

# An Architecture of Belonging Housing for New Canadians

by

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## **Author's Declaration**

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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## Abstract

For hundreds of years immigrants have been coming to Canada to start life afresh in hopes of a better future. Many choose Canada because they consider this country a peaceful, tolerant and welcoming place where people and institutions are open and supportive towards cultural diversity. This perception has led many newcomers to believe that with hard work and perseverance, they can in time achieve a fulfilling life. However, the reality of everyday life for many immigrants and their families has shown that significant challenges threaten the attainment of these goals.

Research into the life of immigrants makes clear that not every newcomer is able to gain full inclusion in Canadian society. As well, not everyone arrives on equal footing. Many families arrive with few resources. These new Canadians need help not only to gain access to key necessities (i.e. housing, income, education and employment) but also to understand the countless and often perplexing new cultural experiences that await them. This group of newcomers become particularly vulnerable to falling into a downward spiral of poverty that can be difficult to escape.

Considering the fact that finding a safe and satisfying home is a critical step in smooth transitioning, it becomes important to ask how the work of architects contributes to the well-being of immigrants attempting to settle and integrate into their newly chosen home.

The thesis studies the potential of making settlement easier by proposing an architecture of belonging. The goal is to create a welcoming place for newcomers that supports both a robust communal life and responds to everyday needs. The positive momentum of inclusive community building further fosters a strong neighbourly bond among residents of all cultures and beliefs, which in turn strengthens the Canadian visions of multiculturalism. The thesis explores the design of a housing prototype that brings a neighbourhood house and housing development on the site of St. Christopher House in Toronto.

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Fig 0.1 The Secret Garden by Francis Hodgson Burnett

This is a classic novel about spoiled and selfish Mary Lennox, who was sent from India to live with her uncle in England when her parents died. The girl hated this new home, but her feelings changed when she finds her way into a locked forgotten garden. In Mary's adventure to bring the garden back to life, she befriends talented Dickon and meets her sickly cousin Collin. Their friendship along with the garden's "magic", as the children called it, rejuvenated the body and spirit of Mary and Collin. After spending every summer day here, the two grew to become strong, healthy children.<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

### Finding a Home: My Own Immigration Story

The true beginning of this thesis goes back to my own memories of arriving to Canada. As an immigrant child, I know how difficult it is to adapt to and fit into a new culture. I was seven years old when I first set foot on Canadian soil. My memories of those early days are vague, but I can remember feeling both curious and anxious about what my new life here would be like. "Will I have friends to play with? Will I be able to see my relatives from home? What are these strange-looking Canadians saying? Can I still eat my favourite foods?" All the things I cherished and enjoyed had been taken away. Looking back as an adult, some of my concerns may seem petty, but my uncertainty and apprehension are feelings that are shared by many immigrants. If a young child like myself, with simple needs, found it so hard to adjust to my new life, imagine the challenges facing families who also have to worry about putting food on the table and keeping a roof over their heads.

As I was looking for a thesis topic, I was captured by the beautiful imageries in Frances Hodgson Burnett's *The Secret Garden*, which inspired me to seek a good landing place for those starting life afresh in Canada. This classic novel is about Mary's adventures inside the hidden garden, and her journey to rediscover meaning and fulfillment in her sad, lonely life. The secret garden is a safe, comfortable and delightful retreat. Its "magic" rejuvenated Mary's body and spirit to make her strong and healthy. I wondered if our home is like

a little secret garden; a special place where we feel a deep sense of belonging and are spiritually uplifted. Belonging is the theme of this children's story. Just as Mary had to find a feeling of belonging in a new land, immigrants work hard to establish roots in Canada. The story inspired me to research the role of architecture in fostering a settlement-friendly setting.

What I want to achieve in this exploration is an architecture of belonging. The concept commits to giving immigrants the best opportunities, freedom and choices to grow the family, and live a fruitful life. My research seeks to help new Canadians find a home, a place where they feel a true sense of belonging here in Canada.



## Idea of multiculturalism

### 1.1 The Vision

Canada's diverse mosaic creates a unique Canadian identity. Our people represent an ethnic, cultural and linguistic mix from more than 200 countries of origin.<sup>1</sup> Results from Census 2006 have revealed that visible minorities have surpassed 5 million Canadian residents – 16% of the total population.<sup>2</sup> Canada's reputation as a peaceful country that values diversity continues to attract thousands of newcomers each year. Within the five-year span from 2001 to 2006, it was estimated that over 1.1 million immigrants came to Canada.<sup>3</sup>

Starting from the time of the early French and British settlements and continuing through the subsequent waves of European and Asian migrations, immigrants have always played an integral part in shaping Canada into the multicultural nation it has become. Along with personal belongings, immigrants have brought with them their unique memories and beliefs, as well as the cultural and lifestyle norms of their country of origin. These contributions have over the years transformed the Canadian culture into one that celebrates our differences through food, performances, music and the arts. The *Caribana*, *Chinese New Year Celebration*, and *Tastes of Thailand* are a few of the many cultural events that take place in Toronto, for example. Although only a handful of Canadians

Fig. 1.1 Canada Day

have first-hand experience of the immigration process, most of us can trace roots back to an immigrant past. It does not matter if the person is a first-generation Vietnamese immigrant or a fifth-generation French-Canadian, it is an intriguing experience to be reminded of one's cultural roots, or learn about those of others, while strolling around the pockets of ethnic enclaves or taking part in festive activities.

History has shown that our diversity is the fundamental building block of Canada, and this is best reflected in Canada's official Multiculturalism Act (appendix A). Canadian multiculturalism is based on a belief in equality for all citizens, regardless of ethnic, racial, religious or linguistic origins. The appreciation of diversity gives citizens the freedom to retain their identities without penalties to their status or participation in our society. This open attitude enables new Canadians to feel more secure and motivates them to take active participation in cultural, economic, political and social affairs. The Canadian government takes pride in promoting multiculturalism as a positive source of inspiration.

*"Canadians value diversity for enriching cultural expression and making daily life more varied and interesting... diversity in the workplace promotes innovation, stimulates teamwork and creativity and helps expand markets for goods and services. As the diversity of population expands, new links are forged with the world at a time when Canadians recognize the increasing importance of having a credible voice in international affairs and in strengthening our advantage in the global economy."*  
< A Statement by the Canadian Heritage Department

Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor also emphasizes the importance of equal recognition in a healthy, democratic society. Taylor writes in his work *Multiculturalism: Politics of Recognition* that a person's identity is in part shaped by "dialogical relationships with others."<sup>5</sup> The lack of recognition or a distorted recognition from society can inflict harm to a group; it forces people into a false



Fig. 1.2 Toronto's cultural diversity

mould and a reduced form of being.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, as the work of Taylor further explains, the building of a democratic Canadian society “requires a politics that leaves room for us to deliberate publicly about those aspects of our identities that we share, or potentially share, with other citizens. A society that recognizes individual identity will be a deliberative, democratic society because individual identity is partly constituted by collective dialogues.”<sup>7</sup>

## 1.2 Realities of the Immigration Experience: How Truly Welcome Are Immigrants in Canada?

*“Canada claims to be a country of many opportunities, but the little I have seen so far seems to contradict this. It is like putting a bird in a cage to decorate your home and it cannot escape.”<sup>8</sup>*

From visions and policies to our cultural values, the principles of multiculturalism encourage cross-cultural harmony. Although they take a positive direction in working with the nation’s diversity, the principles are not without weaknesses. Charles Taylor writes that multiculturalism involves two modes of politics based on equal respect – the politics of equal dignity, and the politics of difference. The first is the principle of equality that treats everyone in a difference-blind manner; and the second is a public recognition of individual identity that fosters particularity.<sup>9</sup> The challenge is finding the midway between “the inauthentic and homogenizing demand for recognition of equal worth, on the one hand, and the self-immurement within ethnocentric standards, on the other.”<sup>10</sup> However, the problem is that there is no neutral set of standards. Collective negotiations with the best intents towards public good are influenced by the views and interests of the majority group. The same problem persists if mainstream society is ignorant or insensitive towards the demands of minorities. In other words, within an established set of multicultural policies, there is an implied openness to how multiculturalism is applied and interpreted in everyday practices.

In the job market, for instance, there are rules to ensure fair opportunities, but the real matter is who best matches the “selection criteria” to get the job. If the possibilities of multiculturalism lie in the attitude and acceptance of people, then a more relevant question to ask is, beyond political correctness, how open is Canadian society towards the “strangers” who are changing the neighbourhoods they join?

The optimistic picture of Canada as a friendly, inclusive country has led many families to embark on this life-changing journey of immigration. Particularly among professional immigrants, there is an expectation that combining hard work with their education and skills will enable them to soon secure material well-being and a quality of life similar to that of their local-born counterparts. However, this is not always the reality they encounter. Persistent research patterns show immigrants lagging behind Canadian-born individuals in multiple aspects of living, which will be discussed in more detail. Furthermore, people may act friendly and polite toward the newcomers, but not necessarily accept them into their community (a.k.a. courteous racism)<sup>11</sup>. Whether the rejection is out of deliberate discrimination or simple misunderstanding, this subtle form of differential treatment is a repeating theme in immigrants’ settlement experience. As we dig deeper to investigate and compare the socioeconomic standing of newcomers and Canadian-born citizens through a cross section of statistics, stories and researches, it raises the questions: Is equal and full participation in the Canadian society possible for immigrants? In reality, is our uniqueness an inspiration for social cohesion or a division line for exclusion?



### 1.2.1 Better Education but Poor Economic Outcome

*“When I first came to Canada [Toronto], I was very hopeful that with my experience and qualification, I would get a job soon, but boy how disappointing it was! It took me almost one year before I could get something that one could call a real job. I had to take it because I did not have any choice and I did not want to go on welfare or depend on others for support.”<sup>12</sup>*

Although new immigrants arriving in Canada are now better educated and more skilled than earlier generations, they have more difficulty converging economically compared to their previous cohorts. A simple comparison of earnings between recent immigrants versus Canadian-born men over a 25-year span reflects this widening gap (Fig. 1.3).<sup>13</sup> Education attainment has little influence in improving the situation.

