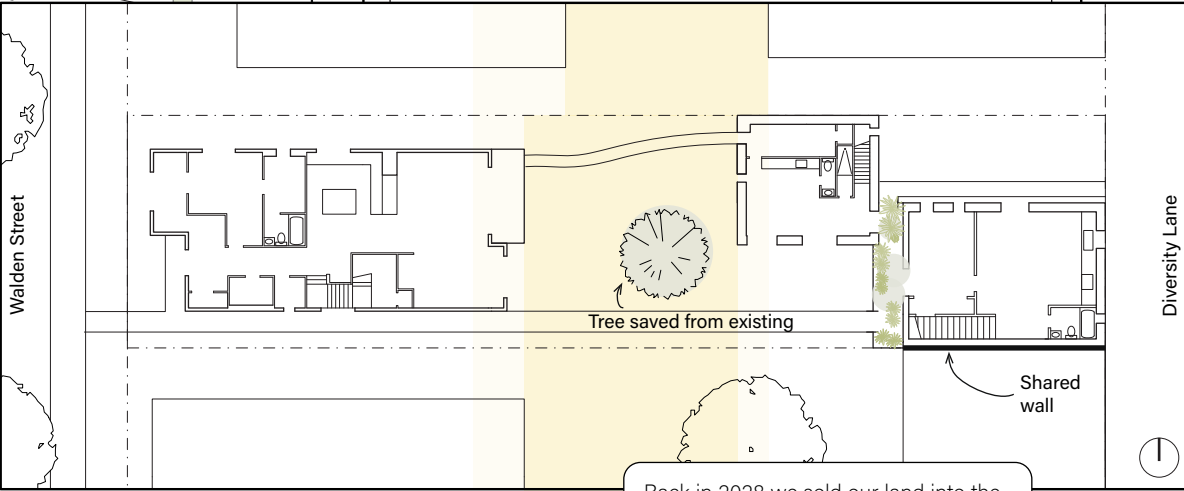
BEFORE AND AFTER ...

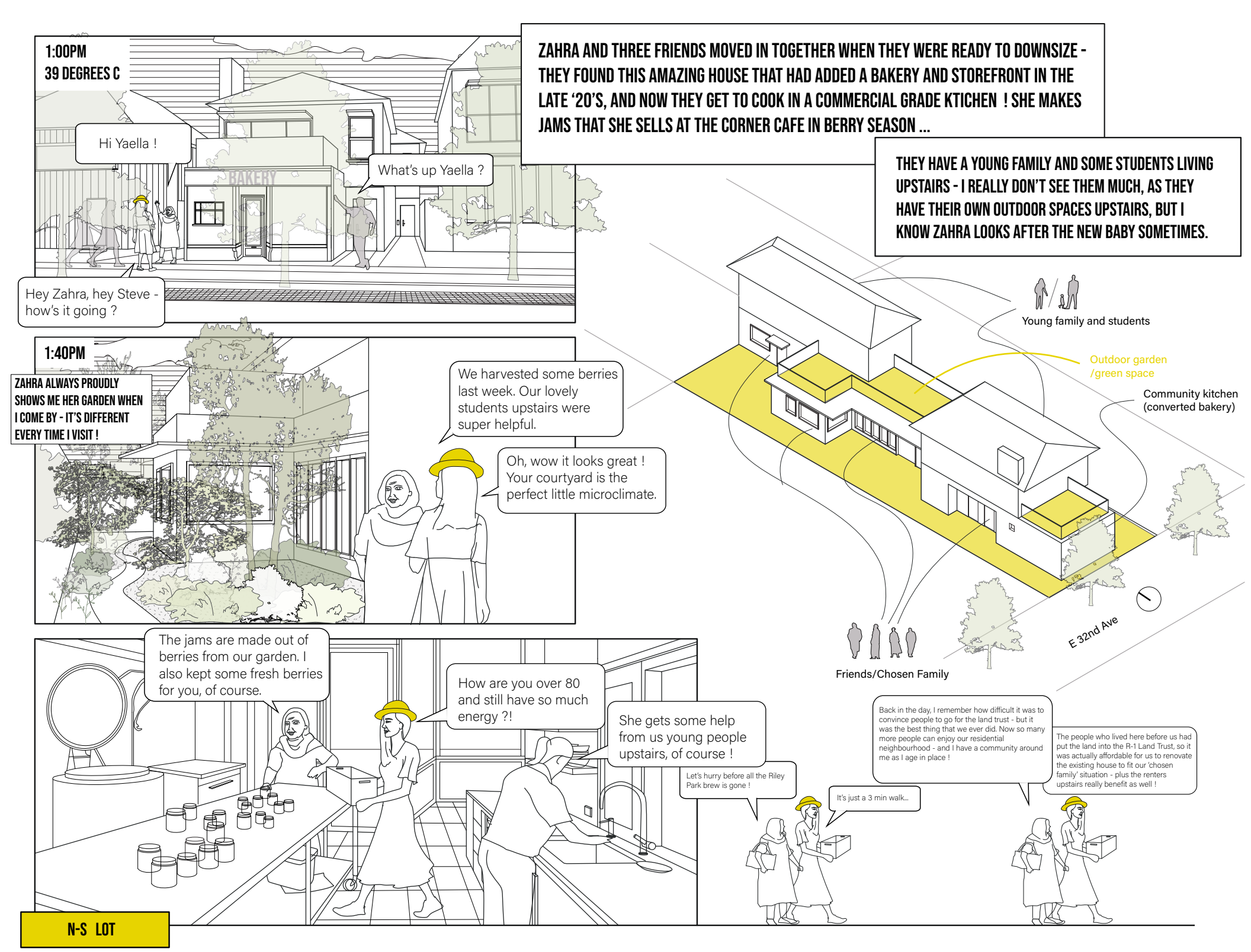
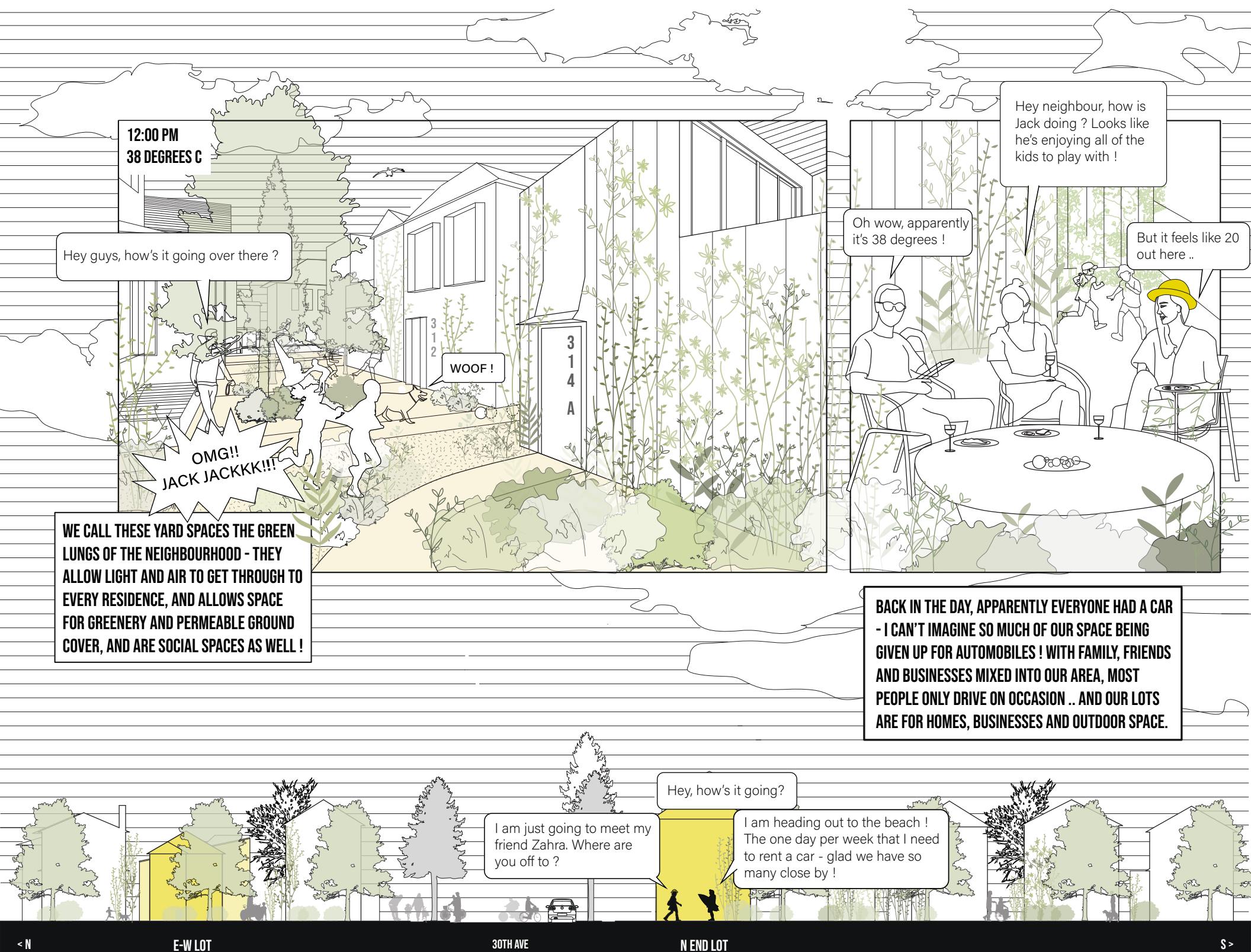
SAVE !

