

Building social connections

Case studies to inspire socially connected multi-unit housing

Volume 2



Introduction: Building social connections in multi-unit housing

The crises of social disconnection and housing affordability can be solved together.

The innovative case studies in this document illustrate how cities can meet housing, affordability, and climate goals while also supporting community wellbeing. Loneliness and social isolation are a key challenge for many communities. The design of our homes and our neighbourhoods can play a crucial role in solving these challenges, together with public health and policy shifts.

Understanding wellbeing

Wellbeing encompasses our physical and mental health, including how we perceive our own health. Many factors contribute to our overall health, including our sense of joy, meaning, belonging, and inclusion. In particular, our social ties are key predictors of wellbeing. These include both deeper relationships with family and friends, and casual encounters with neighbours and other community members. Strong social connections can boost a person's overall wellbeing, and are closely linked to health and happiness. As cities densify, multi-unit housing has a crucial role to play in fostering strong social ties and support networks.



Purpose of these case studies:

- Provide inspiration for local governments and encourage housing that prioritizes social connection, wellbeing, and inclusion
- Offer insights into policy tools that can enable more socially connected housing and development
- Demonstrate how denser housing forms can support broader community goals, including social connection, health, sustainability, affordability, and inclusion

This report is part of a series of resources produced through the [Building Social Connections project](#), which included national training sessions for planners across Canada to learn about and develop policy tools to support social connection in multi-unit housing.

To learn more about this work, please visit: happycities.com/building-social-connections-toolkit



The case studies

The following case studies showcase a wide range of innovative design and policy approaches—all with a focus on building strong social bonds and mutual support between neighbours.

1. MÓYTEL LALÉM

New Westminster, Canada (p. 4)

- **Affordable family housing**
- **Cross-cultural connections**
- **Political will**
- **Reconciliation**



*WATCH
THE VIDEO*



2. VIENNA HOUSE

Vancouver, Canada (p. 11)

- **Sustainability**
- **Social connection**
- **Affordability**



*WATCH
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3. LITTLE MOUNTAIN COHOUSING

Vancouver, Canada (p. 17)

- **Intentional community**
- **Social connection**
- **Sustainability**



*WATCH
THE VIDEO*



1 MÓYTEL LALÉM



Front of Móytel Lalém on Sixth Street.
Image: Lu'ma Development Management

Móytel Lalém is a Halkomelem phrase that translates to “help each other” and “house.” The six-storey building provides 100% affordable, non-market housing for urban Indigenous and Swahili-speaking Peoples, built on six former single-detached dwelling lots. The project emerged through a unique development partnership with funding and support from all levels of government—municipal, provincial, and federal. Móytel Lalém offers a blueprint for affordable homes that prioritize social wellbeing, inclusion, and cross-cultural connections through programming and design.

At a glance

Storeys: 6

Homes: 96

Location: Unceded land of Halkomelem-speaking Peoples and home to the Qayqayt First Nation (New Westminster, Canada)

City population: 84,100

Tenure: Non-market rental homes (20% deep subsidy, 50% rent-geared-to-income, and 30% affordable)

Completion: Summer 2024

Cost: \$34 million

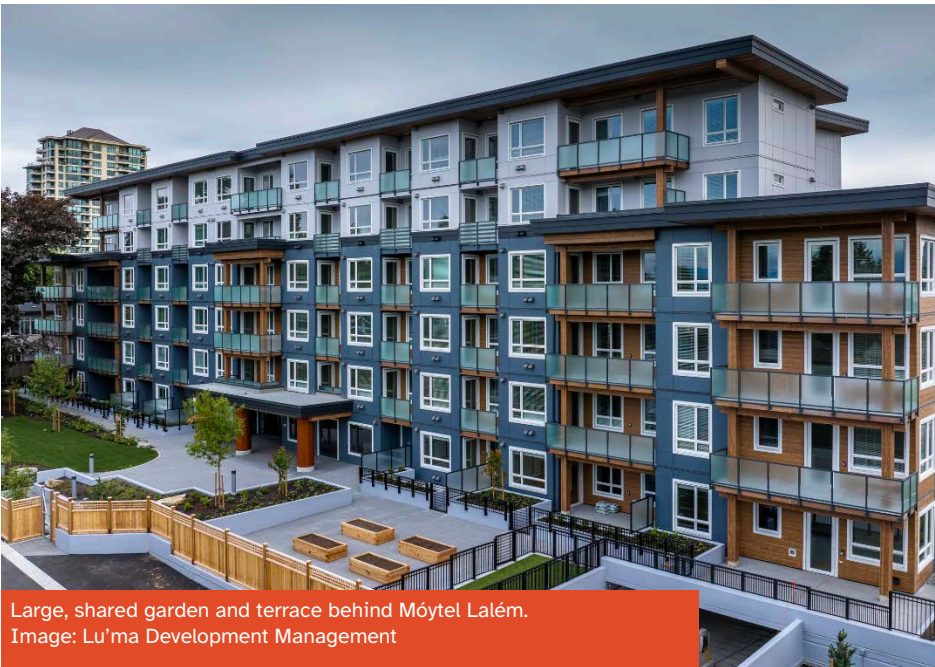
Project partners: Lu'ma Native Housing Society, Aboriginal Land Trust, Swahili Vision International Association

Guiding question

How can communities enable more social, affordable housing that supports wellbeing for diverse cultural backgrounds?