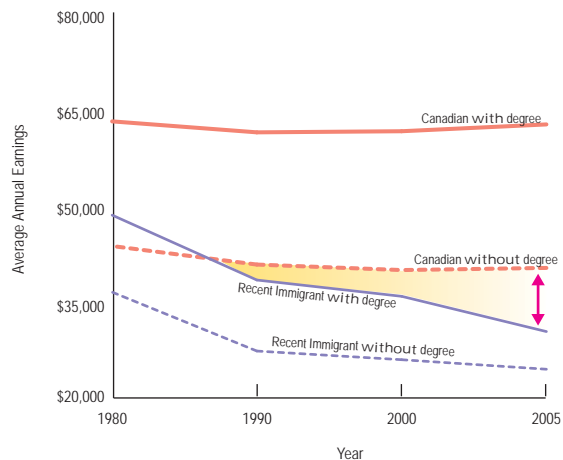


Fig. 1.3 Comparison of Average Earnings between Recent Immigrant vs. Canadian-born Men (1980-2005)

The lack of recognition of their skills and the lack of work experience in Canada (a common job requirement referred to as “Canadian experience”), are two repeating and significant factors in the low economic standing of newcomers. Findings from Statistics Canada’s *Immigrant’s Perspectives on their First Four Years in Canada surveys* indicate that half of job-seeking respondents mentioned the lack of Canadian job experiences as an obstacle; and one-third noted that their foreign experience and qualifications were not accepted.<sup>14</sup> If all employers are asking for Canadian experience, yet no one is willing to give immigrants a chance to gain this, it means that they are systematically turned away from the job market. Pressure to sustain basic living forces many over-qualified newcomers to accept lower-paid, less desirable jobs. It is difficult to break the downhill cycle once they have fall into this state. Barely able to make ends meet, there is too much at stake – such as the risk of losing their food money and a roof over their heads – to quit these jobs in order to pursue slim hopes of a better career opportunity to come along. All in all, depreciating wealth and employment barriers are depleting the material well-being of new Canadians.

## 1.2.2 Limited Resources and Depreciating Quality of Life

Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) has established the basic standards of “adequacy, suitability and affordability” to reflect the societal norm of acceptable housing conditions across Canada. Any household failing one of these three standards is referred to as having a “core housing need.” Within the immigrant population, core housing needs are common. They are more likely than Canadian-born households to live in conditions below minimum expectations.<sup>15</sup>

*“Adequate dwellings are those reported by their residents as not requiring any major repairs. Suitable dwellings have enough bedrooms for the size and make-up of resident households, according to National Occupancy Standard (NOS) requirements. Affordable dwellings cost less than 30% of before-tax household income.”<sup>16</sup>*

*> Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation*

Housing is usually a household’s biggest expense, thus the availability of resources for basic needs is closely linked to a family’s housing status. Although housing affordability is a predominant cause of core housing needs for all household types, the situation of recent immigrants is significantly worse than that of others.<sup>17</sup> This pattern is a reflection of the group’s relatively high portion of income spent on shelter (shelter-to-income ratio - STIR). Recent immigrants on average reported 20% *less* household income than non-immigrants (\$48,774

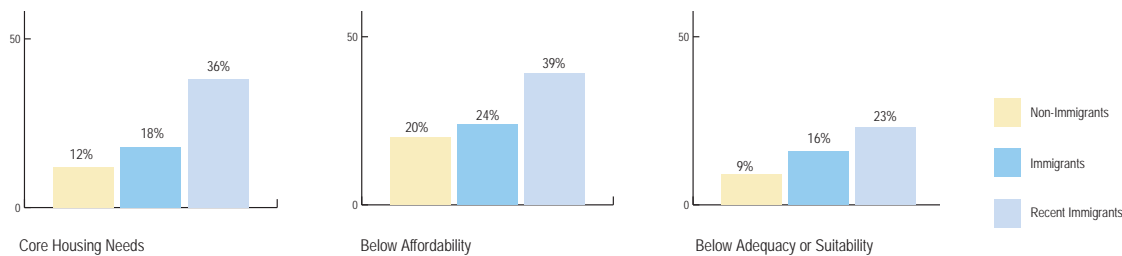


Fig. 1.4 Comparison by CMHC shows that Immigrants consistently fall behind in basic housing standards.

and \$60,174 respectively), but their average shelter cost was 20% *higher* (\$904 and \$738).<sup>18</sup> This greater share of income absorbed by shelter translates to fewer resources left for other necessities that enhance the quality of life, such as nutritious meals and educational training. In addition, financial constraints also limit housing and neighbourhood choices. To feed the family and pay the rent, some of these households are forced to live in less desirable environments, which in part explain the higher level of inadequacy and unsuitability in their housing conditions (Fig.1.4). Evidences show a correlation between housing and material well-being in relation to health. Poor living conditions increase a person's vulnerability to infectious and chronic diseases, injuries, unhealthy childhood development and malnutrition.<sup>19</sup> Related stressors further deteriorate social and mental health. Overcrowding, for example, can cause emotional problems, development delays, bed-wetting and poorer education attainment.<sup>20</sup>

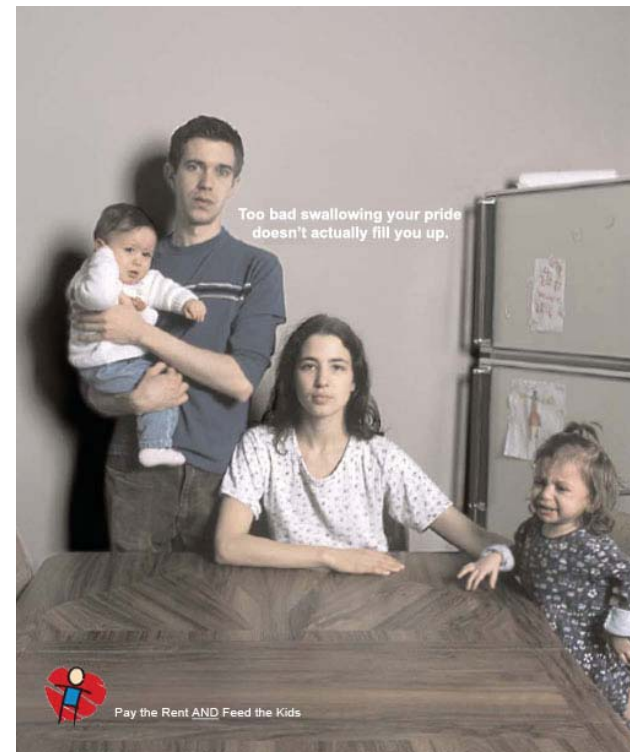


Fig. 1.5 Pay the Rent or Feed the Family?

### 1.2.3 Discrimination and Social Exclusion

*“We call them [landlords]... they have apartments, but when we arrive there it’s a different story, being Black you are discriminated.”<sup>21</sup>*

Initial setback in socioeconomic standing, also referred to as “entry effect,” is an expected phase of resettlement, but over time the situation tends to improve. When immigrants were asked about their perception of material well-being and quality of life at four years in comparison to two years after arrival, 56% (for material) and 44% (for quality of life) answered “better.”<sup>22</sup> Thus, the more relevant question is how long it will take for immigrants to catch up to these conditions, and whether full and equal inclusion is ever possible.

Settlement and integration are two-sided processes. Although the willingness and involvement of the individual immigrant is pivotal to his or her success, the tone of reception set by the host community is also definitive to the conditions for inclusion or exclusion.<sup>23</sup> Unwelcoming attitudes, including discrimination and biased treatments, create obstacles and negative experiences to prevent newcomers from coping harmoniously with the dominant culture. Heightening tensions and resentments lead to discrimination on both sides. Minority groups are not the only victims of hate crimes and violence; community peace is also disrupted.<sup>24</sup>

Discriminatory setbacks related to class, language, and the understanding of dominant institutions and culture are additional hurdles faced by immigrants.<sup>25</sup> Unlike overt racial discrimination, which is illegal and easily identifiable, ill-intended employers and landlords take advantage of these secondary factors to subtly but systematically exclude certain groups. By knowingly establishing criteria that most people of that selected population cannot meet, unwanted individuals are excluded by default. This includes demeaning attitudes and refusal of cooperation, as commented by a Somalian immigrant: “Landlords discriminate in different ways against Somalis on welfare. They do not want to fill

out forms for Somalis on welfare. Quite often problems erupt between landlords and tenants.”<sup>26</sup>

Adverse impacts of differential treatment are reduced with the assistance of social service providers. However, newcomers’ chances of smooth transitioning are most vulnerable in the initial days; any form of exclusion can be instrumental in ruining their abilities of ever building economic security and permanency.

#### 1.2.4 The Struggle to Fit in, Mentally and Emotionally

*“You have to be coping with things on your own, which makes it a lot harder because you have to readjust... the culture and rules and everything that apply to your society doesn’t apply here ... raising children for instance is a big, big problem because the way one come in and discipline is not necessary right for another community... what is acceptable behaviour for one particular ethnic group is not for another ...”<sup>27</sup>*

Fig. 1.6 Photo journal by new immigrant, Chris Young. “I want to give a voice to immigrants in Canada”



Most people acknowledge and expect settlement obstacles, but coping with associated mental burdens is quite different. Feelings of insecurity, anxiety and self-doubt silence people from asking questions and getting help. Furthermore, given that many immigrants come to Canada with high expectations, shattered hope is hard to overcome. In one case, a young engineering couple with several degrees, languages and work experiences threatened to sue the federal government to recover some of the \$20,000 spent on finding a decent job, a credit rating and health care. According to the Toronto Star, they felt misled by the immigration system, which actively recruits highly skilled, educated professionals but fails to inform them about the difficulties of integrating into the workforce.<sup>28</sup> Formal social services for practical necessities are essential, but the couple’s anger and frustrations hints that emotional support for this rough time is equally necessary.