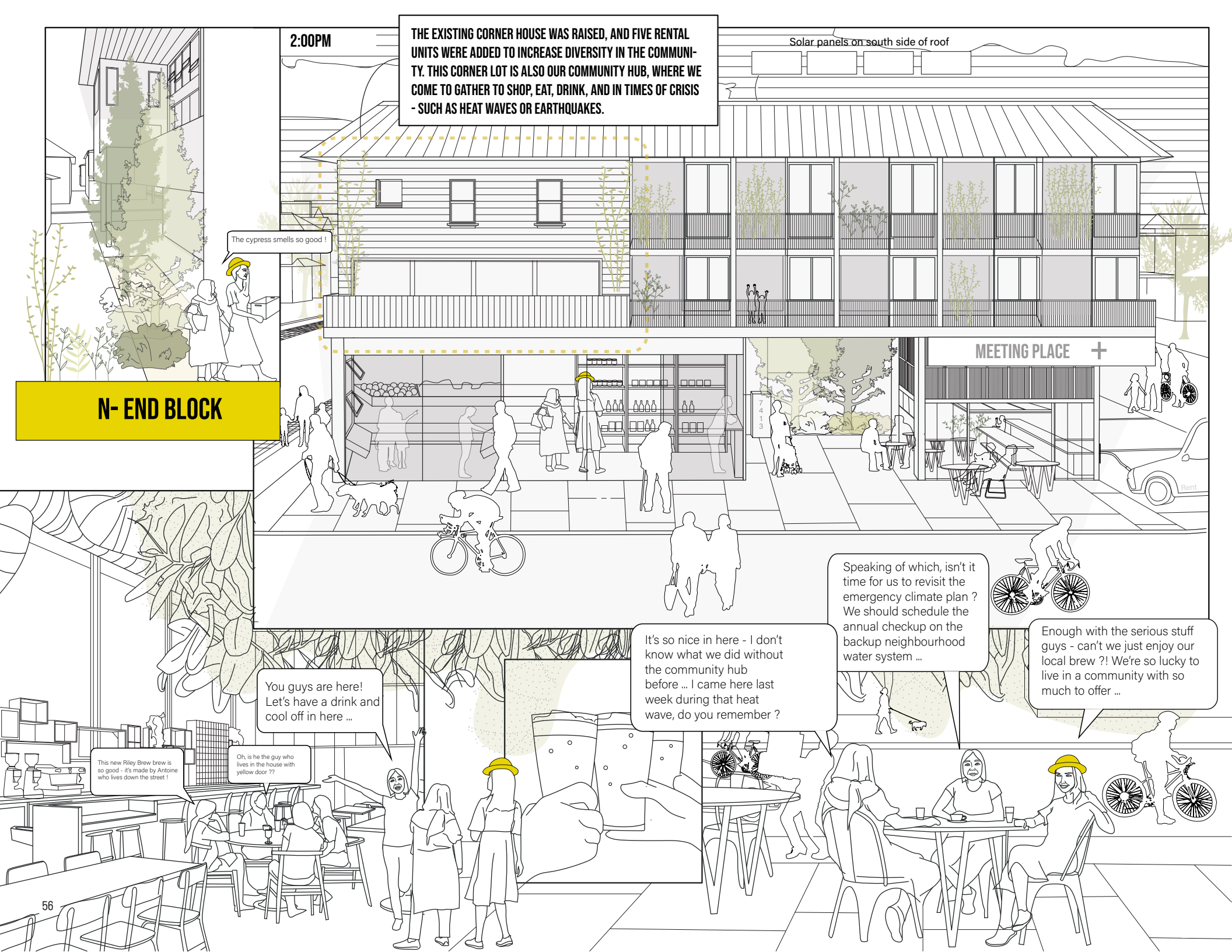
Think of all of the materials we're saving ! And using reclaimed wood for the new build lowered our carbon footprint even more - plus it looks great !

BUILD !

This is going great ! The moving company did a good job of lifting and moving the house.







JURY STATEMENT

The Jury found RS-1 Biophilia laudatory for two main reasons: one, because of its sensitive, even empathetic response to the site, and two, because of its exceptional representations. Rather than assume all lots are the same, it tailored the design moves on various lot configurations and orientations, accommodating variety in the site conditions. It dealt with all the lot types. Jurors also liked the sympathetic approach to sustainability, calling out its poetic narrative and use of a controlled, nature-based solution. Its employment of the graphic novel as a means to present the ideas was creative, and emphasized that dialog and storytelling are important means of community-building.

HONOURABLE MENTION

DO IT ~~YOURSELF~~ TOGETHER

BY PARLEY COLLECTIVE

Haley Zhou, Felix Cheong, Rachel Cohen-Murison, Eveline Lam

Our time with remote working/learning has taught us that it is not the “hard” work (assignments, tasks, labour) that is affected but rather the “soft” work (informal conversations, relationship building) that has been disrupted.

This project is about community making and fostering cooperation. It introduces an open-source, modular system of construction that supports an accessible way of building that is much more inclusionary and participatory. A cooperative model of organization, hand-in-had with changes to local planning that allow for more decentralized decision-making, allow a partnership in placemaking that is grounded in local needs and shared responsibility.

New community oriented developments take place on private properties and under-utilized public land and provide a range of amenities including park space, recreation, coworking, creative studio space, remote learning and alternative mobility hubs.

The goal is to empower communities to come together in cooperative partnerships to respond to their own specific needs and through the act of building together, build better relationships and better community.



