THE MIXING MIDDLE COMPETITION

IMAGINING MIXED-USE NEIGHBOURHOODS
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.

The Urbanarium’s charity registration number is 83332 5830 RR0001.

Visit our website at: www.urbanarium.org
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 recognize 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, lifestyle 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.

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 Hask, Dean Emeritus, Graduate School of Design at the University of Pennsylvania, who made up the Planners’ Advisory Panel. There 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.
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 Mixing 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 56 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 ones 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 developments, sometimes lower, 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 ones 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.
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.

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 to consider how their design might be expanded, over time, to reshape the surrounding block face 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.
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.

### POSSIBLE POLICY IMPACTS

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.

Zoë Acton
Competition Committee Member
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 addresses.

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 reformed via acts of sharing and solidarity: the denizens of the city find they have Lots In Common.

33% GREEN SPACE
8% TRANSPORTATION
13% COMMUNITY
12% COMMERCIAL
34% RESIDENTIAL

4 STOREY
FSR 1.5

First Place
Nicole Sylvia, Roy Cloutier, Lorinc Vass

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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.
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, art 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.

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
The corner is dissolved to maximize daylight onto roof areas and minimize shadows. The 3rd level is stepped back to minimize impact on neighbors and provide outdoor terraces for residences.

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.

Central Plant improves heat recapture and sustainability.

Office Space for Residences.

Amphitheatre.
The amphitheatre and Rooftop Terraces become a place for residences and the neighborhood to enjoy and connect, regularly, as well as specialized and seasonal uses are all imagined: outdoor cinema, performances, rooftop gardening, sunbathing, reading, and sitting.

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**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 grid-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.
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 Mixed Modal co-housing | co-working | co-active

MIXED MODAL
HILLCREST BIKEWAY
MAIN ST
E29 AVE
E32 AVE
E30 AVE
SOPHIA ST
WALDEN ST
JOHN ST

1. 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.

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. 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.

4. FSR 1.5

TOTAL FLOOR AREA 11,669 SF
9% GREEN SPACE
4% TRANSPORTATION
4% COMMUNITY
21% COMMERCIAL
62% RESIDENTIAL

VANCOUVER
3 STORRY
FSR 1.5

1. 30TH AVE
ACTIVE-WAY
COMMUNITY PLAZA
courtyard

2. 2. ALTERNATING PLAZAS

3. 3. SPIN & MIX

SECOND PLACE & PLANNER’S PRIZE
MIXING MODAL
BY VIA: RE+DISCOVER
Anne Lissett, Catherine He, Claire Schumacher, Stephanie Coardeng, 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 with residential use above and live-work townhouses. Mixed Modal wraps these elements around a vibrant communal courtyard 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 walking residential areas and residential density increases, all in a bold form that maximizes the potential of the typical Vancouver residential block.

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, co-operative and mixed residential and commercial spaces 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 scooter riders to grab a drink with friends on a patio.

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**URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY**

The existing bicycle lane 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 reduced paving at pedestrian crossings to reduce the speed of commuters passing through. Generous sidewalks allow walkers, joggers, and teenagers, to pass each other while respecting personal space. Bike racks and other public amenities are provided in the breaks between trees.

**ECONOMIC STRATEGY**

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

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, with rental yields offset by livability. Revenue from commercial units is calculated over 15 years on the average rental price, a longer construction horizon can be secured by the group. Ongoing operational expenses would be covered by strata. Revenue from commercial units is calculated over 15 years on the average rental price, a longer construction horizon can be secured by the group. Ongoing operational expenses would be covered by strata.

**5 SEASONAL FUN**

The active-way and plaza spaces can host seasonal community activities from stroll, a street workout, a sidewalk café, to music/art shows, and creates a sense of safety.

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**6 EYES ON THE STREET**

Mix of residential and commercial uses facing the active-way generates activity at all times of day, and creates a sense of safety.

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**1 PEOPLE-FULL & CAR-FREE**

A sidewalk is designed for multi-modal, active transport, and pedestrian safety. Pedestrians of all ages and abilities are accommodated. The generous sidewalks do not create any parking for cars, without competition with cars.