Relating to unfamiliar and sometimes contrasting social norms is also difficult; misunderstandings and unintentional rude behaviours damage people relationships. For example, eye contact in some cultures shows respect, but in others, it is a challenge to authority.<sup>29</sup> Since these values are often assumed to be understood and so are not explicitly explained, the learning of cultural differences and socially accepted behaviours occurs through trial and error.<sup>30</sup> As for parents, teaching and raising children in the midst of two different sets of values is a strenuous task.

### 1.3 Bridging the Gaps in the Immigration Experience

Canada paints itself as an open, “immigrant-friendly” country, but the controversial socioeconomic gap between recent immigrants and their native-born counterparts suggests otherwise. There is an obvious detachment between Canadians’ perception of what our cross-cultural society should be like, and the reality as experienced in new Canadians’ day-to-day lives (Fig.1.7). That is not to say all newcomers suffer from dysfunctional transitioning. There are many happy Canadians whose lives improved after immigrating, and who do not require settlement help at all. The concern is the polarization between disadvantaged immigrants falling through the cracks in the system into poverty and others who make their way to fulfill the immigration dream.

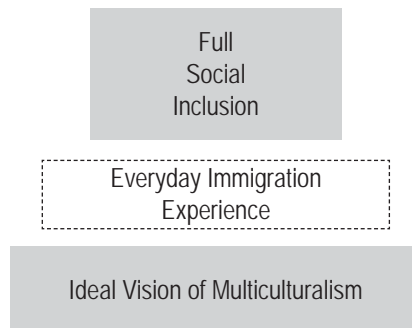


Fig. 1.7 Gap in the everyday immigration experience to reach full societal inclusion

So, who needs help most? Newcomer families identified most at risk are based on the research analysis titled *Asset-based Approaches to Settlement Service in Canada*. It is a review on the potential of asset-building programs to assist immigrants with their settlement and integration needs. Family-sponsored immigrants and skilled workers with low income and low assets, and also refugees, are most vulnerable to problems in the settlement process. Low skills and assets lengthen the time required to secure the key necessities for self-sufficiency. If homeland savings are drained, the family falls into a poverty trap. Similarly, social assistance programs for refugees may end whether or not they have achieved independence.<sup>31</sup> Ability to secure basic needs is the underlying factor for long-term settlement and integration success.

The difference in starting point is roughly categorized by the variance in admission criteria for each immigration category: skilled workers and professionals, business class, family class sponsorship, Canadian Experience Class, and provincial nominees (see appendix A for details). Business class and skilled worker immigrants are screened based on a points system that consists of six factors: education, abilities in English and/or French, work experience, age, any arranged Canadian employment, and adaptability.<sup>32</sup> Proof of sufficient funding for family support is also required. Canadian Experience class and provincial nominees are chosen for their skills and experiences. By virtue of the selection criteria, these categories of immigrants are in a better position than others to succeed.

Financial wealth, personal skills and assets are significant capitals to a smooth transition because they are versatile and transferable into other forms of material and social assets. Strong buying power means more choices and greater flexibility to achieve a good quality of life. To some extent, social status and networking are also closely tied to class and wealth.<sup>33</sup>

Summing up, rebuilding a life in Canada involves multiple levels of material and quality of life factors. Maslow's hierarchy of needs serves as an

established base for understanding the evolving needs of newcomers (Fig.1.8). Individuals must first secure the means to basic physiological, safety and social needs before reaching a higher level of esteem and self-potential development.<sup>34</sup> A smooth transition depends on the ability to move up this pyramid in day-to-day living. The focus of this thesis is to reach out to families with little or no resources to overcome barriers and attain these steps on their own; it acknowledges the fact that not all immigrants need equal intensity and type of assistance. An architecture of belonging proposes an inclusive-community culture to give less advantaged members the same choices and opportunities as others to achieve good quality living. The overall intent of the exploration is to bridge the detachment between the vision and the reality of multiculturalism.

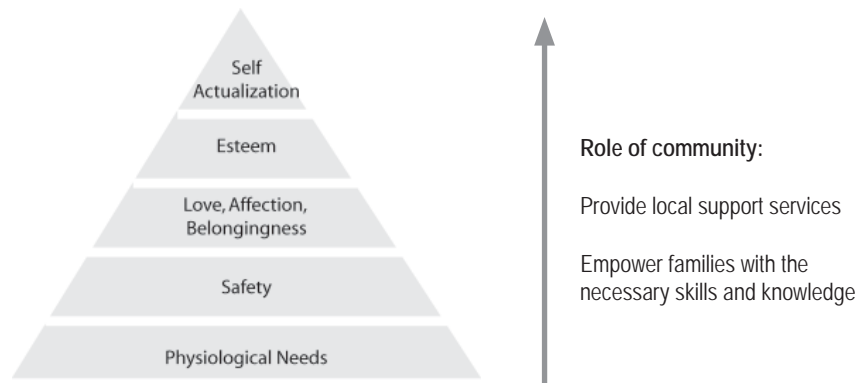


Fig. 1.8 Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and the role of an inclusive community





## 2 Home, a place to belong

### 2.1 Housing and the Community as a Support System for Settlement and Integration

The acceptance of any individual into a society is based on the ability to fulfill the basic needs of living. Any barriers in securing employment, income, housing and education prolong and jeopardize the chances for life improvements. Whether exclusion is caused by discrimination, or the newcomers' own lack of understanding of the Canadian system, extensive research findings indicate unequal access to basic needs among selected groups. There are policies to regulate the access to these necessities, but they do not ensure equality in practice. As David Hulchanski, a professor and researcher specializing in housing, neighbourhood and community planning issues, explains,

“The question is not simply whether the rules of access to the necessities – jobs, housing, and education – are fair and equal. It is whether the day-to-day practices about who gets access to what kind of job, housing and education are fair and equal.”<sup>1</sup>

Establishing fair and equal rules is not enough to ensure social inclusions.

Fig 2.1 “my home”

Along with policy work, teaching newcomers the skills and knowledge to secure key necessities on their own in everyday matters is the key to a healthy long term settlement.

Amongst the four key necessities – housing, education, employment and income – access to housing is particularly important for transitioning. The search for a local community and housing to settle the family is the first task most immigrants tackle upon arrival. The sooner a family finds a comfortable home base to rebuild their life, the quicker they can proceed to the subsequent tasks of seeking education and training opportunities to help them find a job and income.<sup>2</sup> Delays in this process puts immigrants at a greater risk of burning out their initial savings, and falling into a poverty-generating cycle.

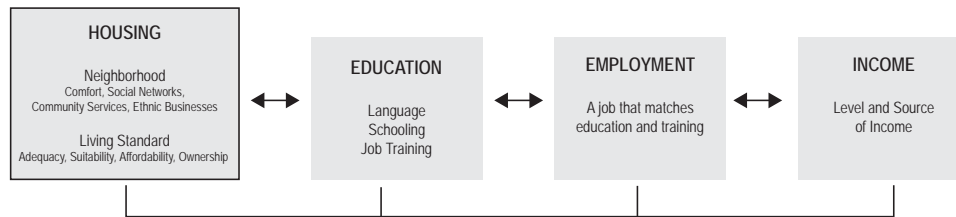


Fig. 2.2 Accessing key necessities for successful settlement and integration

Considering the domino effect of housing conditions on a family’s living standards, the role and the types of support available in the community should provide more than the basic need for shelter. First impressions and lessons about this foreign land come predominantly through the neighbourhood. The relationship between the host communities and the newcomers is significant in defining favourable or difficult everyday conditions for settlement and integration.<sup>3</sup> For example, a residential membership (in the form of a fixed address) gives new members the right to access local institutions and resources for help. Hospitable neighbours who are open to other cultural groups moving in also help immigrants build a sense of permanency in Canada.

## 2.2 Home is More than a Roof

*“Having no place to live means being exiled from all that is associated with having a home, a neighbourhood, and a set of established community networks. It means being exiled from the mainstream patterns of day-to-day life. Without a physical place to call “home” in the social, psychological and emotional sense, the hour-to-hour struggle for physical survival replaces all other possible activities.”<sup>4</sup>*

*< David Hulchanski and Michael Shapcott, Housing for all Canadians*

The issue of housing is usually addressed and managed under the subcontext of physical and financial health. Adequate living conditions are essential and necessary, but housing new Canadians is more than a pragmatic need. In the experience of immigrants, emotional insecurities are closely tied to their living arrangements and lifestyles. This is one reason why some immigrants choose to segregate into ethnic enclaves, for example, “Somalis move to Dixie Road, come to this area because of language problems and to be among other Somalis, they feel more comfortable, to avoid discrimination.”<sup>5</sup>

When housing is treated only as a basic necessity for survival, it functions adequately as shelter, but fails to consider the life of inhabitants. It is possible for a family of ten people to survive inside a two-bedroom apartment; it keeps occupants warm and safe. Nevertheless, the lack of privacy and the feelings of insecurity undermine its integrity as a healthy, liveable place. This thought leads to the next question: What is a “home,” and what is its role in a family’s transition?

A home is a central hub for living because it is one of the places most closely related to everyday life experiences. Who we meet and what we do leisurely, where we shop, and how we travel to work evolves around our home; it affects living habits and organizes daily routines. The different contexts of “home” also structure people and societal relationships: people are recognized as individuals of a household, members of a community, and citizens of Canada.



Fig. 2.3 Home is a central hub for everyday living

Securing a home and its associated network represents a person's place and existence in society.