SURREY



3 STOREY



FSR 0.6



COMMUNITY EXCHANGE
OPEN SOURCE CONSTRUCTION
COOPERATIVE

TOTAL FLOOR AREA 18,500 SF



44% GREEN SPACE



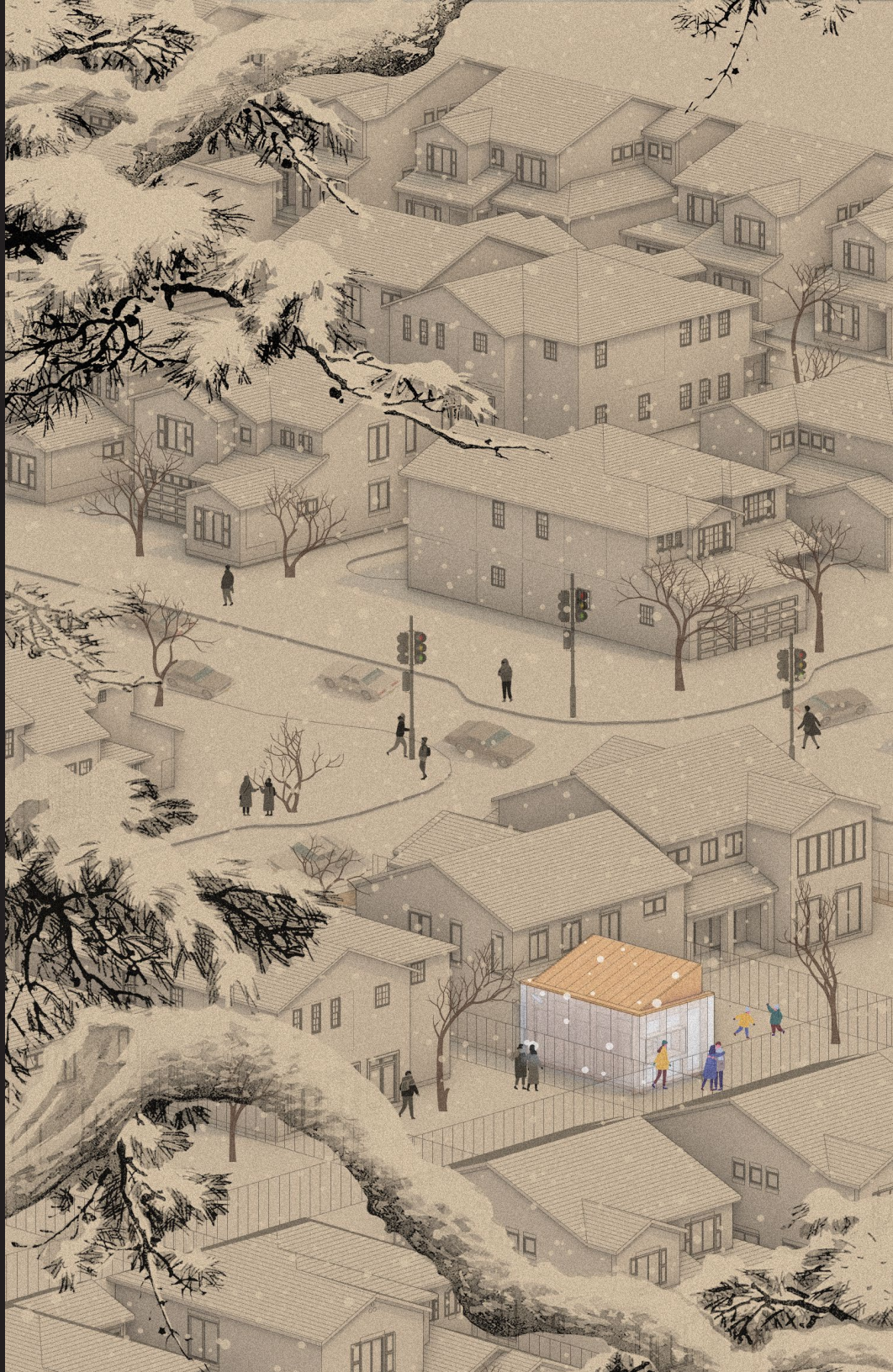
3% TRANSPORTATION



9% COMMUNITY



44% COMMERCIAL



Do It ~~Yourself~~ Together

Cooperative Communities and a Right to Build

How does our neighbourhood bring us together? Our time with remote working / learning has taught us that it is not the “hard” work (assignments, tasks, labor) that is affected but rather the “soft” work (informal conversations, relationship building) that has been disrupted. So how can your neighbourhood become an extended place of gathering and exchange?

This project is about community making, through a shared act of making and building, that can come to recognize the value of a much more intangible skill: cooperation. An open-source, modular system of construction allows an accessible way of building that is much more inclusionary and participatory. The accessibility brings a broader group to the table: the youth and elderly, the pragmatists and dreamers, the hustling self-employed and the white collar worker with a side passion. A cooperative model of organization, hand-in-hand with changes to local planning, allow a partnership in placemaking that is grounded in local needs and shared responsibility.

A common thread of **four kinds of exchange** weaves through the proposed design and starts to define what it means and what it takes to engage with one another and to truly “mix”.

Knowledge

Communal Libraries & Reading Spaces
Intergenerational Care & Learning
Shared Club Rooms

Mobility

Bike Storage & Parking
Carpool & Carshare Parking
Electric Vehicle Charging Hubs
Delivery Pick Up & Drop Off



Craft/Leisure

Repairshops & Tool Libraries
Maker Spaces & Communal Kitchens
Gardens & Greenhouses
Playgrounds & Plazas

Goods/Services

Live/Work Spaces
Locally Produced Retail
Flexible Co-Workspaces

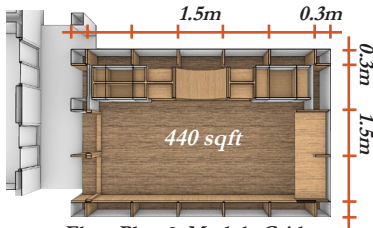
Year 1

Gianna on grew up 158th street in Surrey and spent countless weekends helping with her dad's makeshift projects in their garage workshop and she always found the chance to pick up a tool and build sparked something in her.

When remote learning stopped her shop classes at school, and with her mother now working from home, a backyard workroom rose to the top of the family wishlist.

With some research and advice from her shop teacher who just did a project of his own using a modular system called WikiHouse, they found a local contractor who found the system customizable and less demanding on site. Together with Gianna and her family designed and built that backyard office, rollig up their own sleeves since the system broke down the process into manageable steps.

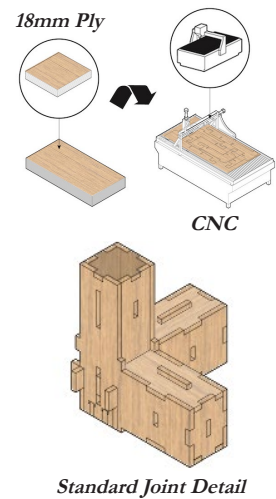
Their neighbours started to notice and wondered about what they could do with such a space ...



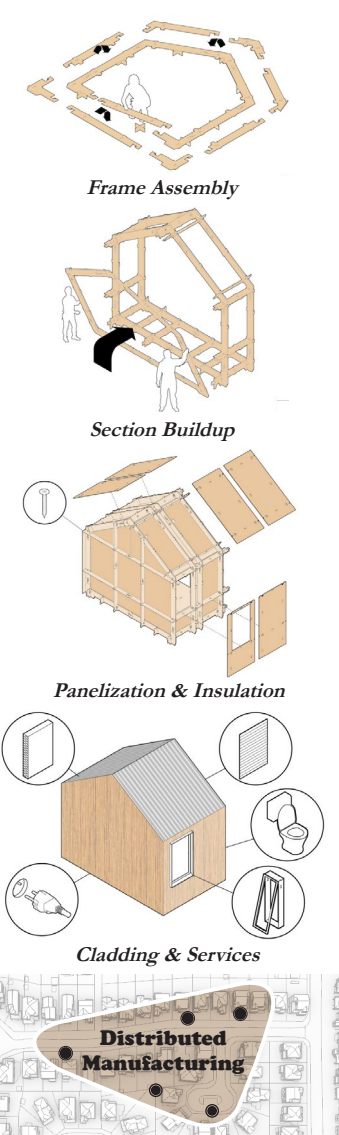
Floor Plan & Module Grid



← Drawing Continues



- An open source system like WikiHouse empowered users with limited access to manufacturing and construction while offering key benefits:
- 1) Pre-engineered and modularized systems make co-production with the residents possible
 - 2) Local and distributed manufacturing that also teaches new skills
 - 3) User designed & customizable material palette allows flexibility to increase lifespan and adaptability



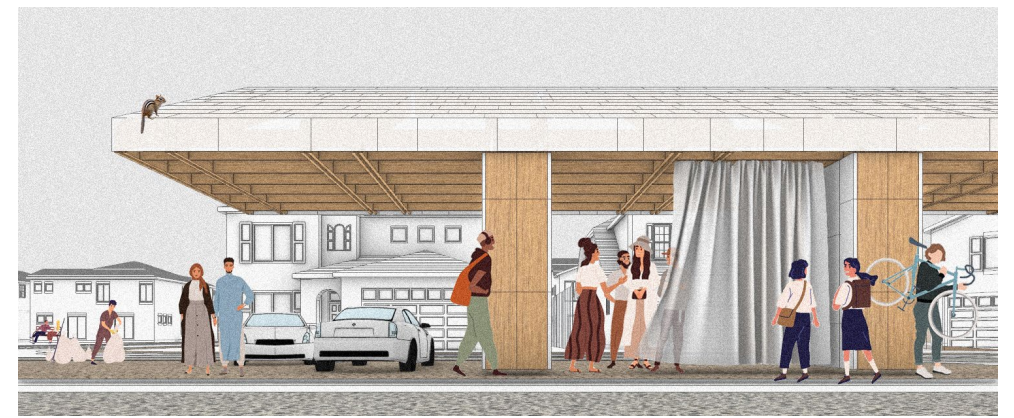
Year 3

Seeing what Gianna had built, two more families around the corner asked for advice and started to build driveway extensions on their own property. One family had sold a car as they no longer needed to commute so much and the freed-up space in their driveway was perfect for a workshop space of their own.

But things got really interesting when two families, long-time friends, decided to open up their backyards and build a two story space together. One recently had their mother move back with them and the other had two kids stuck at home all day. So this space had both a bedroom and bathroom on the ground floor and a play space above.

Before long this space was used not just by them but by their friend's kids as well, and soon the space started to host all kinds of gatherings.

At these gatherings, people started to realized the potential for accessible shared communal spaces and the gap it was filling for the neighbourhood.



Year 5

And soon enough they organized themselves to build another space.

But this was different, it wouldn't be on a private property but rather on a cul-de-sac parking island. The patch of space was an opportunity to build a shared communal room with storage locker walls for a tool library and spaces for delivery pick-up and drop-off.

It would still have a portion of space dedicated for parking (in fact now it would be weather protected), but it was perfect as a local car sharing programs grew in popularity given everyone's changing lifestyle. Another space was dedicated for communal bike parking.