**2. EMBRACE UTILITY STRIP (EXIST TREES)**

Bioswales, trees, and utility strips separate zones for commercial and mixed use interventions address it. Setbacks are provided in the breaks between trees.

**3. FAST LANE, SLOW LANE**

Residential, trees, and utility strips separate zones for travel. Bioswales, trees, and utility strips separate zones for travel. The active-way shifts within the right-of-way, from block to block, with reduced paving at pedestrian crossings to reduce the speed of commuters passing through. Generous sidewalks allow walkers, joggers, and teenagers, to pass each other while respecting personal space. Bike racks and other public amenities are provided in the breaks between trees.

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**3.5 SIDEWALK**

Commercial units are incorporated into the street design.

**EXISTING 30th AVE STREET SECTION**

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**7.8m ACTIVE PLAZA**

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**DESIGN RATIONALE**

Mixed Model 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.

Implementing 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.

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<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>1500</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**MIXING I 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 retail.

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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 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.
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 neighbourhood that could expand beyond.

The first step introduces a new Neighbourhood Zone “NZ” zone which removes the focus from residential to mixed-use and introduces new typologies. Rezoning from Single Family Residential zone to NZ would be expedited for properties meeting a specific criterion.

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.

EXISTING LOT CHALLENGES

<table>
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<tr>
<th>USE</th>
<th>% Residential</th>
<th>% Primary Residence</th>
<th>% Rent</th>
<th>% Suite</th>
<th>% Non-residential</th>
<th>% Mixed-use</th>
<th>% Commercial</th>
<th>% Slope</th>
<th>% LRT</th>
<th>% Bike Storage</th>
<th>% Green Space</th>
<th>% Transportation</th>
<th>% FSR</th>
<th>% Lot Coverage</th>
</tr>
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<td>15 %</td>
<td>5 %</td>
<td>5 %</td>
<td>3.5 Storey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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A global pandemic can be the catalyst that challenges the need for new or different planning tools to adapt to new habits, routines and social interactions. This project provides families with the tools to adapt to new habits, routines and social interactions.

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**EXISTING LOT CHALLENGES**

- **RESIDENTIAL USE %**
  - **Primary Residence**: 90%
  - **Secondary Suite**: 15%

- **NON-RESIDENTIAL USE %**
  - **Non-residential**: 0%
  - **Mixed-use**: 0%
  - **Commercial**: 0%

- **SLOPE %**
  - **Slope 0**: 0%

- **LRT %**
  - **LRT 0**: 0%

- **Bike Storage %**
  - **Bike Storage 0**: 0%

- **GREEN SPACE %**
  - **Green Space 15**: 15%

- **TRANSPORTATION %**
  - **Transportation 5**: 5%

- **FSR %**
  - **FSR 1.5**: 1.5

- **Total Floor Area 11,760 SF**

- **13% Green Space**

- **4% Transportation**

- **5% Commercial**

- **70% Residential**

**FLEXIBLE ZONING**

INCREMENTAL CHANGE COMMUNITY-INITIATED DEVELOPMENT

TOTAL FLOOR AREA 11,760 SF

**SURREY**

3.5 STOREY

13% GREEN SPACE

4% TRANSPORTATION

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70% RESIDENTIAL

**EXISTING LOT**

**EXISTING FLOOR PLAN**

**PROPOSED**

**EXISTING**

**EXISTING SURVEY**

**PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN**

**SURREY**

3.5 STOREY

FLEXIBLE ZONING INCREMENTAL CHANGE COMMUNITY-INITIATED DEVELOPMENT

**PROJECT DATA SUMMARY**

- **Site Location**
  - **Road**: 3 vehicle parking minimum, with no requirements for bike storage.
  - **Sidewalks**: 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.
  - **Safe Access to Non-Residential Amenities**: 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.

- **Front Yard Setback**: Deep front yard, and backyard setback (7.5m), with a requirement for only 40% lot coverage.

- **Fences**: Use of private fences at property line, discourages friendly neighbourhood interactions.

- **Building Height**: Building height, no higher than 9m (7.3m if sloped less than 1:4) – therefore 2.5 storeys.