In the minds of immigrants, having a place to raise the family is also essential to their sense of belonging in Canada. This feeling of connection is developed through time, in the way people congregate and interact with their surroundings, including space, objects and people. From an environmental psychology perspective, this is a dynamic called state-dependent learning: a person remembers best if he or she is in the same conditions when the material or experience was first presented. Certain environmental cues, like a photograph, a view, or a colour evoke associated emotional memories to induce an innately meaningful experience.<sup>6</sup> Paralleling this concept, a good home design is a liveable place that has the capacity to be personalized and to reflect the lives of people living there. Being in the home feels right, and in some way enriches the occupant's life. As Winifred Gallagher, an author with an interest in environmental psychology, writes in her book *House Thinking*, "No matter how it is described or whether it leans towards farmhouse rusticity or international-style urbanity, such a home is a haven of relaxation and fascination – a womb with a view – that positively affects and reflects you and your daily life."<sup>7</sup>

*"I've gone from one home to another embracing them as 'family.' It's my nature to turn strangers into family... it continues to help me cultivate a sense of belonging as I journey through life. I cultivate that sense of belonging, not my relishing my own unique identity, but by becoming more aware of it in various settings and stages of my life."<sup>8</sup> < Nena, immigrant from Belgrade, People in Transition*

The whole process of settlement and integration can be summed up as finding a comfortable fit in a new setting – “a person-to-environment fit,” as Gallagher calls it. Working with this concept, immigrants can have multiple homes that represent a different part of themselves: Canada is a home for their present life, their birth country holds their past memories, and an ancestral homeland reminds them of their cultural origin.

This goes back to underline the multiculturalism belief that all individuals can embrace a dual identity as a full Canadian citizen. Ultimately, no matter what the reason a family has for leaving their homeland, is it not the goal of immigration that they are able to build a “home” in Canada?

### 2.3 Home in Architectural Context: The Work of Designers

*“If one fundamental part of the life, such as food, can affect our well-being, so can shelter. How do you calculate the effects of poorly proportioned homes and ill-conceived, ugly spaces that don’t fulfill your needs? Think of how a set of clothes that’s three sizes too large, in colors you hate and fabric that scratches would make you feel. The home is somehow like the envelope of your clothes. You wrap its skin around you.”<sup>9</sup>*  
< Jeremiah Eck, Architect

Settlement requires a suitable place for new Canadian families to plant new roots and, in time, to rebuild their life economically, socially, and emotionally in this country. From the perspective of architects, designers of “homes,” how can architecture help new Canadians settle in and integrate faster and easier?

Much research and literature has investigated the effect of the built environment on human behaviour and psychology. The book *The Hidden Dimensions* by Edward T. Hall, a well respected anthropologist, is exemplary in describing how spatial relationships affect people-to-people behaviours, cross-cultural interactions, and also architecture and urban developments.<sup>10</sup> Without conscious awareness, people constantly depend on their environment in order to function well and to facilitate a state of mind conducive to carrying out a variety of daily tasks.<sup>11</sup> When we want to rest, we naturally go into a quiet room; but when we wish to socialize, we take a stroll to a location where neighbourly

activities most often take place. Understanding these types of relationships inform space designs that truly match people patterns. Good design alone cannot solve immigration challenges, but careful planning of a spatial environment that works with the process lessens the challenge.

## 2.4 Home for Everyone

*“We weren’t just a bunch of people all living in the same building. We were friends who became extended family, who’d become allies, support for each other and... what made us so great was that we actually were a network of people that needed and supported each other [everyday].”*<sup>12</sup>

A community culture that is inclusive of immigrants’ needs contributes to breaking down the barriers that cause dysfunctional settlement. Architectural planning induces people activities and living patterns that complement this support. For example, a simple building plan is easier for familiarizing with a new environment, and proximity to community facilities is convenient for accessing help. Architecture of belonging creates a supportive environment for guiding newcomers to quickly establish a sense of belonging and an independent footing.

The architectural gesture to put a neighbourhood house and private housing under one roof further reinforces this process. A community-supported housing model values people. The role of architecture, in this case, establishes a place of connections to unite everyone as a family of neighbours, and supports atypical everyday needs with versatile design features and building programs.

An on-site neighbourhood house enhances community life to facilitate the opportunities for bonding and social inclusion in the host society. The residential unit is a family’s private retreat, where occupants have the freedom to carry out their own choice of lifestyle and beliefs. Furthermore, when a family decides to leave the housing complex, they can stay in contact with their former

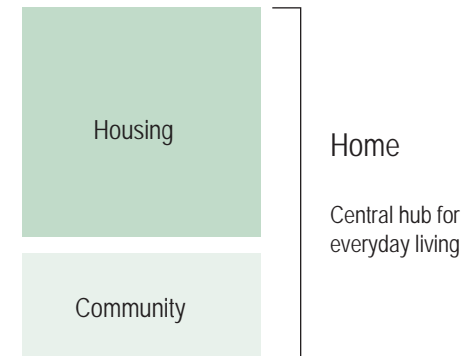


Fig. 2.4 Community-integrated housing model. Tapping into the community network for support.

neighbours through activities and visits to the neighbourhood house. As a whole, this community-integrated housing development is both a home for both residents and a gathering place for other locals. Anyone can be a part of this big family of neighbours.

Inspired by the film, *Where Strangers Become Neighbours*, the goal for a safe and vibrant community goes beyond personal agendas. Extending the scope of housing architecture to become a part of community growth is a win-win situation for all. The positive outcomes of neighbourhood improvements are benefited and enjoyed by everyone.

Fig, 2.5 *Where Strangers become Neighbours* is a documentary film about the Collingwood Neighbourhood House (CNH), Vancouver. It tells the story of how the work of a local institution through community development strategies mended the tensions and conflicts between immigrants and local residents into a culturally inclusive neighbourhood.



## 2.5 Architecture of Belonging

“Belonging” is defined as being connected with a person or thing; and also having possession.<sup>13</sup> In the context of the thesis, this translates to a spectrum of fulfillments: protection of civil rights and assumption of social responsibilities, access to tools for everyday living, inspiration to be a part of Canadian society. When newcomers feel recognized and connected in these aspects, they make the transition from being an “immigrant” to fully becoming – and feeling like – a Canadian.

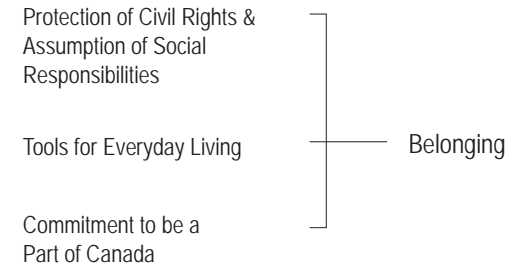


Fig. 2.6 Architecture of Belonging

### 2.5.1 Protection of Civil Rights and Assumption of Social Responsibility

*“Due recognition is not just a courtesy we owe people. It is a vital human need.”<sup>14</sup>*  
*< Charles Taylor, Canadian Philosopher*

Individuals with limited knowledge of and experience with local institutions, culture, and government policies are vulnerable targets for exploitation. A community culture built on neighbourly respect and ownership pride works effectively to discourage inequality and unfair treatments locally. However, this neighbourhood growth attitude do require the interest and participation of residents. A partnership management framework involving the neighbourhood house (on behalf of the neighbourhood’s interests), locals and in-house immigrant residents facilitates this type of collaborative community-making approach. Accessible channels for open communications allow all individuals to voice their concerns. Different groups will have their own opinions, thoughts from all groups should be heard and valued to brainstorm for the best solutions to local issues.



**Ownership and Privacy** | The ability to make small decisions in day-to-day events may appear minor, but is in fact significant to confused newcomers fighting to regain a sense of security and control in the midst of transitioning. Protection of civil rights is highly respected in the workings of this thesis; therefore residents are given choices in matters concerning the whole community, as well as their private home. Tenants are given the right to be aware of and negotiate on building issues through the respective management representatives. Within their own home, this relates to the issue of privacy. Occupants are given the freedom and flexibility to adapt their home for various lifestyles and household activities like quiet relaxation, entertainment and work. Under rental agreements, tenants have rightful ownership and full control of property, as the home belongs to the occupying family during the rental term.

**Respecting and Committing to Community Good** | Newcomers taking part in local matters is one way of gaining social inclusion. Shared building usage between residents and locals implies a common responsibility towards the community that everyone shares. The neighbourhood house is a neutral meeting place for productive discussions and criticism; opposing opinions are worked out in a harmonious manner. This same process is also about finding common grounds. Neighbourhood issues, such as safety and health, concern people of all colours and backgrounds. Furthermore, newcomers participating in community activities are indirectly showing potential and commitment to take on public responsibilities. Their efforts will help to gain them the acceptance of other neighbours.

*“When you come to this country and immerse yourself in ways Canadian, you offer your talents, when you present yourself as a Canadian and not as a Belgian or Dutchmen or whatever, then you put your fellow countrymen at ease at your presence. And then you will be accepted.”<sup>15</sup>*

*<In the words of an immigrant, People in Transition*

## 2.5.2 Access to Tools for Everyday Living

*“What really makes a house a home is how successfully it supports our daily activities, and expresses and nurtures our best thoughts, memories, feelings and patterns of behaviour - our way of life, of which our current residence is one manifestation.”<sup>16</sup>*  
< Winifred Gallagher, *House Thinking*

The community and neighbours are often the centre and limit of newcomers’ social universe in the initial days of immigration. Strengthening community life into an organized system for service and information distribution eases the access of useful tools and knowledge for everyday needs.

**Neighbours Helping Neighbours Meet Everyday Needs** | A strong and well-organized neighbourhood network is an informal social system for assistance that is unachievable via formal channels. Basic but important practical information, like finding a doctor who speaks a specific language, is usually gained by word-of-mouth from friends. A rich pool of human resources drawn from a diverse range of cultures, backgrounds, professions and interests is readily available. As they learn from one another and share information, people who are perceived with only needs have the chance to grow and become assets to society in a dignified manner. The positive outcomes also relieve stress on the welfare system.