The pavilion itself was not cheap to build and divisions of responsibility and maintenance became a hotly debated topic. In the end, the neighbourhood formed a cooperative dedicated to improving the built and urban conditions of the area. The model meant equal ownership, transparent financials and hard earned cooperation.

Organizing under a Cooperative

A coop starts to unify collective visions and discover ways to share resources.

- 1) Mitigate Financial Risk - Cooperatives starts to aggregate buy-in across many people in order to lower risk and create scale that allows access to lenders and builders otherwise not available to individuals.
- 2) Alternative Economies - Cooperatives can also start to capture value by members beyond our limited financial structure. The diagram to the right is an example of the value and contribution we're all capable that cannot be so clearly quantified in dollars but are fundamental building blocks to a community.

How can a community start to have more agency in their built environment? Initiatives are needed both from the **top down** and the **bottom up**.

Community Right to Build Orders

Decentralizing control allows self organized communities to respond to their own specific needs. One model is the Localism Act in the UK that allows CRBOs for small communal uses to have expanded and expedited planning approval on certain grounds, such as that the proceeds that must be reinvested in the community.

Adopting such an legislation here would enable more collaborative projects between residents and municipality.





Year 8

The focus wasn't singular. The community divided its resources and supported different initiatives.

One person had started to work with a neighbour on a backyard garden as a hobby but was now looking to build a greenhouse space where she could start a nursery and shop space for her recently launched online home store. The community chipped in its "resources" and she happily volunteered her space for classes on gardening and featured other homemade products from her neighbours on her website.

Another smaller cul-de-sac would also host a new outdoor pavilion. In this case, the weather protected spots would be fitted with EV charging ports, divisible workrooms, garden spaces, and a larger plaza for outdoor events.

Bike lanes were also added and the streets changed to one way traffic, with diminishing parking to be served at these pavilions and a new policy on street side parking. Driveway parking, a relic of a suburban model of mobility, was now an opportunity for each home to build something uniquely suited to their needs. A place for every home to both address their need and engage with others.



Economic Rationale

The oval pavilion on this page will serve as case study into a standalone project financed solely by the community.

Land

Ownership and negotiations of the land will start with a private purchase of the street desired by the coop, with an understanding that infrastructural maintenance for servicing would be continue to be the city's responsibility.

Construction

The construction of a comparable pavilion is range of \$ 130/sqft and at 2,900 sqft the construction cost would be ~\$377,000.

Income Streams

There are 173 house holds on this site and a monthly \$50 contribution would generate \$103,00 annually for the coop.

Additional sources of on-going income:

- 1) Rental fees for special events and commercial activity like farmer markets. (eg: With Vancouver Farmer Market as reference, 10 vendor stalls would generate ~\$1,600 annually)
- 2) Plantable spaces and money generated from its produce / flora.
- 3) Municipal grants and contributions as a qualified park / public amenity.

Maintenance & Timeline

Maintenance costs are partially offset by non-paid labor of the coop members, but otherwise equal \$1.5 sqft/year.

Considered as a whole, the pavilion could be paid off in 38 months.

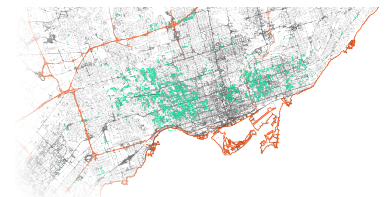


Year 11

The next project tested how well they could integrate a building in a suburban context. How to share uses under the same roof. An oval shaped pavilion spans four backyards, cut through the center by a public alleyway connected to the nearby street. This subdivided the pavilion into quadrants of use that aligned with each home's interests while allowing public access.

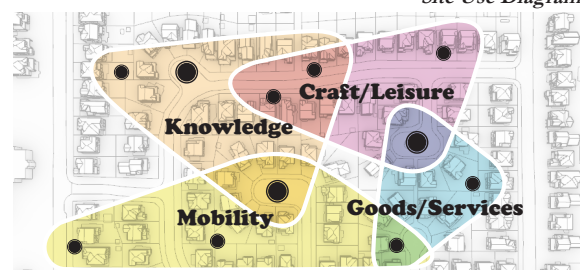
One home was a retired art teacher that now had a space for an art and pottery studio that had regular open classes. In another, a family who loved to host backyard BBQ's fitted out a communal kitchen that became the new go-to spot on the block to fulfill cravings.

One initiative (www.density.build) by a member our team leverages open map data to allow homeowners to quickly determine if their property allows for a laneway home to be built according to by-laws. 257 kilometer of GTA laneways yielded ~26,000 viable properties.



Site Use Diagram

We see a similar tool as **density** that can analyze single family residential blocks for opportunities of community oriented developments. Revealing deficiencies and needs for a range of amenities such as park space, recreation facilities or new uses such as coworking, remote learning and alternative mobility hubs. The **four kinds of exchanges** act as guides to show how a neighbourhood should develops.





Year 15

Time flies and Gianna has now been the shop teacher at Fleetwood Park Secondary School for five years. She's the go-to person for any new projects and often brings her students to help on all kinds of projects around the neighbourhood.

At the edge of the block is a homeowner who used to run a cafe at a plaza down the street but has now decided to downsize and build an extension to his home for a bistro. It will host a communal library, co-working space and storefront that opens up to create a covered outdoor terrace for its visitors.

Gianna and her students would help design and welcome this hub of activity at a corner of their block, a block that started out like any other, but would be now a catalyst for all kinds of activities and interactions not possible before.



Another member our design team is a part of Akin, a member based cooperative that provides creative studio spaces as well as arts-based programming. Her experiences helped inform our narrative on the potential of a coop to foster places where goodwill serves as the foundation of interactions between individuals and fosters a collaborative community.



The pandemic has brought forth a reality made possible by our endlessly digital world, but we're discovering that while being connected online can help us be with one another, it can also polarize and bring fear out of our differences. This project imagines the potential for low density, single family neighbourhoods to embrace their diversity and be empowered to build and to serve one another. The cooperation we learn when we build together is more than a physical skill, but rather a social one. One that is essential for us to navigate our shared world together.

JURY STATEMENT

The Jury was drawn to the artistic sensibility of this proposal, both in the design of the pavilions and in the drawings themselves. The immersive quality of the multi-page, scrolling image draws the viewer into the new space the team has created, and invites viewers to feel like they've become a character in a storybook, in the best possible way. The continuous graphic reads like a Chinese vertical scroll, telling a story over time and seasons, unfolding through the community.

HONOURABLE MENTION

A-TYPES

BY TEAM OCTOPUS
Jessica Little, Michael Knauer

Neighbourhoods are not simply a cluster of homes and businesses, but are a living fabric of interconnected relationships whose whole is greater than the sum of its parts. As a system, they need to be resilient to adapt to changes in the environment, societal pressures and norms, and economic pressures in the future. Our proposal intended to explore four urban interventions, which we refer to as “atypical prototypes (a-types)”, in order to foster neighbourhood-level resiliency.

We focused on the laneway as the medium for urban resiliency, and proposed new opportunities for laneway housing and retail, commercial districts within residential neighbourhoods, reduced barriers for co-housing and non-profit developments, and community-use agreements facilitating community access to amenities. Our goal was to extrapolate the ethos of co-housing onto the neighbourhood scale as a method of building an intentional community where social connections and neighbourhood scale planning reduce the need for external resources and infrastructure.



VANCOUVER


4 STOREY


FSR 1.32


MIXED USE LANEWAYS
PUBLIC FACING AMENITIES
CO-HOUSING / NON-PROFIT
HOUSING

TOTAL FLOOR AREA 11,988 SF


27% GREEN SPACE


7% TRANSPORTATION


8% COMMUNITY


58% RESIDENTIAL



01 INTENTIONS

This proposal intends to introduce prototypes to be used as ‘leverage points’ within residential zones to foster neighbourhood-level resilience. These prototypes are represented as mid-block cohousing or non-profit buildings (A), mixed-use laneway buildings (B), commercial districts (C), and community-use agreements for private amenities (D). These ‘leverage points’ give the neighbourhood the ability to change, evolve, and self-organize during shifts in the local and/or global systems.

POLICY PROTOTYPES

- A** Allow mid-block **Cohousing and Non-Profit** projects in low density residential neighbourhoods
- B** Permit **laneway buildings** to be mixed-use or contain non-residential uses
- C** Permit non-residential uses of residential buildings in designated areas (**commercial districts**)
- D** Require new projects to negotiate **community use agreements** for public use of their amenity spaces

Laneway homes are currently restricted to residential uses only. The pandemic has illustrated the substantial need for dwellings and work spaces to be more flexible. Allowing mixed-use laneway buildings reduces the barriers to economic activity, encourages entrepreneurs, and facilitates new ways to work from home.