Key learnings

- Culturally grounded housing nurtures supportive community for residents
- Ongoing community engagement is critical to understand housing needs
- Commitments to equity and affordability strengthen local policy



Large, shared garden and terrace behind Móytel Lalém.
Image: Lu'ma Development Management

Architects: RLA Architects

Unit types:

- 20 three-bedroom homes
- 37 two-bedroom homes
- 39 one-bedroom homes

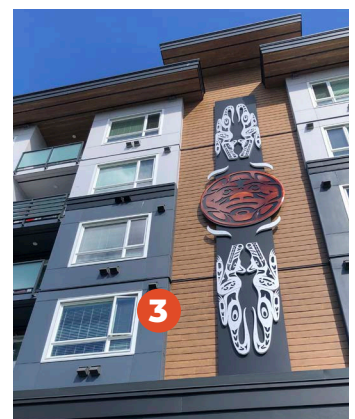
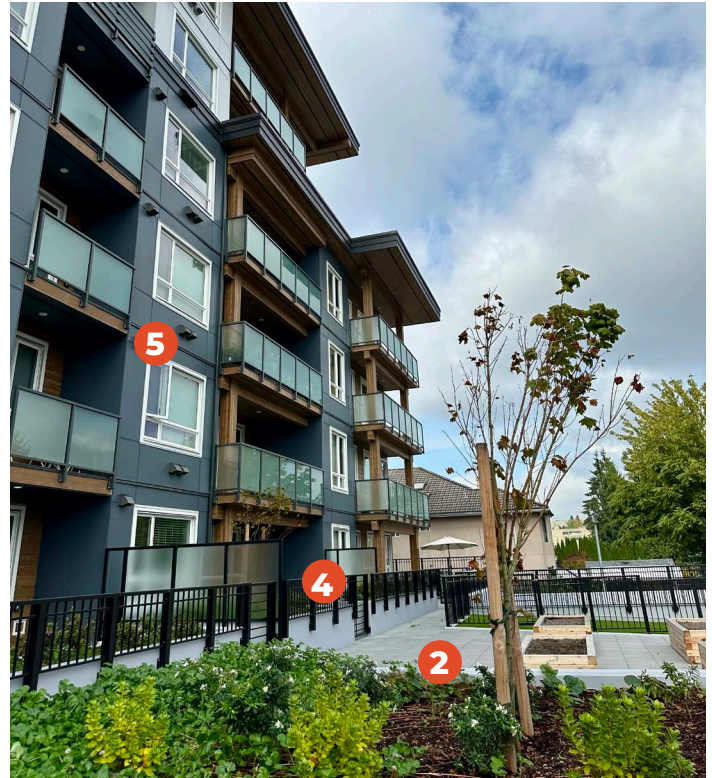
Accessibility: The project includes 100% adaptable or accessible units, exceeding the City's minimum requirement of 40% Adaptable Dwelling Units in accordance with the BC Building Code. The City of New Westminster offers exemptions from total floorspace calculation for adaptable units (1.85 m² for every one-bedroom adaptable housing unit, 2.80 m² for every two-plus bedroom adaptable housing unit).

Sustainability:

- Step 4 in the B.C. Energy Step Code
- Wood frame construction

Social design features

1. **Indoor common room** (1,900 sq. ft) on the main floor with a kitchen and large doors that open onto the outdoor terrace
2. **Outdoor garden and terrace** with planter boxes, outdoor dining areas, gas connections for barbecues, exercise area, seating, covered areas, dog area, and more
3. **Large, covered, accessible entryway** with clear signage, lighting, and Indigenous artwork to reinforce a sense of pride and identity for the community
4. **Semi-private patios** for ground-level homes that face onto the street out front and in the garden area in the back
5. **Active building edge** with regular balconies, doors, and windows to create direct visual connections to the street and garden area



Key learnings

Culturally grounded housing nurtures supportive community for residents

Cross-cultural partnerships

Móytel Lalém was built through a groundbreaking partnership between the Aboriginal Land Trust (ALT), [Lu'ma Native Housing Society](#), and the [Swahili Vision International Association](#). The building is jointly operated by Lu'ma and Swahili Vision, with oversight from the [Aboriginal Housing Management Association](#).

One of Lu'ma's goals is to build capacity for smaller non-profits to develop housing. Swahili Vision wanted to create housing for its community, but didn't have the organizational capacity to do it alone. Lu'ma approached Swahili Vision with the idea for the new housing community and invited the organization to partner on it, despite having over 5,000 Indigenous community members on its waitlist.

Cultural programming

Lu'ma prioritizes cross-cultural connections through its organization-wide cultural coordinator, who helps building managers and staff organize cultural activities, such as dance, beading and drum making workshops. An Elder regularly visits all Lu'ma buildings to connect with residents.

Lu'ma, Swahili Vision, and ALT hosted an opening ceremony for the building, including opportunities for residents to share their stories, and Swahili and Indigenous dance and musical performances.



Móytel Lalém opening ceremony.
Image: Hey Neighbour Collective



Móytel Lalém opening ceremony.
Image: Hey Neighbour Collective

Intentional design

Common spaces at Móytel Lalém embed Indigenous and Swahili cultural elements in functional and decorative design features. A four-storey, metal sculpture by a local Indigenous artist features prominently on the front of the building. Smaller details throughout the interior include floor tiles etched with Swahili words and a Salish eye design in the building's entryway and lobby.

Common spaces are designed to support community gatherings that celebrate and reflect residents' cultures, including a large indoor common room with a kitchen that opens onto the back garden area through large doors.

“We don’t feel alone here. If we cross paths in the elevator, we say hello, we say good morning. It’s a very friendly community. I feel like I’m at home a little bit.”

- Resident, Móytel Lalém

Source: [Radio-Canada](#)



Four-storey, metal Indigenous artwork displayed above the front entrance. Image: Happy Cities



Floor tiles in the building lobby include Swahili words and a Salish eye design. Image: Happy Cities

Ongoing community engagement is critical to understand housing needs

Understanding community needs

Before Móytel Lalém was announced, New Westminster city councillors met with community representatives, including poverty reduction coalitions and residents seeking affordable housing. The City also has a [Community Advisory Assembly](#), which appoints a diverse range of local residents to discuss City policies and projects and provide input and recommendations back to staff and Council. This ongoing commitment to engagement helps City staff better support affordable, culturally significant projects like Móytel Lalém and centre the needs of the communities they aim to serve.