**Networking and Building Relationships** | The absence of homeland support suggests that newcomers will often turn to friends and neighbours for help. Meeting new people and networking shortly after arrival is essential. The neighbourhood house’s open doors, along with the many activities happening throughout the day, offer plenty of relationship building opportunities. This busy and central meeting place is also a convenient place for catching up and maintaining established acquaintances.

However, making new friends is not always easy for newcomers, even for the out-going individuals. Values and social etiquette vary from one country to another, and sometimes these differences make them seem rude, or vice versa

from the immigrant's viewpoint. The role of the community is to educate and bridge these differences. Many conflicts from misunderstandings are avoided if socially norms and expectations are clearly and openly communicated. Furthermore, most new Canadians are willing to make the necessary adjustments to fit in, what they need is guidance. One simple example is explaining common issues like waste and recycling disposal and after-hour noise control policy; a welcome manual listing the "house rules" is very useful.

*"What makes me come back to St. Chris? The pleasant atmosphere ... a home away from home for me and for the students that ... have just moved to Canada or the ones that have been here a long time and still feel alienated. As an immigrant myself I can relate to the feelings of 'strangeness' of my students. The aspect lacking in their lives, proficiency in the English language, is something I love teaching them."*<sup>17</sup>

< *Marianne's story, volunteer at St. Christopher House*

### 2.5.3 Commitment to be a Part of Canada

*“But for all my wholehearted commitment to Canada, I haven’t formalized my Canadian citizenship. It’s not that I don’t feel Canadian enough - my heart belongs to this country. This is, and feels like, my home. I think I’m procrastinating because... our citizenship has no bearing on our everyday lives, it keeps being pushed down our list of priorities... We are here to stay. Our land, our livelihood, our children, our whole life - the things we cherish are all there. This is the only place for us.”<sup>18</sup>*  
*<Martina, immigrant from Netherlands*

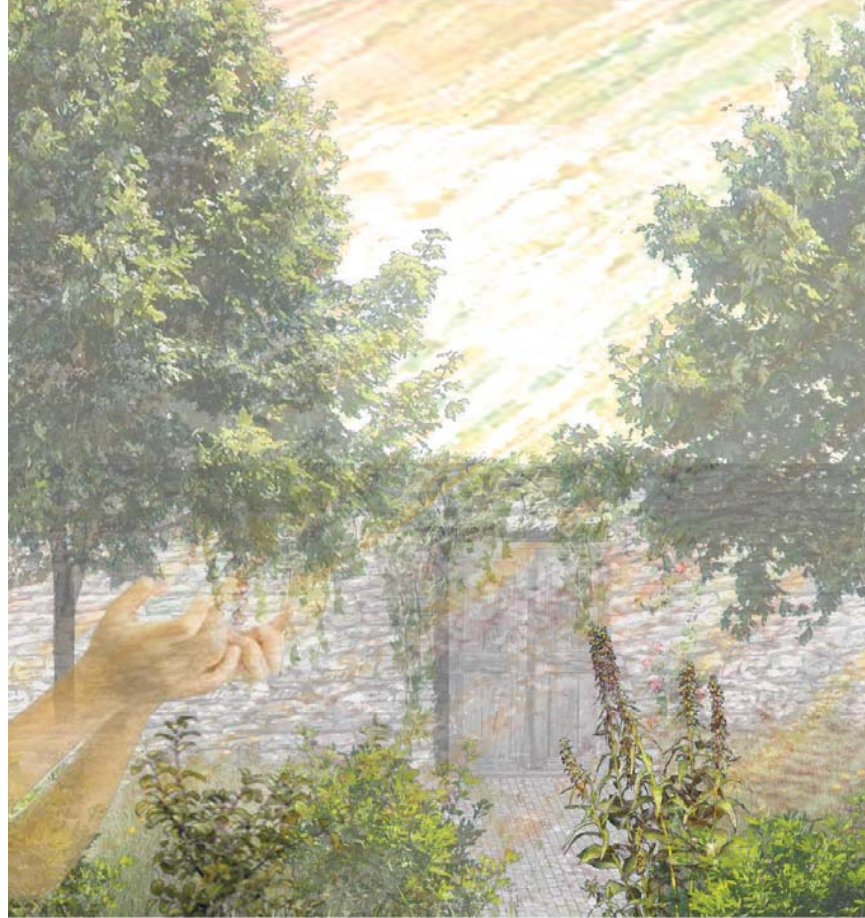
Material well-being is the basis for a secure life, but it’s also important to take into account the social and emotional adjustments that are a part of successful settlement and integration. For instance, a citizenship can be earned with time, but to truly identify and connect with a country as “home” requires a willingness to get involved. So, to be a “Canadian” cannot be measured by actions and tangible achievements alone; it also involves attaining a deeper layer of fulfillment in one’s own sense of identity and connection to life here in Canada.

**Bridging the Past with the Present** | Caught between two worlds, the tug-of-war of contrasting values between a new Canadian identity and cultural beliefs is overwhelming. Past memories are as significant and meaningful as immediate life experiences to define a person’s unique identity. Learning to embrace both aspects will guide newcomers move from past to the present, and further motivate them towards attaining their future life goals.

Personal reflections and growth do not directly solve problems, but it renews confidence and mental readiness to help people better cope with difficulties. The home is a safe refuge for working out these feelings and thoughts. “The home fulfills many needs,” states Clare Cooper-Marcus in *House as a Mirror of Self*; it’s “a place for self-expression, a vessel of memories, a refuge from the outside world, a cocoon where we can feel nurtured and let our guards down.”<sup>19</sup> Retreated from chaos, individuals who are feeling vulnerable

have the privacy and time to let their emotions out and reflect upon what is happening.

**Rediscovering Meaning in Life** | Some newcomers linger in the past, thinking “what if’s,” while others look forward and actively engage in local culture. This is the difference between those who feel like strangers and others who feel at home in this country. Those leading a full life are too occupied to feel homesick. Feelings of belonging arise from a connection towards the people, activities and things people cherish most. When someone finds value in their new setting, they discover a sense of belonging. Community living is where many life-enriching experiences are found. The simplicity of joining recreational activities may end up uncovering talents, passions and lifelong friendships. These are the small pleasures that add interest to life, and make Canada a meaningful new home.





## The architectural exploration

### Rediscovering a Hidden Gem

*Observing the outside of St. Christopher house, the solid brown bricks and cold metal cladding, make the building look lifeless and characterless. Like a fortress, all signs of life are hidden from view. It appears as if people are simply vacuumed into the building, then spat out once again through the entryway after their mission is completed. Most casual pedestrians may walk past the structure feeling indifferent, but the members of this community still love and treasure this place, despite its age and many imperfections.*

*If one can look beyond the thick, uninviting walls, one will soon realize that this place is richly filled with lively activities and interesting people. The beauty of this place is not formed architecturally with bricks and mortar, but with the memories, stories, and enthusiasm of all those who have lived, worked and played here and have shaped St. Christopher House to what it is today.*

*In connecting with the people and learning to appreciate the awkward beauty of this place, it feels as if I have stumbled upon a hidden gem in the city that is waiting to be rediscovered... patiently waiting for its wonderful stories to be told to the world.*

Fig 3.1 (opposite) Inspiration

### 3.1 Building with St. Christopher House

To establish a concrete and realistic context for the thesis, the architectural exploration is completed as a redevelopment design proposal for St. Christopher House (SCH), at 248 Ossington Avenue in Toronto.

The building is currently a neighbourhood house located in West Central Toronto. SCH is a major service provider that offers a variety of programs for socially and economically disadvantaged children, youths, adults and seniors. The organization works with people of all backgrounds to develop healthy personal and community growth. Based on their underlying “hand-up, not hand-down” belief, the purpose of SCH is to motivate and empower less-advantaged groups to gain greater control over their lives and their community.

Many of SCH’s guiding principles and this thesis’ goals work hand in hand to compliment each other. The process of building an inclusive community requires a leader like SCH, whereas the hidden potentials of SCH’s lively character are rediscovered through a voice given by the workings of the thesis. With a common vision of an active community that reaches out to help others, the collaboration is a perfect fit. Furthermore, SCH is involved in a research initiative, funded by Community University Research Alliance (CURA), to study the influences that impact urban changes. The organization’s network of support is invaluable for seeking local insights and background information for the purpose of this theoretical study.

#### 3.1.1 A Diverse and Changing Neighbourhood

Toronto, as Canada’s major immigration settlement gateway, is an appropriate backdrop for the intent to help new Canadians find a home. In fact, 40% of all immigrants who arrived between the years 2001 and 2006 reside in Toronto.<sup>1</sup> Specifically, SCH’s service area has been traditionally a location of



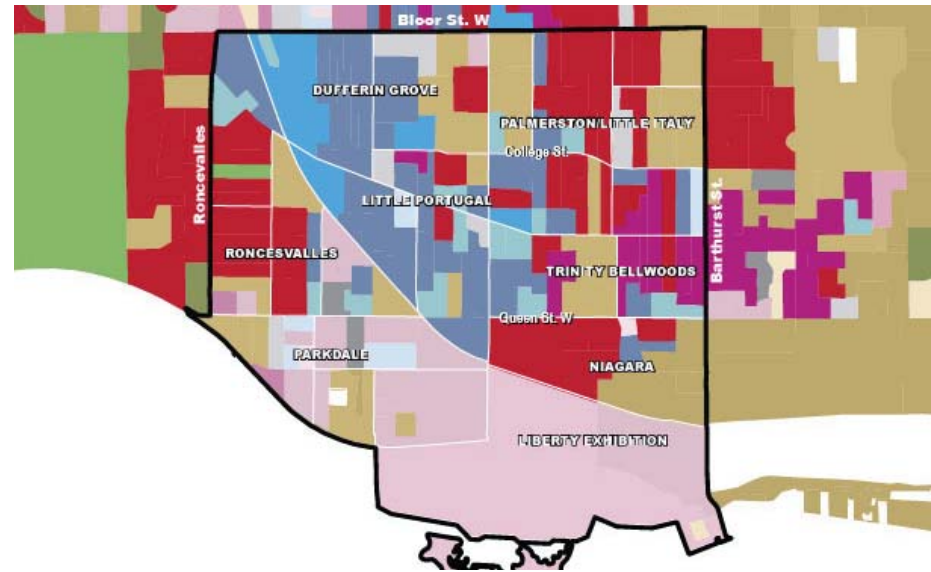
Fig. 3.2 Welcome to St. Christopher House



immigrant settlement, with a significant population of visible minorities. Today, this older part of the city is the home of people from very diverse cultural and social backgrounds (Fig. 3.3).