Ground level living spaces-turned-cafe are staples in vibrant neighbourhoods of cities like Montreal, allowing the neighbourhood the ability to keep their historic character or unique charms while adding vibrancy, activity, and commercial activity to the streetscape. Creating commercial districts limits the impact to the neighbourhood, and maintains the “feel” of the community.

Amenities in multifamily buildings are typically furnished rooms with loose programming elements. These spaces are often underutilized by building inhabitants and could achieve a higher purpose as a community facing public resource. Selective placement in neighbourhoods as resource or emergency gathering hubs in times of need could be achieved without impacting the utility of the building inhabitants overall. Security and time management is paramount to the success of this concept.



[Leverage points are] “places within a complex system where a small shift in one thing can produce big changes in everything”¹

- PLANNING PRINCIPLES**
- This proposal has been guided by the following principles:
- 1 Resilient neighbourhoods are safe, inclusive, diverse, and vibrant
 - 2 Housing quantity or quality cannot not be compromised or negatively impacted
 - 3 Private building amenities can benefit the community by hosting managed public uses
 - 4 Integrate eco-centric management of resources and infrastructure
 - 5 Local production + local transportation + local transactions = local resiliency

WHAT IS RESILIENCE?

“Resilience refers to the amount of change or disturbance that can be absorbed by a system before it is reconstituted into a different set of processes and structures. Resilient systems have the capacity to buffer against minor changes and respond to major perturbations. When change occurs, resilience allows a system to either renew itself or undergo reorganization so that essential components are maintained”²

1. Meadows, D. 1999. Leverage Points. Places to Intervene in a System. The Sustainability Institute. Hartland, VT.

2. Gunderson, L.H., and Holling, C.S. 2002. Panarchy. Understanding Transformations in Human and Natural Systems. Island Press. Washington, DC.



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Located within the Pacific flyway, Vancouver's green spaces serve as both temporary and permanent residence to a diverse range of birds and pollinators. Maximizing and connecting green space serves to improve biodiversity and provides a variety of ecosystem services (e.g. reduced pressure on stormwater infrastructure, improved community health).



STORMWATER

Introducing green rainwater infrastructure such as raingardens and bioswales along pathways and roads allows stormwater to be filtered and detained on site, reducing pressures on downstream watercourses and municipal infrastructure.



TRANSPORTATION

In alignment with City of Vancouver Climate Emergency Action Plan objectives, priority of local transportation modes is reordered to favour pedestrian and microtransportation modes so daily trips can be made by foot, cycle, scooter, or mobility-aid. Microtransportation hubs (e.g. bike share) are scattered at convenient points in the neighbourhood to facilitate short local trips.

NEIGHBOURHOOD CONTEXT 02

INTERCONNECTED AND ADAPTIVE RESPONSE

This proposal imagines the neighbourhood as a bustling hub of community, commercial, and recreational activity built to withstand small changes or adapt to large events. Laneways are reconceptualized from vehicular-centric to vegetated pedestrian corridors and gathering spaces. Maximizing green space and implementing green rainwater infrastructure where possible is integral in buffering against changes in the biosphere and in improving overall community health.

Non-residential uses in the laneways and in residential buildings serves to activate these corridors by offering low-risk economic opportunities for entrepreneurs and work-from-home employees. Paired with public-facing amenity hubs in community-oriented developments such as cohousing, these potentially public spaces facilitate the adaptability of the urban environment and thereby increases the resiliency of the neighbourhoods social fabric.

(RE) CONNECT THE STREET GRID

Dead ends and cul-de-sacs are opened up to encourage maximum pedestrian walkability within the neighbourhood. Lands purchased to complete the street grid can contribute to the creation of new park and public spaces.



COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

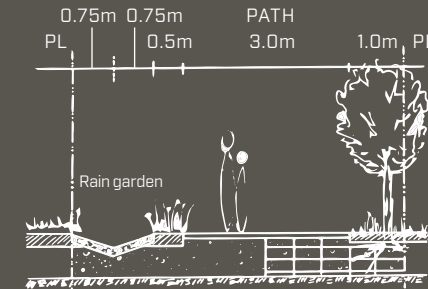
Many Canadian Cities such as (Ottawa and Montreal) have found great success integrating retail or lifestyle uses in residential structures. While housing should not be replaced with other uses, commercial activity can often complement residential buildings while inviting investment and restoring life to aging character homes. Kensington Village in Toronto

is an excellent example of this. These structures may see their ground floors converted into restaurants, quaint shops, or art galleries which allows the neighbourhood to maintain its original character and charm, while re-invigorating the structures and re-imagining streetscape.

SUBJECT BLOCK 03

RE-INVENTING THE LANESCAPE

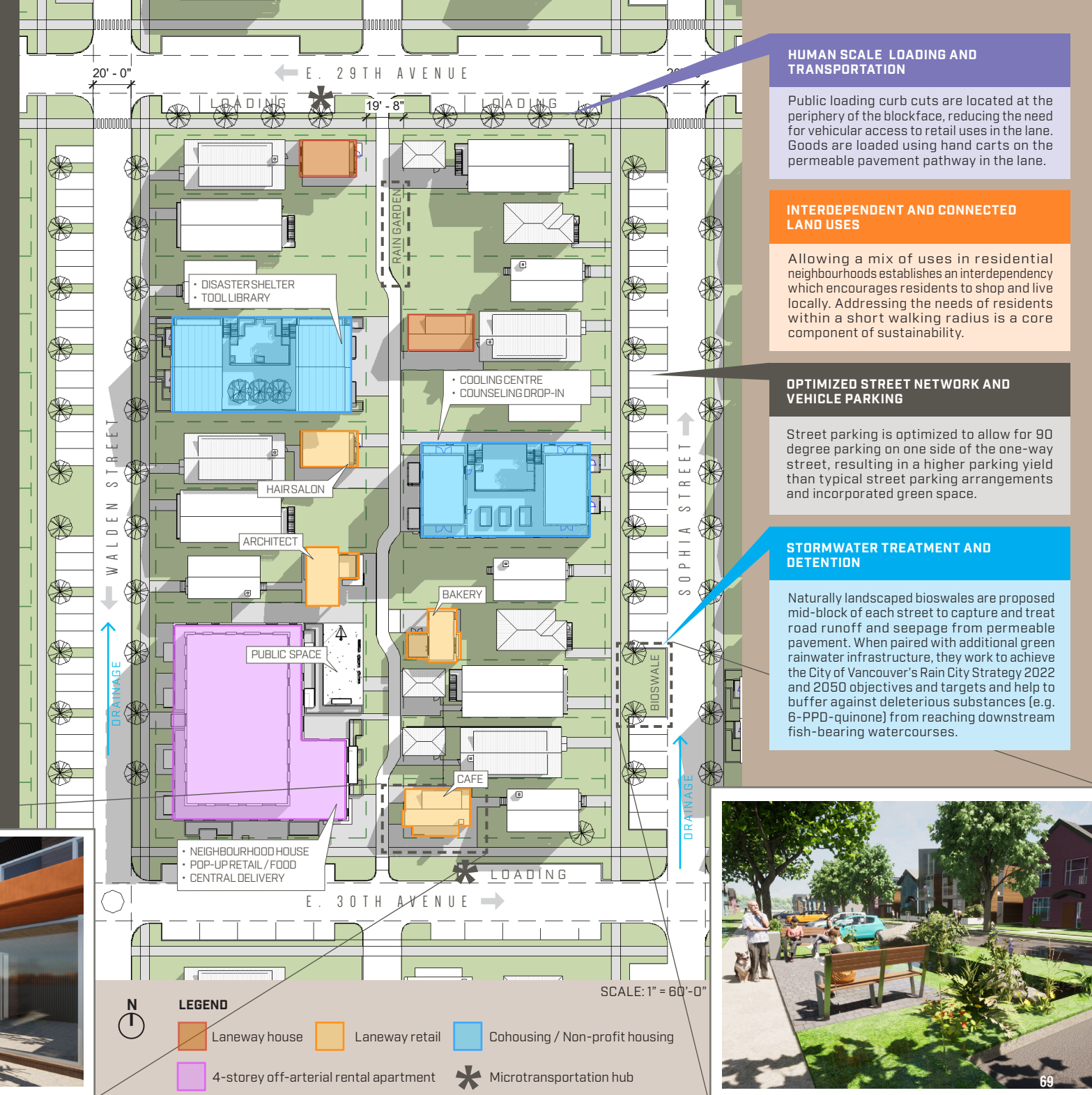
Laneways in the Lower Mainland typically serve as utility and vehicular corridors. While this pragmatic existence has served its function over the past century, we need to ask more of these spaces in the future. This proposal imagines a pedestrian and active transportation corridor weaving between pockets of green space and rainwater infrastructure. Native vegetation and soils are reintroduced, encouraging pollinators and other fauna to permeate deeper within the urban fabric. Tangible infrastructure benefits of this lanescape proposal include a more substantial tree canopy which dampens heat island effects, and substantially increases stormwater detention and filtration.