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**FLEXIBLE ZONING**

INCREMENTAL CHANGE COMMUNITY-INITIATED DEVELOPMENT

**FLEETWOOD**

**GUILDFORD**

**WHALLEY**

**NEWTON CLOVERDALE**

**SOUTH SURREY**

**PROJECT DATA SUMMARY**

- **Site Location**: 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 neighbourhood that could expand beyond.

- **First Step**: Introduces a new Neighbourhood Zone “NZ” zone which removes the focus from residential to mixed-use and introduces new typologies. Rezoning from Single Family Residential zone to NZ would be expedited for properties meeting a specific criterion.

- **Goal**: 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.

**SIMPLE SMALL THINGS FIRST**

**A global pandemic can be the catalyst that challenges the need for new or different planning tools to adapt to new habits, routines and social interactions. This project provides families with the tools to adapt to new habits, routines and social interactions.**

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**By TEAM C-R**

Taylor Castañón-Rumebe, Vince Castañón-Rumebe
STEP. ONE. remove barriers for change

Remove the barriers that make it hard to make a small-scale incremental change. This requires small policy changes that are easy to understand and implement without red tape.

1. **Create a new Neighbourhood Zone’ NZ** which removes red tape and encourages small-scale incremental change.
2. **Remove parking minimums** – encourage small-scale incremental change.
3. **Simple Permitting Process** allows for compliance with existing zoning and building codes.
4. **Create a new ‘yard-width’ – when lots are narrower, this creates more area up the street to be used for pedestrian and cyclists. These well-lit sidewalks give owners the flexibility to put safety, flexibility, and connections through the block.

**Where on-site parking is created, the parking pad or setback must be permeable paving. This means that open space on the lot isn’t covered in asphalt and creates safety, flexibility, and connectivity through the block.

**STEP. TWO. encourage the smallest first step**

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

1. **Commercial Conversion** By removing barriers to doing, it becomes more profitable for homeowners to convert parts of their existing structure into a small business or accessory building.
2. **Commercial Conversion** The owners provide property tax benefits to the community through the conversion to a small business, which acts as a barrier for community development. By removing these barriers, we can encourage small-scale incremental change.
3. **Flanking/Terrace Use** Use the edge of the lot for permeable paving or an open space to connect. It increases the amount of open space in the block, creates safer pedestrian and bicycle routes, and encourages small-scale incremental change.
4. **Encourage Mews** Mews provide multi-modal routes that are free from cars, so it creates a safer, more attractive, and more convenient route for pedestrians and cyclists.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD ZONE “NZ”**

**Principal Use:** Residential dwelling

**Height:**
- 3.5 storeys with
- 12m sloped roofs
- 9m flat roofs

**Lot Coverage:**
- Max. 65% lot

**Floor Space Ratio:**
- 1.5 FSR
- 0.39 FAR

**Lot Widths:**
- 10 m

**Setback:**
- Rear – 2 m
- Side – 3 m + 0 m (can be reduced to 1 m, 0.5 m, and 0 m)
- Front – 1 m + 3 m

**Permeable paving:**
- Coverage
- Max. 65% lot

**Garage Conversion:**

- **Step 1:** Homeowners have the liberty to convert accessory building and purchase in the neighbourhood community.
- **Step 2:** Homeowners can choose to sell, rent, or return it, where it could contribute to a local amenity.
- **Step 3:** It gives owners the chance to build an accessory building for their own business, or rent the space themselves. Homeowners can choose to sell, rent, or return it, where it could contribute to a local amenity.

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INFILL BUILDING
LOT REDEVELOPMENT

**STEP. FOUR.** building on the progress

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

**STEP. FIVE.** sharing the costs

Replacing an existing single-family house with something multifamily with lower associated costs in a lot and in smaller increments. Traditionally, like renovations, homeowners have to come up with a considerable amount of capital to proceed. This is why projects tend to be financed by real estate investors who have their capital readily.

**Home Equity Loan.**

Owner financing is where the homeowner might be able to finance the costs of improvements, out of their equity in the property. This is common for improvements that do not require permitting and with no or minimal disruption to the household.