Making space to hear from diverse voices

Like many multi-storey, affordable housing projects, Móytel Lalém faced vocal public opposition. City staff and community partners took proactive steps to hear from a wide range of community members and voices—beyond those who would typically attend a public hearing.

For example, City staff invited Indigenous community members to share their stories at Council, highlighting the emotional impact and cultural significance of this development. Additionally, the BC Non-profit Housing Association encouraged community members who could not attend to share written feedback. In the end, Council received record-breaking number of support letters from community members, outnumbering those in opposition.



A sign and plaque acknowledge the traditional territory and meaning of Móytel Lalém. Image: Happy Cities

"[Móytel Lalém] was also the most supported project in the history of New Westminster. We smashed the records for support letters."

- [Hugh Forster, project developer](#)

Commitments to equity and affordability strengthen local policy

Long-term community plans

This project required Official Community Plan (OCP) amendments and rezoning from a Single Detached Residential District to a Comprehensive Development District. Commitments to reconciliation and affordability goals in the OCP established a strong policy foundation for ensuring the project's approval.

Key directions in New Westminster's [2019-2022 Strategic Plan](#) include:

- “Protect and enhance rental housing; aggressively pursue creative approaches to housing policy and on-the-ground projects; facilitate the development of a range of ground-oriented infill housing and provision of other choices in housing.”
- “Actively and meaningfully engage with Indigenous communities and individuals to develop enduring relationships; create a welcoming, inclusive and accepting community.”

Council approved the OCP amendment and rezoning, citing the project's consistency with the city's broader policy goals related to inclusion, affordable housing, and reconciliation.

Flexible and streamlined approvals process

Recognizing the project's alignment with City goals, staff took actions to streamline the approvals process. For example, the former houses on the site dated from 1911 to 1943, which would normally need to be protected. City staff recommended not pursuing on-site retention in an act of reconciliation because the houses represented the City's colonial history and the project intended to house Indigenous Peoples. Staff did not refer the application to the Community Heritage Commission. The houses were made available for purchase if a buyer wanted to relocate any of the homes to a new site.

Staff shared that the project was approved three times faster than comparable developments with similar timelines in other cities.

Relevant policy tool: Reduced public hearing requirements

As of 2025, municipalities in B.C. cannot hold public hearings for rezonings for housing developments that align with their official community plans (OCPs).

This provincial legislation would have significantly streamlined the approval process for Móytel Lalém, which faced a difficult public hearing process with vocal opposition—despite the majority of the community being in favour of the project.

2 VIENNA HOUSE



Vienna House front entrance and building facade.
Image: Public Architecture

Vienna House offers a blueprint for sociable, sustainable, and affordable housing. The development provides 123 non-market rental homes clustered around a central courtyard in Vancouver's Kensington-Cedar Cottage neighbourhood.

The project combines wood frame construction, prefabrication, and Passive House design to reduce building costs while creating a climate-resilient, sustainable housing community.

Did you know?

Vienna House has a counterpart housing project in Vienna, Austria called [Vancouver House](#). The City of Vancouver and City of Austria committed to a knowledge exchange on best practices in net-zero emissions buildings.

At a glance

Storeys: 7

Homes: 123

Location: Unceded territory of Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations (Vancouver, Canada)

City population: 662,248

Tenure: Non-market rental homes (mix of shelter, low-income and average market rental homes)

Completion: Estimated fall 2025

Budget: \$48 million

Project partners: BC Housing, City of Vancouver, More Than a Roof Housing Society

Architects: Public Architecture

Guiding question

How can climate-resilient buildings nurture social connection?

Key learnings

- Social courtyard supports connection and sustainability
- Municipal support enables housing innovation
- Social programming complements design to create stronger housing communities
- Sustainable, climate-adaptive design ensures long-term resilience

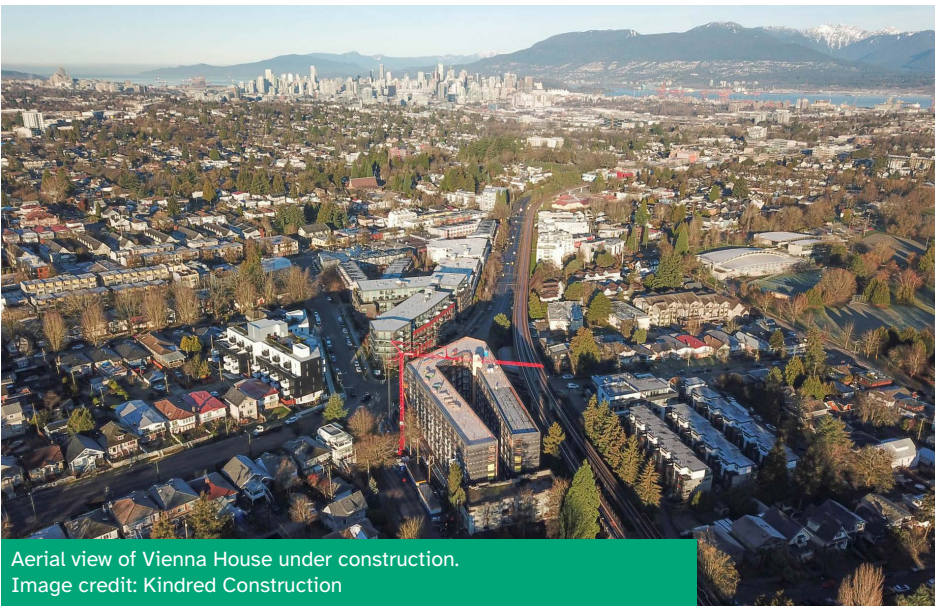
Unit types:

- 29 studio homes
- 37 one-bedroom homes
- 35 two-bedroom homes
- 16 three-bedroom homes
- Six four-bedroom homes

Accessibility: Ten per cent of homes are accessible for people with disabilities. All units are adaptable.