TYPICAL SECTION AT LANE



TYPICAL RAIN GARDEN SECTION



HUMAN SCALE LOADING AND TRANSPORTATION

Public loading curb cuts are located at the periphery of the blockface, reducing the need for vehicular access to retail uses in the lane. Goods are loaded using hand carts on the permeable pavement pathway in the lane.

INTERDEPENDENT AND CONNECTED LAND USES

Allowing a mix of uses in residential neighbourhoods establishes an interdependency which encourages residents to shop and live locally. Addressing the needs of residents within a short walking radius is a core component of sustainability.

OPTIMIZED STREET NETWORK AND VEHICLE PARKING

Street parking is optimized to allow for 90 degree parking on one side of the one-way street, resulting in a higher parking yield than typical street parking arrangements and incorporated green space.

STORMWATER TREATMENT AND DETENTION

Naturally landscaped bioswales are proposed mid-block of each street to capture and treat road runoff and seepage from permeable pavement. When paired with additional green rainwater infrastructure, they work to achieve the City of Vancouver's Rain City Strategy 2022 and 2050 objectives and targets and help to buffer against deleterious substances (e.g. 6-PPD-quinone) from reaching downstream fish-bearing watercourses.



STREET LAYOUT

Streets and lanes are reconfigured to put walking and other active modes of transportation on the top of the street hierarchy. Street parking is optimized, while the lanes become green boulevards of activity and nature. Loading and truck movements are centralized, encouraging smaller loads and localized production of goods. Streets are one-way traffic only.



STREETSCAPE

68

A COHOUSING / NON-PROFIT HOUSING

Mid-block apartment and stacked townhouse typology for non-profit societies with max 1.5 FSR. Height is considerate of neighbourhood context, but pushes the vernacular higher.

* 4-STOREY OFF ARTERIAL

Policy allowing four storey apartments consisting of 100% rental density off arterial streets was approved by Vancouver City Council in December of 2021.



COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

Many Canadian Cities such as (Ottawa and Montreal) have found great success integrating retail or lifestyle uses in residential structures. While housing should not be replaced with other uses, commercial activity can often complement residential buildings while inviting investment and restoring life to aging character homes. Kensington Village in Toronto

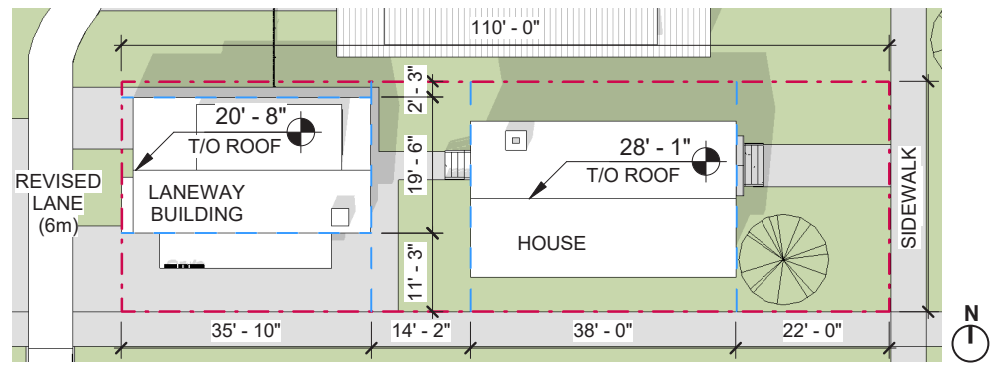
is an excellent example of this. These structures may see their ground floors converted into restaurants, quaint shops, or art galleries which allows the neighbourhood to maintain its original character and charm, while re-invigorating the structures and re-imagining streetscape.

69



B

PROTOTYPE "B" - LANEWAY RETAIL / OFFICE



PROTOTYPE LANEWAY BUILDING - SITE PLAN 1:300

MODEL ZONE: RS-1
SITE AREA: 3,630 SF
MAX HEIGHT: 9.5m (31'-0")

Setbacks (house):
Front: 20% of lot
Sides: Min. 10% of lot
Rear: Min. 45% of lot

Setbacks (laneway):
Front: 10'-0" min.
Sides: Parking stall (9'-0" min.) + 3'-7" for firefighting access
Rear: 3'-0"

Blue text denotes variance from existing schedule

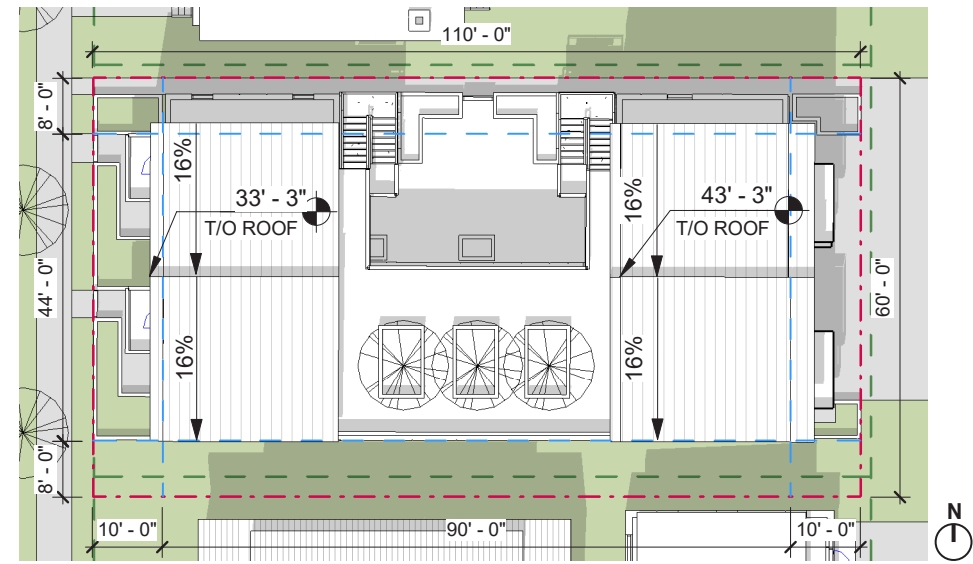
POLICY SUGGESTIONS

1. Add "Laneway House" to Outright Approval Use within applicable district schedules. Remove conditional approval and design review for Laneway Buildings.
2. Add office, retail, food / service, counseling services, package storage, transportation rental uses to Outright Approval Use within Laneway Buildings.
3. Remove density penalty for flat roofed Laneway Buildings.
4. Remove mandatory parking minimums for Laneway Buildings.
5. Allow subdivision of parcels to allow for sale and ownership of Laneway Buildings.



A

PROTOTYPE "A" - MIDBLOCK COHOUSING / NON-PROFIT



PROTOTYPE MID-BLOCK COHOUSING / NON-PROFIT BUILDING - SITE PLAN 1:300

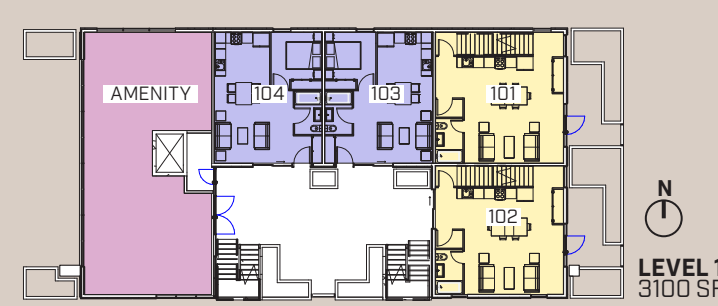
MODEL ZONE: CD-1
SITE AREA: 6,600 SF
MAX HEIGHT: 4 storeys (as defined by the building code)

Setbacks:
Front: 10'-0"
Sides: 8'-0"
Rear: 10'-0"

The need for increased density in residential neighbourhoods and a creative, inclusive approach to affordable housing in Vancouver is apparent. To achieve the above, we propose that grassroots and citizen-led developments be given favourable zoning conditions to encourage their undertaking and relaxations commensurate with their future contributions to the neighbourhood.

POLICY SUGGESTIONS

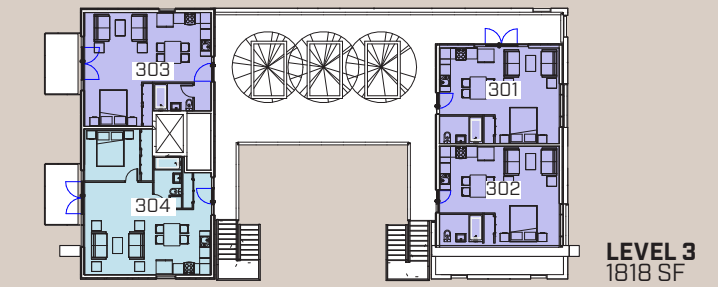
1. Allow mid-block rezonings of one or two lot proposals for Non-Profit housing or Cohousing projects.
2. Allow increased height and density for cohousing and non-profit projects in residential neighbourhoods.
3. Waive DCL's and other requirements which add undue costs to cohousing and non-profit projects.