Residential mortgage will generally be used by individuals with a strong credit score at middling interest rates. Financing real estate means financing a single-family home and two or more properties.

**Co-ownership.**

This project proposes an innovative model of “co-op housing” (a co-op existing ownership) where individuals have a share in the property, and are expected to become co-owners so they can sell or inherit the property, and live in a shared home, and the unit “structure,” community, etc.

- Considers greater capital to complete the project.
- Work done to the property will increase the property value for the owners as a whole.
- Shared equity building permits can be financed by shared equity investors who have their capital readily.

**STEP. SIX.** assemble together

Six Familes 1 Permit

Before starting any new construction or renovation the first step is to ensure that the home-to-be-size is feasible. This is why projects tend to be financed by real estate investors who have their capital readily.

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Access to encourage home-owners, small-scale developments are aligned with social and environmental benefits. High-quality living in a home can be achieved at a lower cost and environmental benefits. Traditionally, like renovations, homeowners have to come up with a considerable amount of capital to proceed. This is why projects tend to be financed by real estate investors who have their capital readily.

**Property Tax Relaxation for First Time Homeowners**

The city will benefit if an increase in the number of property units following the redevelopment, as well as overall infrastructure cost saving, resulting in decreased overall space.

**ASSEMBLY REDEVELOPMENT**

**FACE & AUTONOMY**

What is task and the necessity to build journeys within their neighborhood. Although it is a complex endeavor to redevelop existing single-family homes, the objectives are to increase density and create more units, and improve affordability. In addition, the creation of new units is only designed if the City and the owner work together to get some new incomes, and no small properties might re-consider giving their lots to the low-cost housing to ensure a safe neighborhood.

Having a family-friendly neighborhood involves providing a safe place for community gatherings. If the homeowners do not, it is not safe. Primarily is important to have these adjustments come in the commercial spaces within residential areas, and something that has done within the public realm to increase access and attractiveness.

The 5 main interventions proposed within the public realm are:

1. Reintegrate the Grid
2. Integrate the Cul-de-sac
3. Establish Mews
4. Shared Driveway
5. Private Covered Entrance

In order to make better use of existing small single-family lots are preferred. Land assembly type developments might require fewer of the city allows single property owners must work together.

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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.
Module X reconfigures the typology of traditional dwelling units by inviting residents to design their home's layout by mixing and combining modules to accommodate work, family needs and financial situations. Residents become proactive makers of their own neighborhood 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 neighbor 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 neighbors and build a resilient community that grow together.
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.

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.

Flex closets act as storage units, partitions, and doors, that are move-able on wheels at 1.2m (4’)

module X formula

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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.
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.

RS-1 BIOPHILIA
BY AIR STUDIO
Inge Roecker, Robyn Gray Thomson, Yang Yang, Andrea Harl, Jessica Chen

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...THE DUAL PLOT ZONE, COMBINED WITH THE FORMING OF THE RS-1 LAND TRUST, HELPED PREPARE OUR RESIDENTIAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE DEMOGRAPHIC AND CLIMATE CHANGES THAT WERE TOCOME.

Allowing multiple building lots per lot and increasing green space from the street and public landscape, will allow for more ground-cover, something that I love about my home right now.

and different lot orientations / sun exposure. Another different building configuration: we should consider options on each side, while outlasting steep gradients that can make for easier construction.

This is my place. I was family, home, hotel when the kids were kids and a few years ago I my son and his young family built a home and offer the laneway side of the property. I love facing them here.

...the garden is looking good, isn’t it? Do you like my son’s taking a break from work...
Hey, guys, how’s it going over there?

I am just going to meet my friend Zahra. Where are you off to?

I am walking out to the beach! The one day per week that I need to rent a car - glad we have so many close by!

Hey, Zahra, hey Steve! How’s it going?

Oh, cool apparently it’s 30 degrees!

Zahra always proudly shows me her garden when she makes jams that she sells at the corner cafe in berry season...

The jams are made out of berries from our garden. We also keep some fresh berries for you and a friend.