Fig. 3.3 West Central Toronto is very diverse  
House to House Fall 2005

- more visible minorities, more low-income people, more high-rise residents
- more middle-income people and more blue collar workers
- more professionals, more medium-density housing
- more young professionals, more medium and high-rise buildings or condos
- more middle-income people, more tenants
- more blue-collar workers, more Latin Americans, more high-density housing
- more middle-income people, more East Asians, more families
- more higher-income people, more low-density housing and home ownership



Over the last decades, the area has undergone massive development and gentrification. The results have transformed the streetscapes and the way people live. Several former industrial zones have been redeveloped, many older multi-family buildings have been renovated into expensive single family homes, and once-abandoned shops are now filled with galleries and specialty boutiques. The area’s proximity to the downtown business district, its convenient public transportation, and its interesting shops and city living are all key attractions. What used to be “fairly poor” is now an eccentric neighbourhood appealing to a much more diverse population group, including artists and young professionals. This economic shift is affecting businesses, the housing market, the types of social and recreational activities, and even the character of the neighbourhood. The ripple effect of gentrification is changing west-central Toronto in all possible ways (see Appendix B for more information).



Fig. 3.4  
Massive developments.  
Everything from renovating  
Victorian houses to new condo loft  
developments.

### How Residents Experience Neighbourhood Changes? CURA, Bringing People Together First: Words from the People<sup>2</sup>

*"Once it was dangerous before, or it did feel that way, and now that there's all these nice stores and galleries it feels safe."*

*"Fewer business are catering to regular folk... there is a built-in exclusion of who is going to frequent those [new businesses] places"*

*"It used to be entirely Italian or Portuguese, and now it seems like I play soccer on Saturday at Dufferin Grove that there are twenty different ethnic groups represented between the twenty people that are there."*

*"I don't know what happened to all those people who used to live in the rooming houses..."*

*"The cost of housing is really out of every single person's range, unless you go into so much debt. You can't afford to buy a house... Rent an apartment, my rent is 50% of my salary."*



Fig 3.5  
A new mix of businesses and city  
life. The West Central Art and  
Design District - one of Toronto's  
"most dynamic and progressive  
neighbourhoods"

### 3.1.2 New Opportunities in a Transforming Community

*“The character of the neighbourhood is changing; it is good for some, and bad for others...”<sup>3</sup> < in the words of a local*

**TORONTO LIFE**

May 2008

## Electric Avenue

In a matter of years, Ossington has gone from no-go to boho. With Foxley and Delux, it's become a culinary destination **By James Chatto**



Gentrification is a kind of death. Old friends gather round as the cold, stiff neighbourhood finally slips away, remembering wilder times, anecdotes to be told and retold in years to come. Slightly to one side stand those who have done well in the will—the landlords and developers, faces set in an expression of pious sympathy while cook-a-hoop inside. So we mourn the Yorkville of the 1960s, the Queen West of the '70s—all the cafes and bistros, the galleries and second-hand bookshops, the bohemian zeitgeist, which made the area so interesting and desirable that rents soared like a fever. And yet, sometimes death is a mercy. Wander down Ossington Avenue these days and you won't hear anyone waxing nostalgic for the way things were five years ago, when the stretch between Dundas and Queen was dominated by gun-toting Vietnamese gangs and back alley punks dealing drugs. A double murder in a sleazy karaoke bar back in 2003 marked the beginning of the end of that particular era, with police and residents finally collaborating to move the crime out. Thus began the long, slow climb into respectability.

Fig. 3.6 Toronto Life, May 2008

Observations and stories from local residents show that neighbourhood changes can either help or hinder healthy community growth. Transformations are generally welcomed by locals; they have opened new doors for a fresh mix of retail stores, and initiatives have been carried out to make the streets safer and more enjoyable. Nevertheless, improved city life and infrastructures are pushing up the cost of living and rents. This has caused some family-run businesses and low-income households to be priced out of their own neighbourhood.

From the point of view of immigrants trying to fit into the local culture, changes are promising opportunities. People are primed for changes in a gentrifying community. Resentment towards new types of developments and groups joining will be a lesser problem. Also, the demand for programs and services expansion in a growing community hints at a demand for volunteer help. Dedicating time and efforts to neighbourhood events is not just another “obligation,” but a new type of enjoyment. These commitments are chances for people to reveal their hidden abilities and talents, regain their self-worth, and to earn the respect from the host community. Neighbourhood changes are inevitable. The difference is how this momentum can be best used for positive local growth and improvements.

### 3.2 The Concept: Architecture Contributing to Good Living

Thoughtful design enhances the occupants' living and activities, but it is the care of inhabitants that transforms a "space for living" into a home for people. Thus, a lively home is not solely the work of the architect. In the book *Consensus Design: Socially Inclusive Process*, architect Christopher Day gives an eloquent description of the home as a place infused with the spirit of people,

"Homes aren't about roofs, but the spirit under them. It is spirit of place that affects us in places... Can spirit be designed into places? Design can make places upliftingly beautiful— but this only sets the scene. It is the people who use a place that breed its spirit. And as spirit is so bound up with the community of "users" (those who actually use the place), it is they who influence what direction this spirit takes."<sup>4</sup>

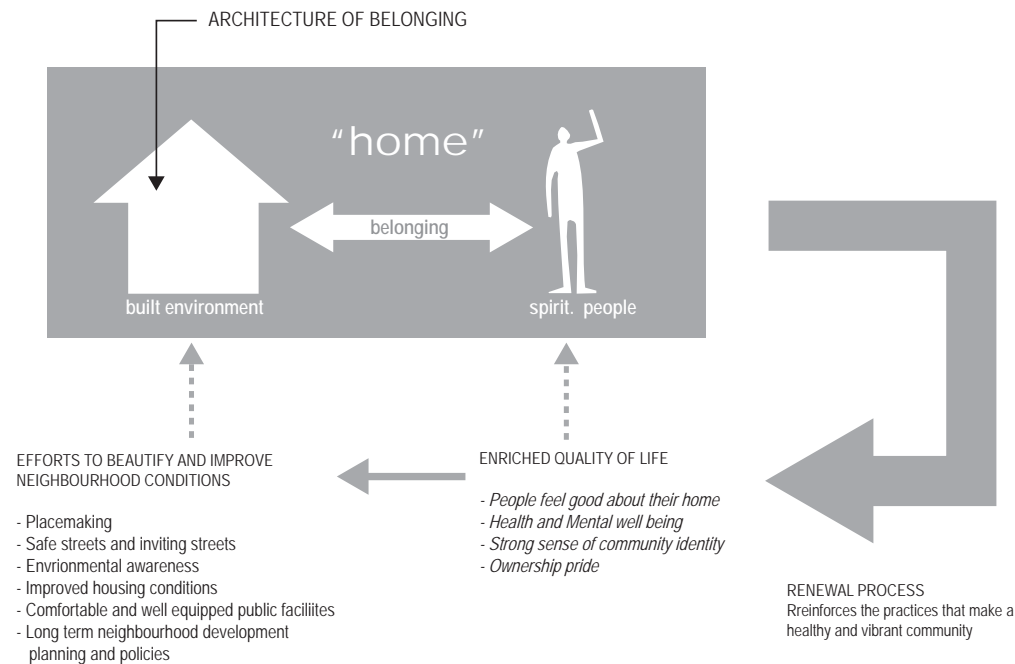


Fig. 3.7 The positive process of architecture contributing to good living

Architecture of belonging is a home for residents by residents. Their combined efforts and passions make a place liveable and enjoyable. It is full of life to reflect collective goals. If people take pride in and “feel good” about where they live, they are naturally motivated to further improve the conditions for good quality living (Fig 3.7).

The self-empowerment approach to community-building is in part adopted from the lessons of placemaking principles. *Project for Public Spaces*, a non-profit group committed to the making of good public spaces, describes “placemaking” as process of “[capitalizing] on a local community’s assets, inspiration, and potential, ultimately creating good public spaces that promote people’s health, happiness, and well being.”<sup>5</sup>

### 3.2.1 How People Experience their Home

A good person-environment fit is essential to the sense of belonging, and the role of architecture is to better support and to enhance this fit. Understanding how occupants inhabit a space and use it for various activities can profoundly improve the function and quality of space design. Following the advice of architect Jeremiah Eck, “Instead of thinking ‘kitchen,’ ... imagine what a ‘food prep’ and ‘social area’ should look like. Rather than fixating on ‘living room’ or ‘den,’ ... consider whether a certain space is public or private, formal or informal.”<sup>6</sup>

Overall, the organization and design of the proposed community-supported housing establishes a small community. It houses a variety of programs, activities and users. Since the building works as both a social destination and a private residence, well-thought-out spatial planning is critical to ensure smooth operations. Conflicts in sharing spaces and confusing territorial boundaries can disrupt activities and damage peaceful co-existence among users. Some activities can overlap, but others require full isolation.



Fig. 3.8 Bryant Park, NYC. A generously dimensioned steps double as seating that faces a temporary stage during lunchtime.

People experience and understand their surroundings through their senses. The way people function and communicate is related to the human perception of spatial conditions. In reference to Edward Hall's work, the sensory apparatus is divided into two main groups: the distance receptors (eyes, ears, nose) and the immediate receptors (skin, membranes, muscles)<sup>7</sup>. What the body detects by sight, sound, and smell prompts varying intensities of contact among people. Manipulation of physical arrangement and space dimensions creates a sense of boundary in respect to the suitable level of privacy and contact.