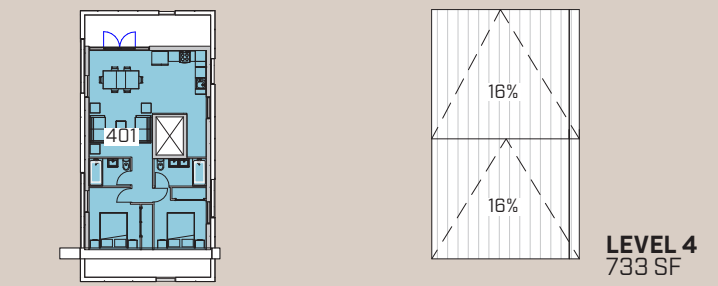
LEVEL 1
3100 SF



LEVEL 2
2829 SF



LEVEL 3
1818 SF



LEVEL 4
733 SF

LEGEND

- Studio
- 1 Bed
- 2 Bed
- 3 Bed
- Amenity

BUSINESS CASE(S)

The economic reality of the cost of land in Vancouver and the Lower Mainland excludes many from home ownership or from entrepreneurs starting a business. The economic potential of these policy prototypes to overcome this economic reality is substantial.

Cohousing allows households to participate in innovative approaches to home ownership. Amenity rentals and laneway business have the potential to generate funds for homeowners to cover repairs and upgrades. Allowing small-scale non-residential uses in laneways creates opportunity and reduces risk for those starting a business. Lastly, locating small businesses in residential neighbourhoods establishes a dependable market with supportive foot traffic.

Presented below is a business case for renting the amenity room on a monthly basis for a public facing neighbourhood use 25% of the time.

INCOME		
	RATE	VALUE
Rent	0	0
Strata fee	\$350/mo	\$50,400/yr
Parking	0	0
Amenity Rental	\$1000/mo	\$12,000/yr
GROSS OPERATING INCOME		\$62,400/yr

EXPENSES		
	RATE	VALUE
Operating expenses	\$278/mo	\$40,032/yr
Property taxes***	0	0
Replacement reserve	\$72/mo	\$10,368
GROSS OPERATING COSTS		\$50,400/yr
NET OPERATING INCOME		\$12,000/yr

DEVELOPMENT PROFORMA

CAPITAL COSTS		
	RATE	VALUE
Land*	MARKET	\$2,721,968.00
Construction hard costs	\$290/SF	\$2,570,850.00
Soft costs	20.2%	\$1,849,572.00
Escalation contingency	4%	\$394,967.00
Project contingency	7%	\$610,971.00
GST	0%	\$0.00
TOTAL CAPITAL COST		\$9,154,266.00
TOTAL COST PER UNIT		\$762,855.50

FINANCING		
	RATE	VALUE
Land equity		\$2,721,968.00
Municipal fee reduction		\$96,012.00
Municipal DCL waiver		\$66,563.00
TOTAL FINANCING REQUIRED		\$6,269,723.00
Net sales revenue		\$6,407,986.20
Less marketing costs	3.5%	\$320,399.31
Less profit	0%	\$0.00
AHOP contribution**	26.5%	\$2,425,880.49
Surplus (shortfall)		\$0.00

ASSUMPTIONS

1. Land reflects approved use value
2. Includes administration fee for BC Housing Housing Hub
3. FFE budget not included
4. GST passed through to purchasers at time of unit sale
5. Construction costs for wood frame apartment < 6 storeys = \$290/ sf
6. No underground parking proposed
7. *Market rate of land based of off ZOLO realty average sale price for Vancouver in January 2022
8. **BC Housing Housing Hub's Affordable Home Ownership Program (AHOP) contribution, in return for equity on individual units as per program details

AREA SCHEDULE

BUILDING AREAS		VALUE
Average unit area		621 SF
Net saleable area		7456 SF
Circulation + service		386 SF
Amenity		1023 SF
Gross building area		8865 SF
Efficiency		84%
FSR		1.32

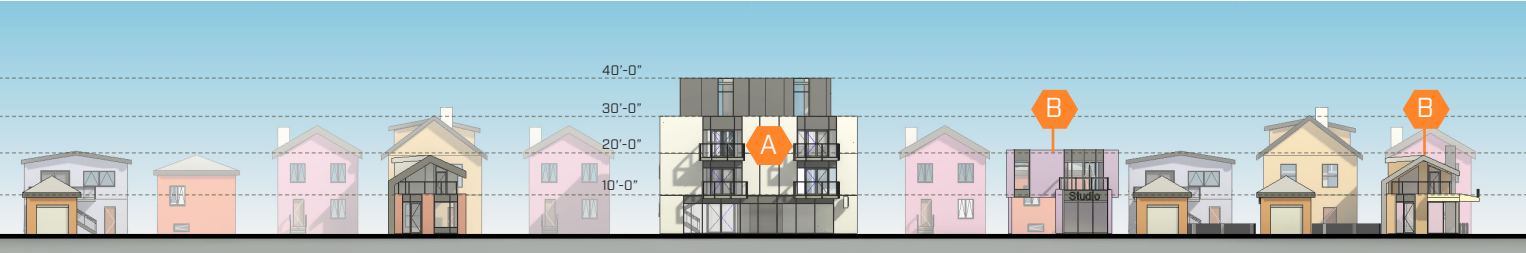
UNIT NO.	TYPE	AREA
101	3 BED	1128 SF
102	3 BED	1128 SF
103	STUDIO	474 SF
104	STUDIO	474 SF
AMENITY	---	1023 SF
201	2 BED	690 SF
202	STUDIO	454 SF
203	1 BED	557 SF
301	STUDIO	401 SF
302	STUDIO	401 SF
303	STUDIO	459 SF
304	1 BED	557 SF
401	2 BED	733 SF
TOTAL		7456 SF

UNIT MIX

UNIT TYPE	%	NO.
STUDIO	50	6
1 BEDROOM	16.6	2
2 BEDROOM	16.6	2
3 BEDROOM	16.6	2
TOTAL	100%	12 UNITS



PROTOTYPE "A" 05



WHAT IS COHOUSING?

Cohousing a resilient model of living realized. It is an intentional community, built by a group of individuals who take to developing a building of private homes with a central amenity where they can gather and participate in sharing knowledge, resources, responsibilities, and communal living. People attracted to Cohousing typically value inclusivity, a sense of community, and the environment.

A+D SOCIAL RESILIENCY

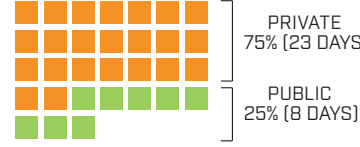
COHOUSING ON THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SCALE

In a community where people know their neighbours, there is considerable opportunity for natural connections and support that reduce the need for external resources and infrastructure, thereby providing a rich social life and promoting neighbourhood resiliency.

The cohousing built form intentionally fosters an intergenerational and diverse group of people, where neighbours can collaboratively plan and participate in community activities. This two-lot design encourages social interaction of inhabitants by creating opportunities for spontaneous encounters, and allows existing residents to participate.

Cohousing on a neighbourhood level creates micro-hubs of community stewards who are receptive to providing public-facing amenities and are motivated to participate in neighbourhood planning. As building amenities in new developments are often only used to host annual or seasonal events (e.g. Christmas parties), the general anecdote is that they are unused the majority of the time. By designing amenities to be public facing 25% of the time or during critical times (i.e. cooling centre during a heatwave), there is a benefit to inhabitants to potentially generate a small amount of income while simultaneously providing substantial benefits to greater community.

PROPOSED AMENITY PUBLIC / PRIVATE USE AVAILABILITY



PROPOSED USE MATRIX

		PERMITTED USE			
RES.		LANEWAY RETAIL	RETAIL DISTRICT	MOBLOCK NON-PROFIT	APARTMENT OFF ARTERIAL
	One-family dwelling	●	●		
	Two-family dwelling				
	Multi-family dwelling			●	●
COMMERCIAL					
	Office	●	●		
	General retail	●	●		
	Cafe / restaurant	●	●		
	Digital production	●	●		
	Light manufacturing	●	●		
	Pop-up retail / food service	●	●	●	●
PUBLIC	Pop-up manufacturing	●	●	●	●
	Disaster / crisis centre			●	●
	Public washrooms			●	●
	Cooling centre			●	●
	Mental health drop-in	●	●	●	●
	Rotating library			●	●
	Public bike lockers			●	●
	Micro transportation	●	●	●	●
	Public parking			●	●
	Central delivery	●	●	●	●
Central storage	●	●	●	●	
Daycare	●	●	●	●	

PROTOTYPE “A” 06



JURY STATEMENT

The Jury was impressed at how this scheme integrated design considerations and changes to the existing policy landscape to enable its success. The scheme recognizes the need for different types of ownership and tenure, including co-housing, which will be necessary to achieve affordable housing. It considers stormwater management, and treats the street as the space for vehicles so that the lane can serve as an active community space. It expands on the co-housing approach that we saw in the Missing Middle competition, and really seems to design around principles of social resiliency in a compelling way. It succeeds in addressing both the housing crisis and climate change.