Sustainability:

- Passive House design
- Mass timber and light wood construction with prefabricated elements



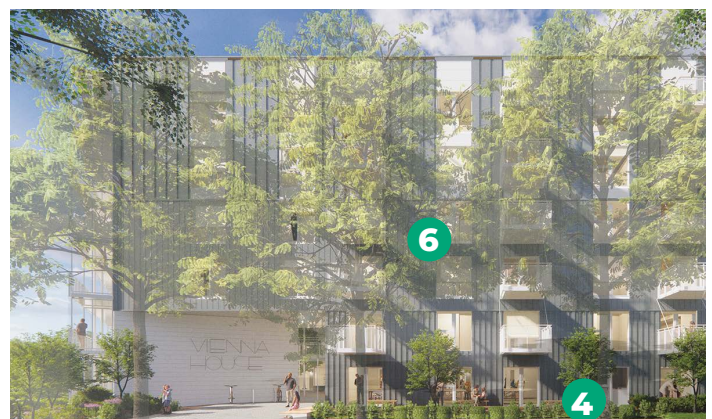
Aerial view of Vienna House under construction.
Image credit: Kindred Construction

What is passive house?

Passive House is an internationally recognized high-performance building standard for energy efficiency. Passive House buildings should [consume up to 90% less](#) heating and cooling energy than conventional buildings.

Social design features

1. **Central courtyard** provides an outdoor gathering area and informal play space, surrounded by unit entrances and balconies to facilitate social interaction.
2. **Multipurpose room**, directly connected to the courtyard and building entrance, provides space for birthday parties, play, meetings, communal dinners, and more.
3. **Shared balconies** overlook the courtyard on every floor, buffered from the SkyTrain noise by the building.
4. **Community garden** for residents along the street doubles as a privacy buffer between the public sidewalk and ground-floor homes.
5. **Wide, social corridors** (5 ft.) include spaces to pause and interact with neighbours, with seating and personalized entryways that create transitions between public and private space. North-facing units have fully sprinklered walkways instead of balconies to act as a sound buffer and reduce noise from the nearby SkyTrain.
6. **Active building edge** has regular balconies, doors, and windows, providing direct visual connections to the street and courtyard below.



Images: Public Architecture

Key learnings

Social courtyard supports connection and sustainability

Early on, the project team [assessed](#) the costs and benefits of two different building forms: "O" and "J". The "O" form has an enclosed courtyard, with homes connected by an outdoor walkway overlooking the courtyard. The "J" scheme represents a more typical North American apartment building form, with an indoor hallway through the interior of the building and units on both sides.

57% more social encounters among residents

Early analysis of the proposed designs found that the courtyard form supported greater potential for social interaction and higher livability. Specifically, the [FLUID Sociality tool](#) predicts that the "O" scheme will generate 57% more encounters and 35% more greetings than "J" layout, due to the way that residents would circulate through the building.

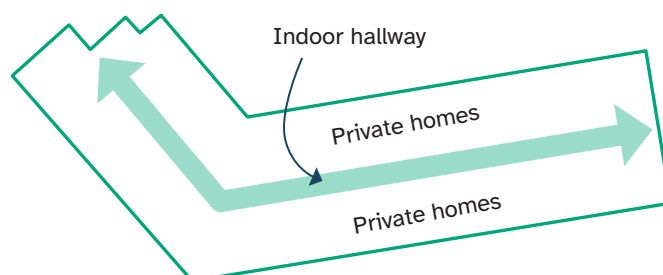
Two-thirds reduction in cooling costs

In the "O" scheme, homes are located only on one side of the outdoor walkway, meaning that they can have windows and natural daylight on both sides. This layout allows for cross-ventilation through the units, which helps to cool units with less reliance on air conditioning, thereby lowering the costs of cooling the building by two thirds.

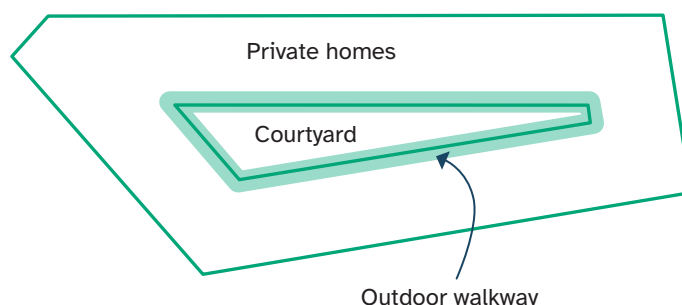
The "O" scheme also offered better acoustics, helping to buffer noise from the nearby SkyTrain.

For a more detailed comparison, see the [report from BC Housing](#).

"J" building form



"O" building form



Relevant policy tool: Incentives for social courtyards and circulation

Municipalities can encourage more social design features in multi-unit buildings—such as courtyards and wider, social corridors—by offering development incentives.

North Vancouver's [Active Design Guidelines](#) and Port Moody's [Social Wellbeing Design Guidelines](#) both offer floor area exclusions for common spaces that meet social and active design criteria, ensuring that social features do not take away from the number of homes a building can provide. This helps support affordability by spreading the cost of social spaces over a greater number of homes.

Municipal support enables housing innovation

As a demonstration project, Vienna House required strong partnerships between the city, housing operator, and the design and development team. The City of Vancouver provided the land for Vienna House and facilitated collaboration between the operator (More Than a Roof Housing Society), BC Housing, and the design team. Early collaboration helped streamline decision-making around innovative features, including the courtyard design and use of prefabricated elements.

Social programming complements design to create stronger housing communities

In addition to sociable design features, Vienna House aims to build an intentional community with a diverse mix of households in a comfortable, resilient home.