How are you over 30 and still have so much energy?

We harvested some berries last week. Our lovely students-updates were super helpful.

Oh, wow it looks great! Your courtyard is the perfect little microclimate.

We have a young family and some students living upstairs. They really don’t see much, as they have their own outdoor spaces upstairs, but they know Zahra cooks after the new baby sometimes.

Zahra and three friends moved in together when they were ready to downsize - they found this amazing house that had added a bakery and storefront in the late 20’s, and now they get to cook in a commercial-grade kitchen! She makes jams that she sells at the corner cafe in berry season...

We call these yard spaces the green lungs of the neighborhood - they allow light and air to get through to every residence, and allows space for emergency and possible ground cover, and are also as spaces as well!

Hey neighbour does it lack doing? It looks like he’s supply all of the lots to play with.

Oh, once apparently it’s 30 degrees!

But it looks like it’s not here.

Back in the day, apparently everyone had a car. I can’t imagine so much of our space being taken up for automobiles! With family, friends and businesses mixed into our area, most people only drive on occasion... and our lots are for homes, businesses and outdoor space.

Hey Zahra, hey Steve - Thanks it going?

We worked on the garden when we first moved in - it’s a struggle every time it’s light.

The garden is always in bloom.
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.
Our site 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 consumption, 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 inclusive and participatory. A cooperative model of organization, hands-on-making with changes to local planning that allow for more decentralized decision-making, allows 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 hobby hubs.

The goal is to empower communities to come together in cooperative partnerships to respond to their specific needs and through the act of building together, build cooperative partnerships to respond to their own specific needs. One model that it is not the “hard” work (assignments, tasks, labor) that is affected but rather the “soft” work (informal consumption, relationship building) that has been disrupted. So how can your neighborhood become an embodied place of gathering and exchange?

This project is about community making, through a shared act of making and building, that can come 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.

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

Knowledge

Communal Libraries & Reading Spaces

Designated Light & Co-work Spaces

Shared Desk Rooms

Craft/Leisure

Repair groups & Tool Libraries

Maker spaces & Communal Kitchens

Gardens & DIY

Goods/Services

Locally Produced Retail

Distributed

Knowledge

Craft/Leisure

Goods/Services

BY PARLEY COLLECTIVE

COMMUNITY EXCHANGE

OPEN SOURCE CONSTRUCTION

TOTAL FLOOR Area 18,000 SF

44% COMMERCIAL

9% COMMUNITY

3% TRANSPORTATION

44% GREEN SPACE

3 STOREY

FSR 0.6

SUReY

Full Colour And Gold
Organising under a Cooperative

A coop can start with collective vision and diverse ways to share resources.

1) Modular Financial Hub - Cooperatives start to aggregate key to access more people in order to take advantage of and scale models that were accessible to lenders and builders otherwise not available to individuals.

2) Alternative Economies - Cooperatives can start to capture cities to improve beyond one limited financial structure. The diagram to the right is an example of the value and contributions we all make that cannot be so easily commodified in dollars but are fundamental building blocks in a community.

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

Community Rights to Build Homes

Decentralizing economic and organizational communities to respond to their own specific needs. One model is the Locality Act in the UK that allows DIY to be part of small, semi-permanent uses to be tested and expanded and its formal adoption to correspond with the model to ensure that these DIY projects are considered as reinvigorated in the community. Adapting such an legislative how would enable more collaborative projects between residents and municipality.
The focus wasn’t stoppages. The community decided to
remorse and supported different initiatives.
One person had started to work with a neighbor on
a backyard garden as a party. The area was built
out of pallets, and another in the backyard.
A local contractor who called WikiHouse, they found a local contractor who
was doing something similar to theirs. This sparked something
that led to a tool and a workshop that led to a
project.

With some research and advice from her shop teacher
in her, Gianna and her students would help design and
build something uniquely suited to their needs. A place
for every house in both address their need and engage
with others.

Another small rule was to allow new outdoor
porches. In this case, the weather permitted space
would be built with 0.75 sleeping area, discrete comfort,
garden spaces, and a larger place for outdoor rooms.

This was a tool that could be used.