PLANNERS’ PRIZE STATEMENT

The Mixing Middle proposals are a breath of fresh air, after more than two years of home confinement resulting from COVID-19. Every neighborhood in the city has become a mixed-use district, accommodating home offices, businesses run over the internet, and remote employees zooming with their colleagues. As well, there are a growing array of home-based enterprises that make goods for sale or provide services, including childcare, accounting, woodworking, computer servicing, home baking, and chocolatiers, to name just a few, selling their products over the internet or out their front door. We should remember that some of the world’s largest technology firms famously began in garages alongside suburban bungalows in Silicon Valley and Seattle, and while not all young people have their eyes set on replacing Microsoft or Apple, they value the convenience of being able to work from home. Many architectural firms began in the homes of designers, and we suspect that many of the entries to this competition were produced there as well.

The Mixing Middle competition sought ideas that would help accelerate this trend, enabling residents and owners in urban and suburban districts of the city to make permanent changes to their lots and homes, or encouraging redevelopment that results in a greater mix of uses. As the planner’s jury, we looked for submissions that were rooted in a cogent analysis of the community assigned for study and the current barriers to mixing

uses. Solutions should not be general, but sharply focused on the unique aspects of their community, with an eye to how public interventions at the community scale might spur changes to individual sites. We looked for aspirational visions, but also practical ideas that could be tried and, if successful, might change the dynamic – just as how laneway housing has become accepted over the past decade.

The entries received ran the gamut from modest to transformational: adaptation of current homes, additions of commercial space to the front and rear of houses, more expansive additions of commercial as well as residential space on laneways where they existed or were added, selective redevelopment of sites for larger commercial complexes, and total redevelopment of single-family residential areas at higher densities with mixed uses. Some of the most imaginative entries focused on the cultural shifts that would be possible through local entrepreneurship attached to nearby homes, including co-living/work, and community-managed commercial outlets. One proposal for Coquitlam introduced us to Zazz, owner of Stick and Bicycle Repair, Carol’s Mini Carrots, The Tall Can Cinema Club, and a host of other enterprises probably never contemplated for the community. We were inspired by the many proposals for more elegant and enlightened approaches to regulation (or de-regulation), new forms of tenure, co-ownership of new commercial spaces, and innovative financing

arrangements. We observed that many proposals suggested a design approach led by citizen collectives, proposing neighbourly collaboration for development, with approval relying on local community support.

A close inspection of the entries precipitated a healthy discussion of the practicality of several of these approaches. We wondered whether schemes that relied upon lot-by-lot addition of commercial spaces along laneways would be able to attract the level of patronage needed for their success. The financial analyses of new development on several tear-down site proposals seemed to require more density than was likely to be supported by neighbours and would only be feasible with deep subventions or high rental rates. Or perhaps they were only solutions that could be considered in areas where a density transition was already underway, or in locations that could attract both residents and passersby.

We concluded that the most compelling approaches sought synergy, combining regulatory changes and municipal investment in placemaking that attracted people to the new commercial outlets, with private or non-profit entrepreneurship. We were also looking for ideas that were achievable in the foreseeable future. Rather than taking a blanket approach of offering every homeowner the opportunity of adding commercial space to their lot, the jury felt that it was

Genevieve Bucher
Director of Community Planning, City of Coquitlam

Michael Epp
Director of Planning, City of North Vancouver

Gary Hack (chair)
Professor and Dean Emeritus, University of Pennsylvania

Neil Hrushowy
Director, Community Planning, City of Vancouver

critical to focus initially on one or a few locations in a community where a development could demonstrate the success of diversifying the area. Ensuring success in a suburban community is, of course, quite different than in a densifying near-downtown area. Hence, we have selected two competition entries that we believe are equally deserving of the Planners’ Prize and demonstrate imaginative approaches in quite different communities. The scheme presented for Coquitlam by ALTFORMA Architecture, which they named “Coliving Quadplex,” is deceptively simple: start the addition of mixed uses by reintroducing the corner store, along with offices and co-working spaces, coffee shops, artist’s spaces, and other small scale uses. Add new higher density housing at these new hot-spot corners that will help make the mixed uses possible. Developers would be obliged to create sidewalk plazas and small public open spaces to help create spots for socialization. The municipality can aid the process by increasing the allowable plot ratio, allowing commercial uses, and making the intersection pedestrian-friendly through shortening crossing distances and unifying the walking surfaces. As these initial ventures prove successful, they will be duplicated at other intersections and soon there will be a web of mixed-use areas within a few-minutes’ walk of every home. We imagined that with further parking reductions, the dwelling mix could easily be diversified to include accessible flats or lock-off rentals. The fine illustrations of this strategy should make it easy for homeowners to imagine the changes.

Some areas near downtown are currently facing pressures for higher density redevelopment and new uses that challenge the much-loved character of the residential community. In their brilliant scheme for the Riley Park neighbourhood in Vancouver, VIA – A Perkins Eastman Studio proposed an “active way” along 30th Avenue, where autos are prohibited, but all other forms of mobility are encouraged – walking, jogging, bicycles, scooters, skateboards, prams, handicapped vehicles, and perhaps in the future, autonomous delivery vehicles and small driverless busses. This “Mixed Modal” approach aims at drawing people of all ages to the active way, serving as a catalyst for new developments with ground and second floors providing space for a mix of workplaces, retail shops, artist and artisan spaces, and community uses. Housing is located above to create eyes on the street. We were impressed by the team’s careful analysis of the financial parameters of such developments, and the precise changes to zoning and regulations that would be necessary to enable such new structures. The sensitive design of the active way, which jogs from side to side of the right-of-way to create pedestrian plazas, is a contribution to planning for new mobilities. Less travelled cross-streets are ideal for becoming new community spines.

The two proposals awarded the Planner’s Prize have the potential of being implemented over the next few years. Many other schemes also contributed new ideas to the

Ann McLean
City Architect, City of Surrey

mix. Recognizing the difficulty of navigating cul-de-sac neighborhoods on foot, there were proposals to couple small mixed-use developments with pedestrian ways that connect adjacent streets. One scheme for Surrey illustrated how such an area might begin the transition to a diverse mixed-use, mixed density neighborhood. There were several excellent proposals of how laneway development could be coupled with stormwater detention to produce a more sustainable community. On a smaller scale, one proposal tackled the forgotten uses in a community – recycling centers, storage warehouses and auto workshops – and illustrates how these could be integrated successfully into residential areas.

We commend the energy and creativity that all participants brought to their submissions. They have enlarged our sense of what might be possible and offer new ways to think about planning for the Mixing Middle.

CREDITS

COMPETITION CO-CHAIRS

Catherine Alkenbrack
Marta Farevaag
Sara Stevens

COMPETITION COMMITTEE

Zoë Acton
Kari Dow
John Hemsworth
Sam Khany
Richard Henriquez

URBANARIUM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Amy Nugent

ADMINISTRATION

Andrea Smith

Visit themixingmiddle.ca to view
the awards presentation, winning
submissions, videos and more

JURY

Caterina Gomes Senior Planner, Vancouver Park Board
Colette Griffiths Owner, The Federal Store
Travis Hanks Architect AIBC
Richard Henriquez Architect AIBC
Jennifer Lippa Architect AIBC
Paul Lebofsky Architect AIBC
Tracey Mactavish Architect AIBC
Rebecca Meyers PhD Candidate, School of Community and Regional Planning, UBC
Shirley Shen Registered Architect, WA
Ding Yu Project Manager (Parks Planning), City of Port Moody

PLANNERS' ADVISORY

Genevieve Bucher Director, Community Planning, City of Coquitlam
Michael Epp Director of Planning, City of North Vancouver
Ann McLean City Architect, City of Surrey
Neil Hrushowy Director Community Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability, City of Vancouver
Gary Hack Professor and Dean Emeritus at University of Pennsylvania, Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners

TECHNICAL ADVISORS

Cory Douglas First Nations Art, Architecture and Culture Specialist
John Madden Sustainability Specialist
Paul Siggers Retail/Economic Development Specialist



THE JURY DELIBERATION OCCURRED ON JAN 29, 2022 ON ZOOM. IT WAS MORE FUN THAN IT LOOKS!

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