Planned programming for residents includes:

- Monthly community meals, holiday meals and a weekly affordable food program supported by More Than a Roof Housing Society's Soul Kitchen program
- Volunteer opportunities (e.g. social, garden clubs)
- Community support coordinators who assist with life skills coaching, resume building, health and wellness, and connect tenants to community resources
- Regular social events hosted by tenant volunteers and information sharing through social calendars and community newsletters

Relevant policy tool: Unlock city-owned land for affordable homes

The cost of land adds significantly to overall project costs, particularly in city with high land prices. A key way municipalities can support affordability is by providing city-owned land at low or no cost for affordable housing developments.

To learn more about municipal levers for affordability, watch [Robert Brown's talk](#) from the *Building Social Connections in Practice* sessions.

Relevant policy tool: Streamline approval processes for affordable housing

Rezoning for Vienna House was submitted through Vancouver's [Social Housing or Rental Tenure](#) (SHORT) Program, which aims to streamline the approval process by reducing development approval times for qualifying projects by nearly 50 per cent. Additional policies—for example, not requiring stepbacks—helped further streamline the design process.

Sustainable, climate-adaptive design ensures long-term resilience

Innovative building techniques

Vienna House is a hybrid mass timber and light wood building with cross-laminated timber (CLT) floors and prefabricated wall panels. These construction methods aim to [reduce embodied carbon](#) in a building's lifecycle, compared to traditional concrete and steel. Prefabricated components also help increase the predictability of construction costs, and can create [savings](#) through reduced time, materials, and labour needed to construct the building.

The construction team used BIM to coordinate the materials required to build Vienna House. This helps to ensure accuracy in the sizing of components, along with other details that can help minimize construction delays.

For more information, see BC Housing's bulletin on [Use of wood, prefabrication and mass timber](#).

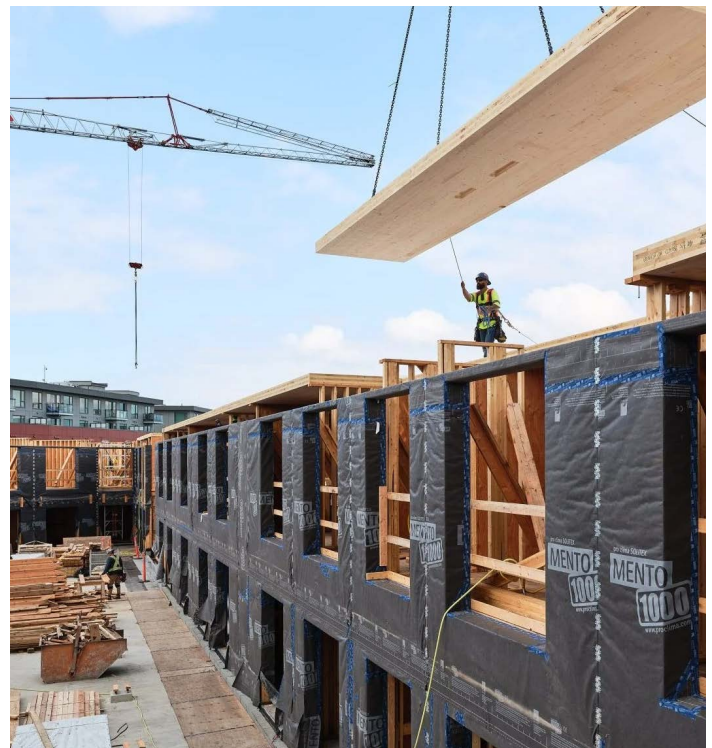
What is building information management (BIM)?

BIM is an approach that uses digital data to support project delivery and collaboration across project teams through shared data and 3D models. It improves coordination, helps identify construction issues, and facilitates maintenance and operations.

Thermal comfort

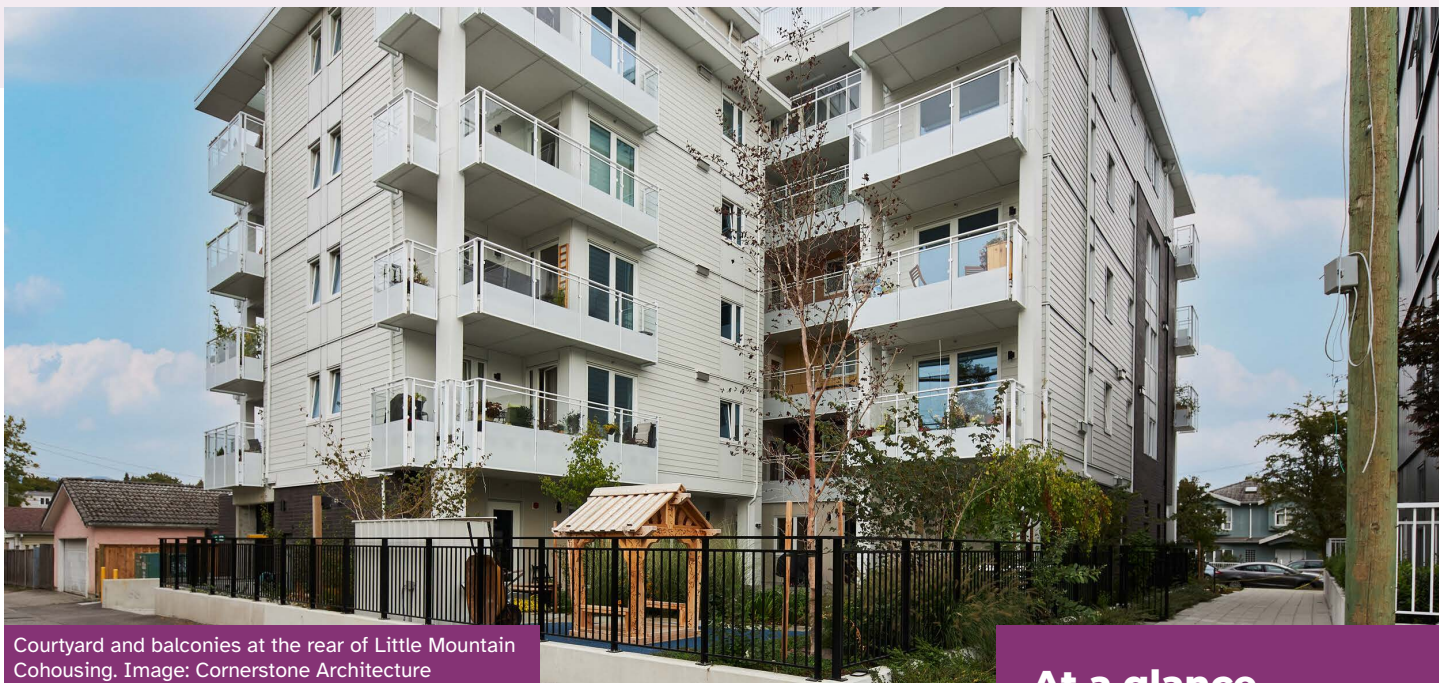
Increasingly, multi-unit homes must be designed to withstand various climate scenarios, including extreme heat and smoke from forest fires. Vienna House includes several features to optimize thermal comfort of residents.