Year 8

This is an image showing a plan of a house with different sections labeled.

Economic Rationale

The real value on this map will serve as
cases that are included project financed
by the community.

Ownership and disruptions of
the land will start with system purchase of
the structure. The city, with
ownership and disruption, not be able to
reasonable space for their recently launched online home
stores. The community decided to

Contribution

The construction of a comparable
package is range of $ 150,000 and at
$3,500 the construction cost
would be ~$37,500

Incomes

There are 150 houses built on the site
and a nearly $20 contribution would
generate $500,000 annually for the coop.

Additional sources of on-going income
1) Realized fees for special events and the site rental fee.
2) Sale of space and money generated from on premise sales.
3) Maintenance costs are partially offset by new parcel of the grove from
but otherwise up to X sqft/year.

Considering as a whole, the potential costs could be
paid off in 10 months.

We use a similar tool to directly
check with single-limb residential
blocks for opportunities of sustainable
residential developments. Rebuilding without
land and making a site to be
expanded and expedited
and be realized.

Another member of our design team
would be ~$377,000.

Maintenance & Timeline

Maintenance costs are partially offset by
new parcel of the grove from
but otherwise up to X sqft/year.

Considered as a whole, the potential
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and be realized.
The pandemic has brought forth a reality made possible by our resilient digital world, but we’re discovering that while being connected online can help us to be with one another, it can also isolate and bring fear of our differences. The project imagines the potential for true shared, collective, and collaborative spaces to foster a sense of wholeness and be empowered to build and to serve our communities. The construction on how we build together is more than a physical skill, but rather a vision, one that is centered far more to navigate our shared world together.

Tour #5
Four. Flo and Gianna have now been the shop teacher at Harwood Park Secondary School for five years. She’s the go-to person for any new project and often brings her students to help on all kinds of projects around the neighborhood.

At the edge of the block is a house where a man who used to run a café on a plaza down the street has now decided to downsize and build an extension to his home for a studio. It will host a community library, re-working space and storefront that opens up to create a central acoustic arena for its visitors. Gianna and her students would help design and welcome this kind of activity as a corner of their block that started out like any other, but would be now a catalyst for all kinds of activities and interactions not possible before.

Another another our design team is part of Sika, a manufacturer based cooperative that provides innovative ready spaces as well as anti-bacterial programming. The experiences helped them in their narrative on the potential of a coop to foster places where good will occurs at the foundation of interactions between individuals and fosters a collaborative economy.

Locally Produced Retail

Additional sources of on-going income:

1) Pre-engineered and leading to CRBOs for small communal
2) Plantable spaces and money generated
3) User designed & data to allow homeowners to quickly
4) Horizontal and vertical lifespans and adaptability
5) CNC

One initiative (a laneway laneway home to be built according to
2,900 sq ft the construction cost would
yield ~26,000 viable properties.

The oval pavilion on this page will serve as an open source system like
a covered outdoor terrace for its visitors.

The Amenity Pavilion

An example of the value and cooperation. The pavilion itself was not cheap to build and divisions
space was dedicated for communal bike parking. It was perfect as a local car sharing programs grew in
parking (in fact now it would be weather protected), but
communal room with storage locker walls for a tool
All our projects in their garage workshop and she always found
the system customizable and less demanding on
called WikiHouse, they found a local contractor who
backyard workroom rose to the top of the family wishlist.

With some research and advice from her shop teacher
school, and with her mother now working from home, a
projects in their garage workshop and she always found
flexible workspaces to a community.

The Amenity Pavilion

Another example of how our design team is grounded in local needs and shared responsibility.

Intergenerational Care & Learning

Considered as a whole, the pavilion
allows CRBOs for small communal
between residents and municipality.

One team was

The pavilion is range of $130/sq ft and at
The pancake house raised $103,000 annually for the coop.

Another another our design team is part of Sika, a manufacturer based cooperative that provides innovative ready spaces as well as anti-bacterial programming. The experiences helped them in their narrative on the potential of a coop to foster places where good will occurs at the foundation of interactions between individuals and fosters a collaborative economy.

The Jury

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.