The in-depth investigations of architect and urban designer, Jan Gehl in *Life Between Buildings* have summarized five ways in which designers can define isolation and contact (Fig. 3.9)<sup>8</sup>. Different combinations of these principles form the appropriate settings for the intended activity. For example, residents may appreciate easy access to street life, but balk at the intrusion of strangers being able to look right inside their home. An uninviting fortress wall solves the privacy problem, but cuts off all connections with the public realm. A more pleasant method is screening with landscaping; a gradual transition protects the home from over-exposure, but maintains a flow of activities and contact.

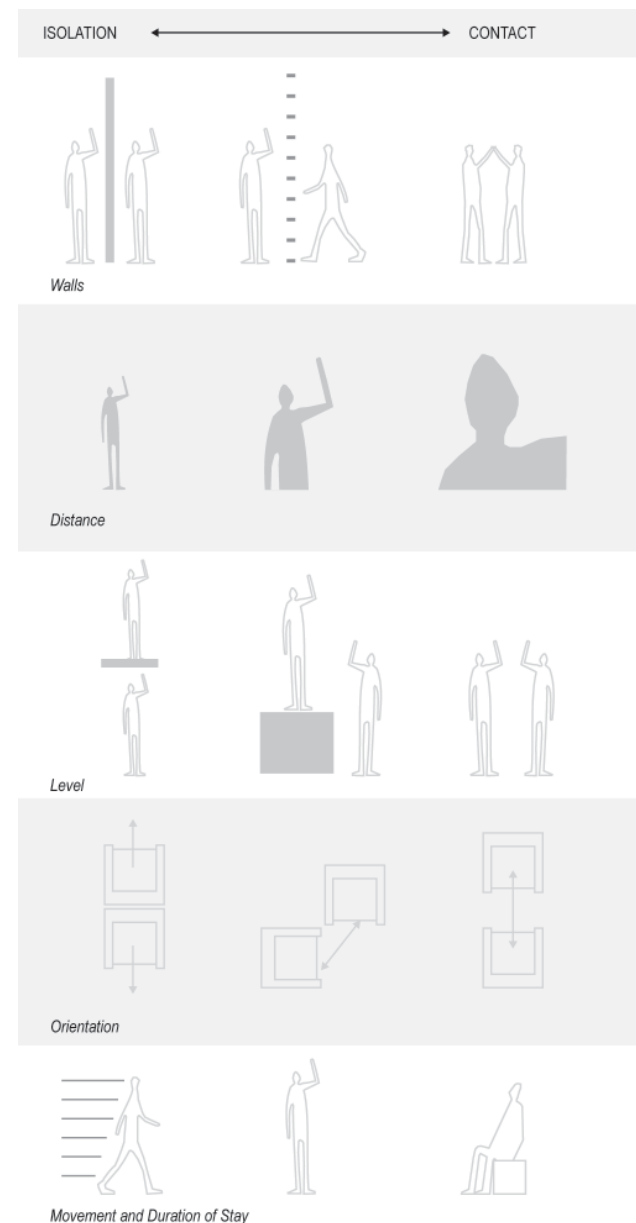


Fig. 3.9 The limitation or enhancement of the senses through physical arrangement and dimensions. *Adopted from Life Between Buildings, Jan Gehl*

### 3.3 The Design

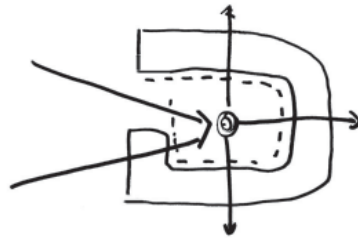
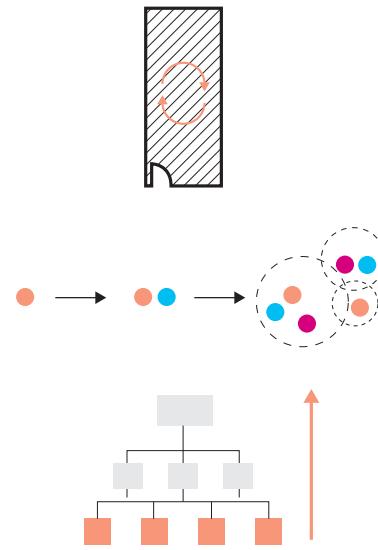


Fig. 3.10 Design Parti

**Design Parti** | The design parti represents the basic organizational structure of the building design, and the symbolic ideas of home. The communal courtyard is shaped and oriented to capture natural sunlight and fresh air, the essences for healthy living conditions. These are then distributed to the other areas wrapped around the courtyard. The parti also describes the symbolic relationships of “home”: an intimate retreat for a family, a community for local residents and a city for everyone. The spirit and core essences of architecture of belonging are rooted in and radiate from the heart of the community and its people.

**A Place for Individuality** | Flexible amenities and space designs are adaptable to meet diverse living patterns. Residents are given freedom and security to preserve their choice of lifestyle and beliefs. People are recognized as unique individuals.



**Privacy and Ownership:** A variety of flexible unit design accommodates different family needs. Full ownership gives residents security and stability in everyday life.

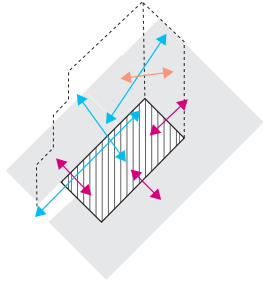
**Choice of Participation:** Welcoming and convenient access to community life offer members the choice of participation at their comfort level.

**Bottom-up management approach:** Channels of communication for each member to engage in neighbourhood affairs.

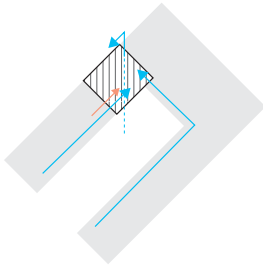
Fig. 3.11 Place for Individuality

- Family Residents
- Neighbours
- Visitors and Neighbourhood House Program Users

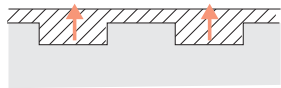
**A Place of Connections** | The crossing of people activities and the layering of sensory experiences stimulates a sociable atmosphere. Shared common spaces are neutral meeting grounds to bring unrelated groups together. People are recognized as a collective group.



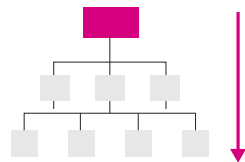
St. Christopher Commons (L) : An outdoor living room for the whole community. A centralized social node for all residents, visitors and program users.



Common Floor Lounge (M): Common floor meeting place for building residents



Apartment local street (S): By invitation only, the patio a cozy gathering place for friends and close neighbours.



Top-Down management: Shared goals bond all members together as a collective community.

Fig. 3.12 Place of Connections

- Family Residents
- Neighbours
- Visitors and Neighbourhood House Program Users





*"St. Christopher is a neighborhood-based, multipurpose agency in the west end of downtown Toronto. We are a team of volunteers, participants and staff who develop community programs and services in response to need and also promote socio-economic conditions in which individual and families in our catchment area can thrive." <sup>9</sup> < St. Christopher House*



Fig. 3.13 Photos of St.Christopher House



Fig. 3.14 From the corner of Dundas St. W and Ossington Ave.