- **Mixed-mode ventilation** combines mechanical and natural ventilation to enhance air quality and comfort.
- **Operable windows** allow residents to open windows on both sides for cross-ventilation.
- **Exterior shading** reduces heat during warm months, with individually controlled exterior fabric shades on the building's south side.
- **High-performance building envelope** minimizes energy loss, maintaining a stable indoor environment.



Mass timber panel installation.
Image: Andrew Latreille / Kindred Construction

3 LITTLE MOUNTAIN COHOUSING



Courtyard and balconies at the rear of Little Mountain Cohousing. Image: Cornerstone Architecture

Little Mountain Cohousing is a social, six-storey "village," providing 25 homes in Vancouver's Riley Park-Little Mountain neighbourhood. At Little Mountain, neighbours offer a built-in support system: Residents share weekly meals, work together to manage the building, and even take turns with after-school care.

A group of committed residents formed a partnership to act as a non-profit developer, navigating city policies and lengthy permitting processes to build homes that deliver social, climate, and financial benefits.

What is cohousing?

Cohousing—short for collective housing—is a housing model where residents own their individual homes and have access to enhanced shared amenities, such as common kitchens, courtyards and multipurpose spaces.

Cohousing residents participate in and share the planning, design, management, and maintenance of the community and engage in ongoing community-building activities.

At a glance

Storeys: 6

Homes: 25

Location: Unceded territory of Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations (Vancouver, Canada)

City population: 662,248

Tenure: Strata (rentals allowed)

Completion: Spring 2021

Cost: \$22 million

Architects: Cornerstone Architecture

Unit mix:

- Three one-bedroom homes
- Eight two-bedroom homes

Guiding question

What role do resident-led developments play in building stronger, more connected communities?

Key learnings

- Common social spaces that connect throughout the building help foster a sense of community
- Cohousing communities report strong social and financial benefits
- Cohousing project viability is sensitive to delays

- 13 three-bedroom homes
- One four-bedroom home

Accessibility: The building meets the minimum accessibility requirements in the B.C. Building Code.

Sustainability:

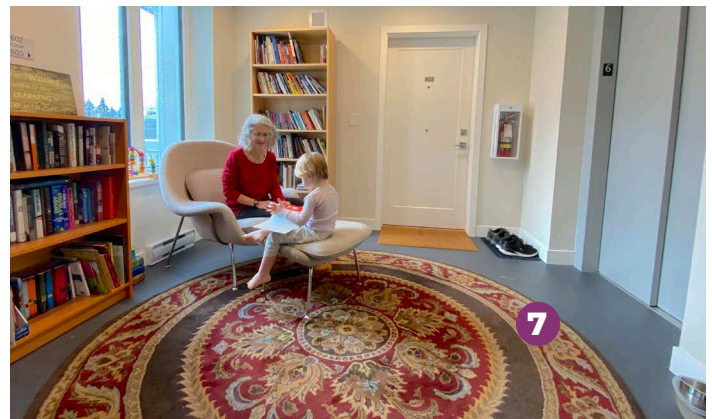
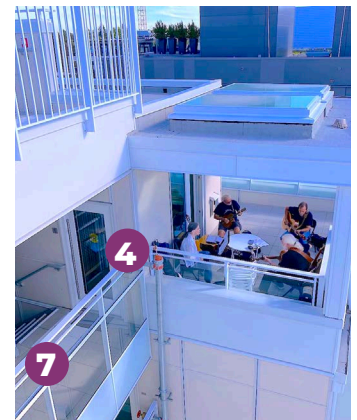
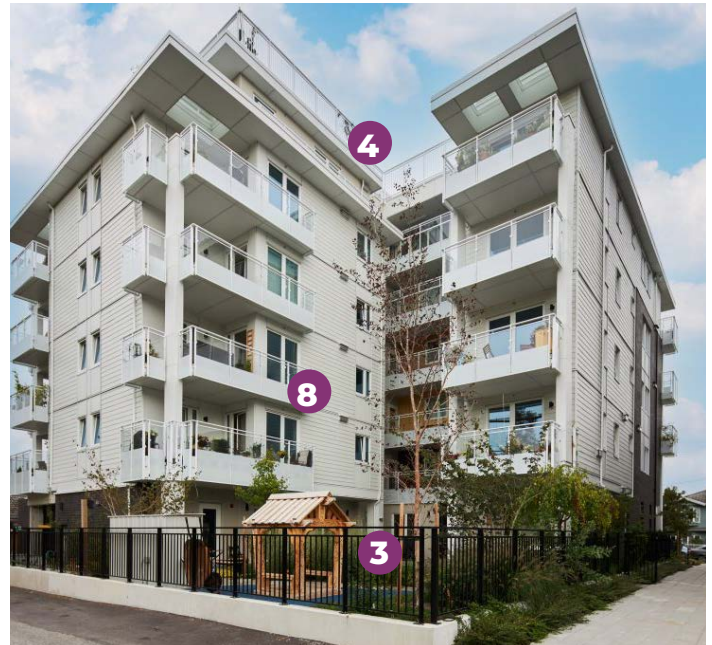
- Passive House design
- Heat recovery ventilators (HRVs) in each home and amenity space minimize heat loss while circulating fresh air
- Resident-organized sharing schemes help reduce consumption