JURY STATEMENT
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 urban interventions, which we refer to as “atypical prototypes (a-types)”, in order to foster neighbourhood-level resilience.

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, mixed-use buildings, and community-use agreements for private non-profit buildings (A), mixed-use laneway buildings (B), and mid-block cohousing or laneway homes (C). These prototypes are designed to be articulated at both street and block scale, and their design is intended to encourage active uses, support improved urban connections, and facilitate community access to amenities. These developments in the development process. Typically, they bring tangible and intangible benefits to neighbourhoods and their development.

This proposal has been guided by four following intentions:

- Resilient neighbourhoods are whole, inclusive, diverse, and vibrant
- Housing quality or quantity cannot be increased, negatively or positively
- Laneway buildings need to reflect the character of the local area and enhance the streetscape
- Mixed-use public spaces can offer significant benefits to the neighbourhood, including social and economic benefits

Neighbourhoods as local systems are connected within larger systems, such as schools and hospitals, but are also interdependent and can experience shifts in the environment. Neighbourhoods have the ability to change, and self-organize during shifts in the environment. 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 urban interventions, which we refer to as “atypical prototypes (a-types)”, in order to foster neighbourhood-level resilience.
Located in the Renfrew-Collingwood, Vancouver’s greenest neighbour, both biophysical and technological resources to draw diverse users into the community. Recognizing and appreciating the urban microclimate, the community engaged in a variety of activities that promote green and sustainable living. These activities include planning, community engagement, and waterways and municipal infrastructure.

Integrating green infrastructure in the microclimate and surrounding areas, pathways and public areas, as well as pedestrian and active modes of transport, with active and passive transportation. Recognizing that green spaces serve to improve biodiversity and ecosystem services (e.g., reduced pressure on watercourses and municipal infrastructure). Implementing green rainwater infrastructure where applicable. Native vegetation and rainwater infrastructure. Native subsoils - filter media - growing medium - cobble substrate - native vegetation.

The STREETScape is an excellent example of this, as utility and vehicular corridors. While this pragmatic existence has served its function over time, street parking in special residentially oriented areas has been reimagined as pedestrian and active transportation corridor.

Native landscapes are imposed on urban infrastructure. wet streets (road sump) and landscape from permeable surfaces. The evolution of rainwater harvesting and storing technologies, combined with improved stormwater management, has transformed some laneways into pedestrian and active transportation corridors.

Street parking is optimized to allow for 90% of vehicles to park on the arterial street, resulting in higher parking rates with fewer street parking arrangements and expanded green space.

Public loading curb cuts are located at the periphery of the blockface, reducing the need for vehicles access to access the lane. A large green belt connects the two lanes.

In alignment with City of Vancouver Climate Action Plan objectives, priority is given to the efficient use of energy and resources. A microclimate strategy is proposed to help achieve short- and long-term objectives and targets and help to implement the City of Vancouver’s Rain City Strategy 2022. Simultaneously, urban green spaces serve as both temporary and permanent residence to a diverse range of birds and pollinators. Maximizing and connecting green spaces serve as both temporary and permanent residence to a diverse range of birds and pollinators.

The original character and charm, while inviting investment and commercial activity can often not be replaced with other uses, particularly commercial activity in the existing buildings serves to activate these corridors by offering low-risk economic opportunities for entrepreneurs. Land uses in the laneways and in residential ground floors converted into art galleries. In addition, Queens Park and other commercial buildings, services (e.g., restaurants, quaint shops, or micro-enterprises) which allows for maintaining the microclimate and the neighborhood to maintain its original character and charm, while inviting investment and commercial activity can often not be replaced with other uses.
PROTOTYPE LANEWAY BUILDING - SITE PLAN 1:300

- **MINIMUM SITE AREA:** 3,630 SF
- **MAXIMUM HEIGHT:** 9.5m (31'-0")
- **REAR SETBACK:** 10'-0" minimum + 3'7" for firefighting
- **SIDE SETBACKS:**
  - **FRONT SETBACKS:**
  - **LANEWAY:**

**POLICY SUGGESTIONS**

1. Allow mid-block rezonings of one or two lot consolidations.
2. Allow increased height and density for cohousing and non-profit projects in residential neighbourhoods.
4. Remove conditional approval requirements for Laneway Buildings.
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
8. **BC Housing Housing Hub's Affordable Home Ownership Program (AHOP)** contribution, in return for equity on individual units as per program details

**BUSINESS CASE(S)**

Presented below is a business case for Laneway Buildings. The economic reality of the cost of land in Vancouver has made home ownership for first time buyers a fantasy. The necessity for alternative business plan is apparent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPENSES</th>
<th>RATE</th>
<th>VALUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating expenses</td>
<td>$278/mo</td>
<td>$40.032/yr</td>
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<tr>
<td>Property taxes***</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replacement reserve $72/mo</td>
<td>$10,368</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal fee reduction</td>
<td>$96,012.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus (shortfall)</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total capital costs</td>
<td>$9,154,266.00</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INCOME</th>
<th>RATE</th>
<th>VALUE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Net sales revenue</td>
<td>$6,407,986.20</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surplus (shortfall)</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less profit</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less marketing costs</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>$320,399.31</td>
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<tr>
<td>AMENITY RENTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1000/mo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Operating Income</td>
<td>$62,400/yr</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operating expenses</td>
<td>$278/mo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NET OPERATING INCOME</strong></td>
<td>$12,000/yr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DEVELOPMENT PROFORMA**

**PROPERTY**

- **LAND EQUITY:** $2,721,968.00
- **CONSTRUCTION HARD COSTS:** $2,570,850.00
- **PROJECT CONTINGENCY:** 7% $610,971.00
- **TOTAL CAPITAL COST:** $9,154,266.00

**FINANCING**

- **APPROXIMATE Unit Cost: $762,855.50**
- **AHOP contribution** | 26.5% | $2,425,880.49
- **AHOP contribution** | 26.5% | $2,425,880.49
- **Municipal DCL waiver** | $66,563.00
- **Municipal fee reduction** | $96,012.00
- **TOTAL COST PER UNIT** | $72,855.50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIT MIX</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>UNITS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 BEDROOM</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 BEDROOMS</td>
<td>25% (8 DAYS)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 BEDROOMS</td>
<td>25% (23 DAYS)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STUDIO</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**POLICY SUGGESTIONS**

1. Allow increased density in residential neighborhoods to encourage small businesses in residential neighborhoods
2. Allow increased height and density for cohousing and non-profit projects in residential neighborhoods
3. Remove conditional approval requirements for Laneway Buildings
4. Construction costs for wood frame apartment < 6 storeys = $290/ sf
5. No underground parking proposed
6. Market rate of land based of off ZOLO realty average sale price
7. **BC Housing Housing Hub's Affordable Home Ownership Program (AHOP)** contribution, in return for equity on individual units as per program details
8. **BC Housing Housing Hub's Affordable Home Ownership Program (AHOP)** contribution, in return for equity on individual units as per program details

**LEGEND**

- **Building**
- **1 Bed**
- **2 Bed**
- **Studio**
- **Amenity**
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.

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.
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 accustomed to changes to individual space and to how public interventions at the community scale can enable changes to individual sites. We looked for submissions that made permanent changes to their lots and homes, or owners in urban and suburban districts of the city to help accelerate this trend, enabling residents and architectural firms began in the homes of designers, and the convenience of being able to work from home. Many world’s largest technology firms famously began in their front door. We should remember that some of the childcare, accounting, woodworking, computer offices, businesses run over the internet, and remote employees zooming with their colleagues. As well, there is a trend toward more home-based enterprises that make goods for sale or provide services, including children’s, accounting, woodworking, computer servicing, home baking, and chocolatiers, to name just a few, selling their products over the internet or out of their front door. We should remember that some of the world’s largest technology firms famously began in garages in communities such as Silicon Valley and Seattle, and while not all young people have their employees zooming with their colleagues. As well, 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 forgone uses in a community – recycling centers, storage warehouses and auto workshops – and illustrated how these could be integrated successfully into residential areas.

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

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Sara Stevens

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

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