Semi-private, ground-level patio next to the street out front at Little Mountain Cohousing.
Image: Cornerstone Architecture

Social design features

1. **Social lobby** with comfy seating and bulletin board connects between the common house, courtyard, and circulation spaces
2. **Common house** includes a kitchen and dining area connected to a "rumpus room" for kids, designed to evolve as children grow
3. **Courtyard** with outdoor play area
4. **Rooftop** with seating and community garden, connected to an additional patio and flex room on the floor below that hosts sleepovers, work sessions, and yoga
5. **Laundry room**, complete with exercise equipment and space for workouts
6. **Below-ground parkade** with a workshop and music room, including a TV that younger residents use to play video games
7. **Social circulation** with nooks at each elevator, and outdoor stairways connecting between social spaces on all levels
8. **Active building edges**, including balconies that face one another at the back of the building, and patios for ground-floor homes



Cohousing communities report strong social and financial benefits

Cohousing communities build connections between neighbours through organized social activities, shared management of the building, and extensive common spaces. Familiar, trusting neighbours can provide mutual support to one another, leading to stronger social ties and financial savings.

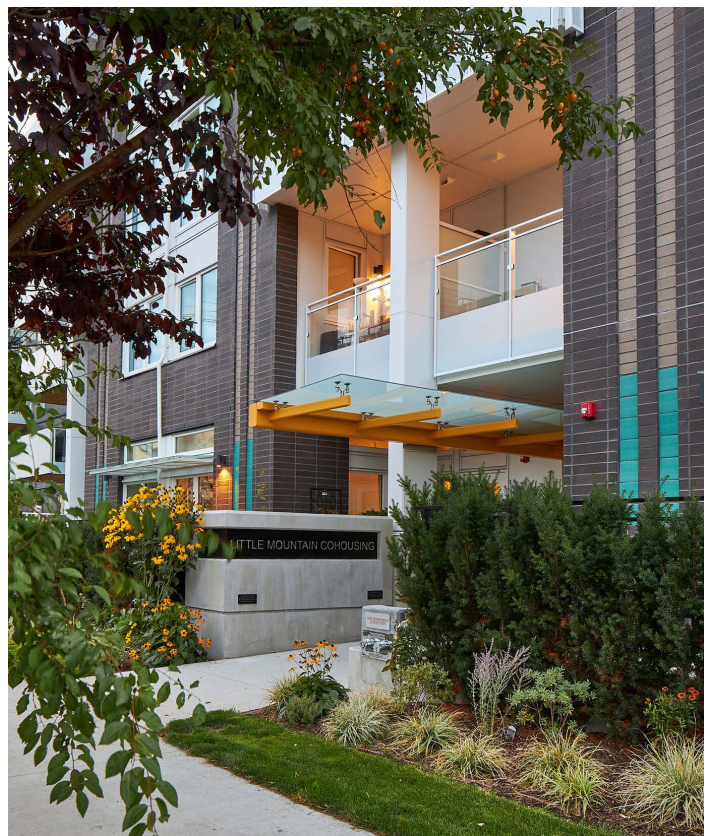
Financial benefits

Cohousing residents report many cost savings on everyday expenses, such as through weekly shared meals, combined shopping trips, and the ability to share and borrow household items and appliances—and even cars. At Little Mountain Cohousing, residents organize a before- and after-school care group. Many older residents in the building volunteer to walk children home from school and stay with them until their parent or guardian is home. Some residents also hire teenagers to help with child care. The group planned to implement a car-sharing scheme, but was unable to formalize it due to insurance costs. However, residents can informally share vehicles.

“We enjoy our own small apartments, but we also dine together two or three times a week. Volunteers provide after-school care for other people’s children, saving families hundreds of dollars a month. Sick, sad or stressed neighbours have friendly faces to turn to, right outside their doors. In short, we are developing a culture of kindness and belonging.”

- Charles Montgomery, Little Mountain Resident

Source: [Vancouver Sun](#)

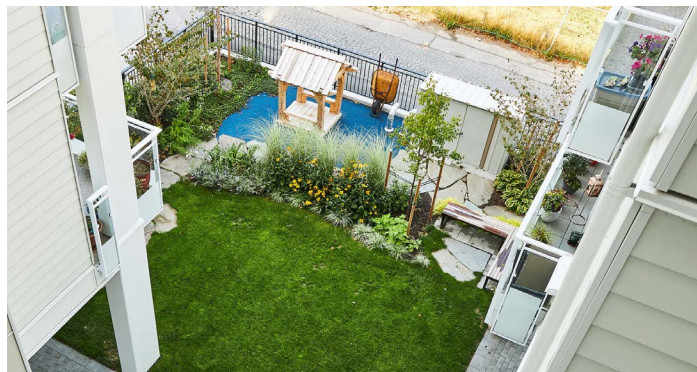


Little Mountain Cohousing entrance.
Image: Cornerstone Architecture

Social benefits

Cohousing offers a built-in support system, boosting social connection and resilience for all residents, with particular benefits for people such as older adults, families, and those who live alone.

At Little Mountain, amenity spaces did not significantly increase the building's overall cost. The City of Vancouver allows amenity spaces—such as the rumpus room and common house at Little Mountain—to be excluded from overall floor area calculations, ensuring that these spaces do not take away from the number of homes a building can provide. This helps to distribute the cost of social spaces over a greater number of homes, reducing the cost per household.



Shared courtyard
Image credit: Cornerstone Architecture

Relevant policy tool: Reduced parking minimums

Parking in most multi-unit buildings is [typically under-used](#). New legislation from the Province of B.C. has removed parking requirements for new homes close to transit, with many municipalities removing parking requirements entirely or implementing more flexible policies.

For Little Mountain Cohousing, the City of Vancouver reduced the required number of parking spaces in recognition of residents' plans for a car-sharing scheme. Residents transformed this extra space in the basement into a workshop, music room, and larger bike room designed to accommodate cargo bikes.

Relevant policy tool: Single-stair buildings

In 2024, the Province of B.C. updated the building code to allow [single egress stair buildings](#) up to six storeys. Single-stair designs can save projects money and space, by removing the requirement for a second egress.

Little Mountain Cohousing initially had a single stair egress design but had to add a second exit stairway due to building code requirements at the time. As of 2025, Vancouver has not yet agreed to allow single-stair buildings.

Cohousing project viability is sensitive to delays

Unlike most strata developments, prospective cohousing residents form a group to purchase land and develop a home themselves. This process is expensive and time-consuming, posing challenges for residents who must learn to navigate complex city policy. Small groups do not have the financial power of a typical multi-unit housing developer, and may have limited ability to withstand delays, inflation, or setbacks in the development and approvals process.

As a result, some estimates suggest that only [10 per cent](#) of cohousing groups that form succeed in building a home together.

Lengthy approval processes increase home prices for residents

Little Mountain Cohousing's delays were incredibly costly. Despite the land already being zoned for six storeys, the development permit was delayed by six months. The delays costed [an estimated \\$40,000 per home](#), due to consultant fees, insurance costs, and repeat site visits with trade professionals.

Additionally, the project was charged with the municipal Empty Homes Tax for the homes on the property during the wait for the development permit. Although the group successfully appealed the charge, the process was lengthy.

Little Mountain Cohousing financing

The residents at Little Mountain formed a limited liability corporation to act as a non-profit developer, with all members contributing to the down payment. The group hired a cohousing consultant to support them through the development process. A few wealthier residents were able to contribute more money to the down payment, which helped the group secure financing. Each resident had to contribute a minimum of \$30,000 up front for the down payment.

Currently, many banks do not loan money for resident-led, multi-unit developments due to the complexity of a group of people contributing to a mortgage, making it more difficult to secure financing. Little Mountain received a mortgage and construction loan from Vancity.

Relevant policy tool: Encourage community-oriented developments

Cohousing provides social benefits for residents, but is rare in North American cities and incredibly difficult to build, particularly with high land costs in a city like Vancouver. Cities can consider policies to enable more community-oriented housing. Possible tools include streamlining or expediting approval processes for community-oriented projects, and offering fee waivers to improve affordability. For example, the City of North Vancouver reduced development charges for [Driftwood Village Cohousing](#) in exchange for below-market units. These policy tools need to be considered and balanced with incentives for affordable, non-market, and market rental housing.

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To learn more about this work, please visit: happycities.com/building-social-connections-toolkit



[Happy Cities](#) is an urban planning, design, and research firm that uses an evidence-based approach to create happier, healthier, more inclusive communities. Our firm has spent over a decade collecting evidence on the links between wellbeing and the built environment. Our Happy Homes research shows how intentional design can reduce social isolation and boost community resilience in multi-unit buildings, culminating in a toolkit to help housing providers turn wellbeing evidence into action. Through our housing practice, we advise municipalities, developers, and housing providers on strategies to support resident wellbeing throughout all development stages.



[SFU Renewable Cities](#) (RC) uses dialogue and systems thinking to convene groups and build capacity to co-create practical solutions that address interconnected challenges. RC works to catalyze the transition to equitable, livable and resilient communities. RC is a special initiative of the [SFU Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue](#).



[Hey Neighbour Collective](#) (HNC) brings together landlords and housing operators, non-profits, researchers, local and regional governments, housing associations and health authorities. Together with residents of multi-unit housing, these HNC partners take action to alleviate loneliness and social isolation through building social connectedness, resilience, and capacity for neighbourly support and mutual aid. HNC is housed at the SFU Morris J Wosk Centre for Dialogue. Key academic research partners include SFU Urban Studies, Gerontology, and Health Sciences.

Móytel Lalém

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All public hearing and engagement information for the project can be found on the City of New Westminster's [engagement site](#).

Project partners

Developers

- Aboriginal Land Trust (ALT)
- Lu'ma Development Management (LDM)

Operators

- Lu'ma Native Housing Society
- Swahili Vision International Association

Supporting partners

- Terra Social Purpose Real Estate
- Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA)

Funders

- City of New Westminster: Grant of \$631,000 for the offsite servicing and infrastructure costs out of the Electrical Utility, Engineering Capital Plan and Affordable Housing Reserve funds
- BC Housing: Capital grant, construction financing, long-term mortgage, and ongoing monthly subsidy to offset the very low rents that BC Housing's Community Housing Fund provides
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC): Support with costs of the building design, rezoning, and Development Permit application. ALT also applied to CMHC for a significant capital grant to help fund the project.

Vienna House

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Project partners

Developers

- BC Housing
- More Than a Roof Housing Society

Operators

- More Than a Roof Housing Society

Supporting partners

- City of Vancouver

Funders

- BC Housing
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation National Housing Strategy Demonstrations Initiative
- Natural Resources Canada
- Forestry Innovation Investment
- Wood WORKS! British Columbia
- BC Mass Timber Demonstration Program

Little Mountain Cohousing

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Timeline