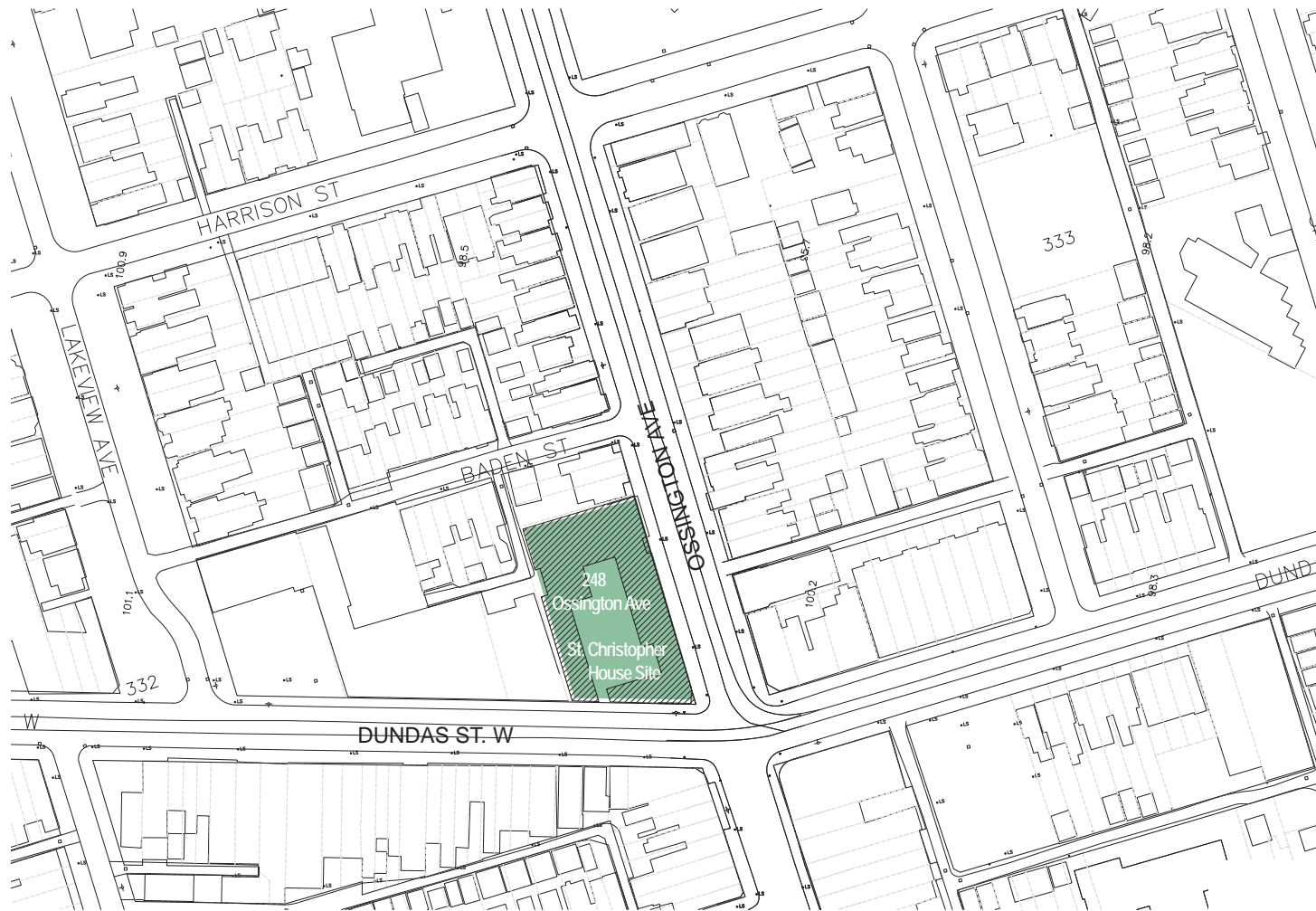
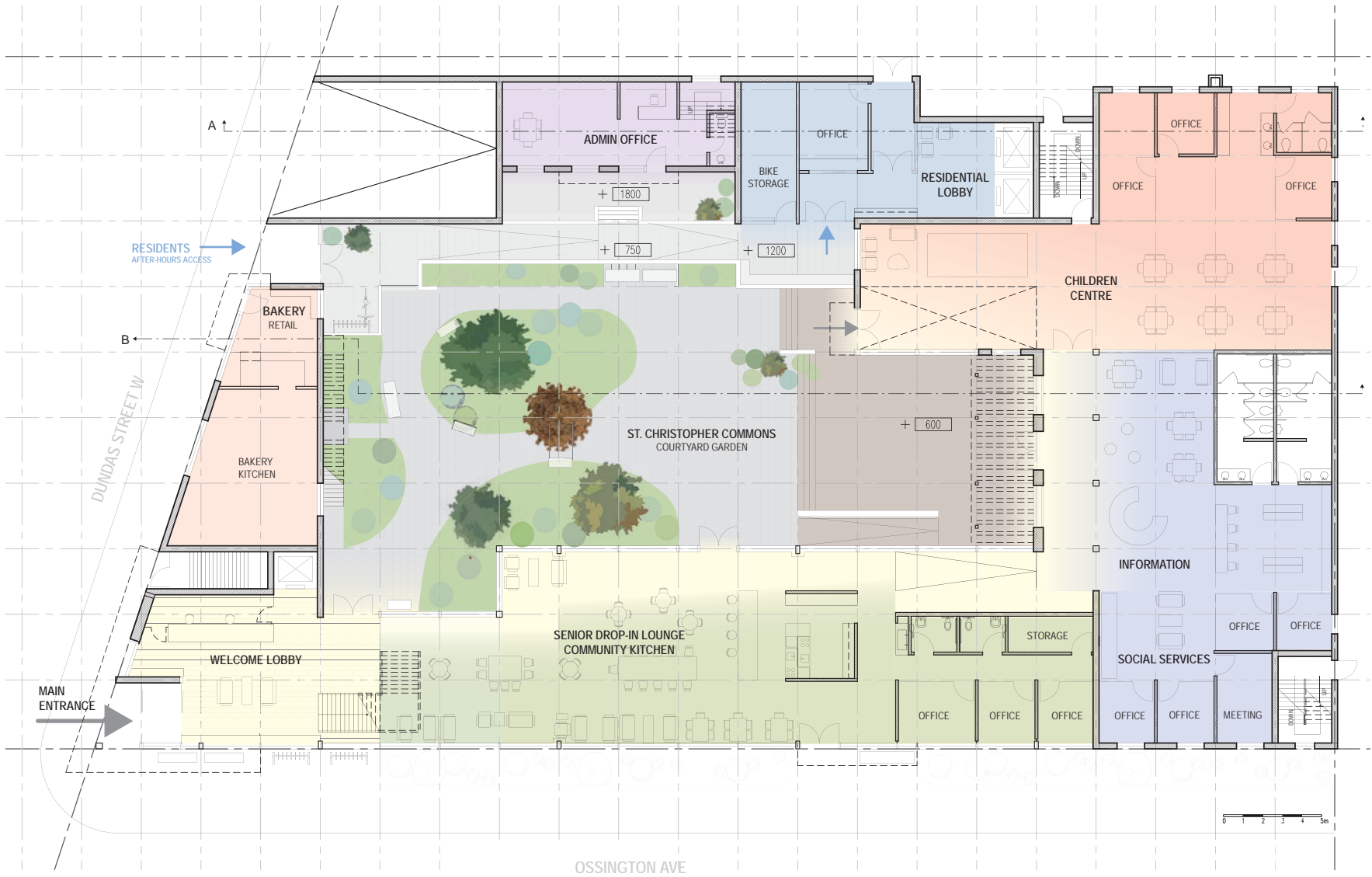




Fig. 3.15 Stepping inside the welcome lobby.



\* 1:300

Ground Floor Plan, Neighbourhood House | D-02





Fig. 3.16 Looking down into the welcome lobby.

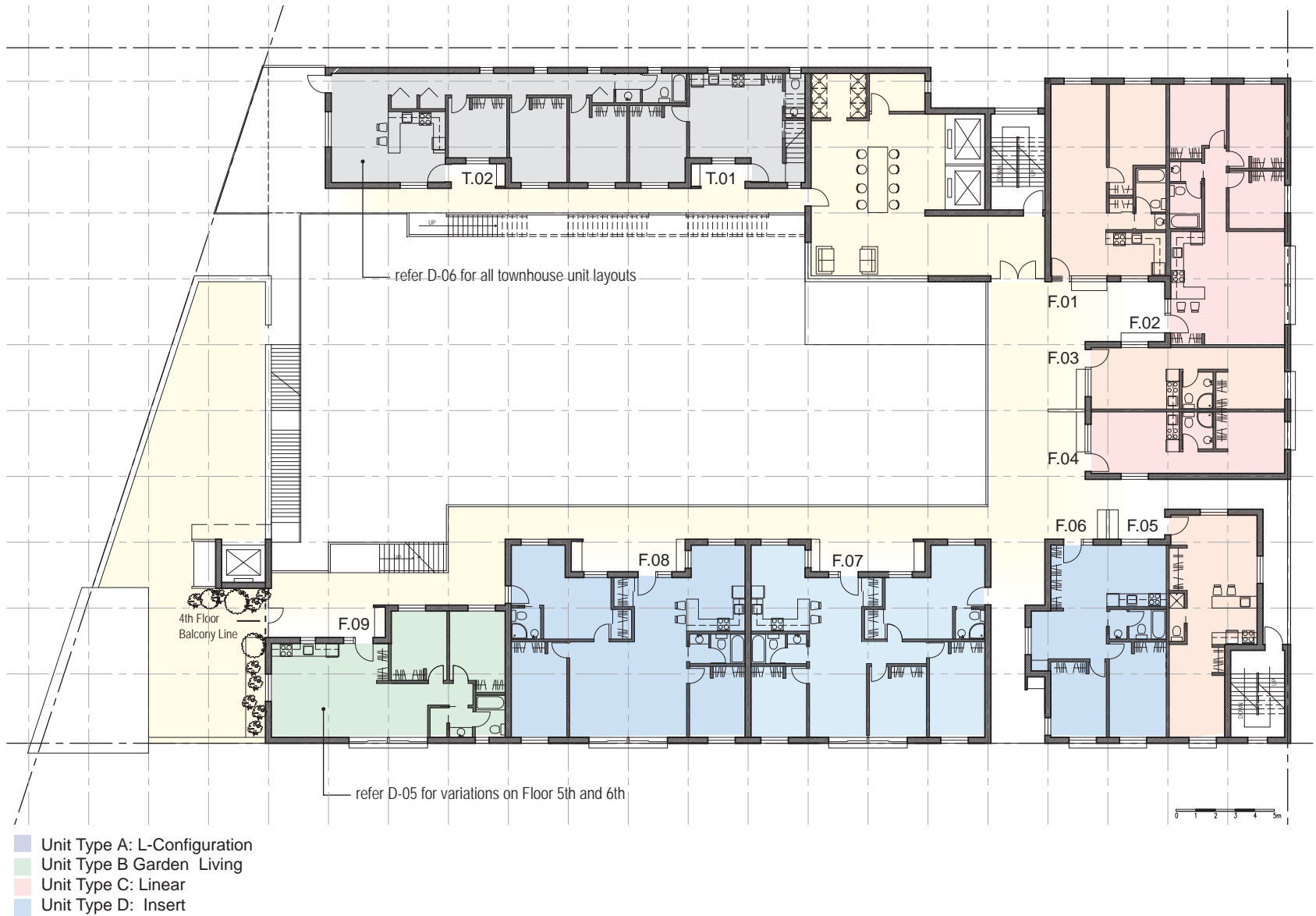


\* 1:300

Second Floor Plan, Neighbourhood House | D-03



\* 1:300

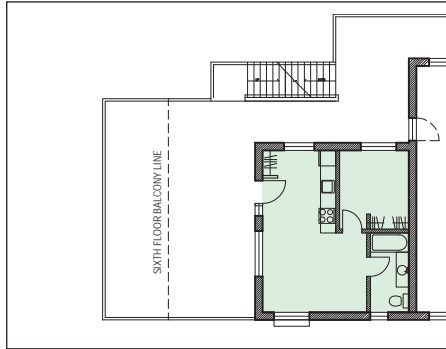


\* refer 3.5.2 Designing a Flexible Home for details

Third Floor Plan, Typical Residential (3rd to 6th Floors) | D-04







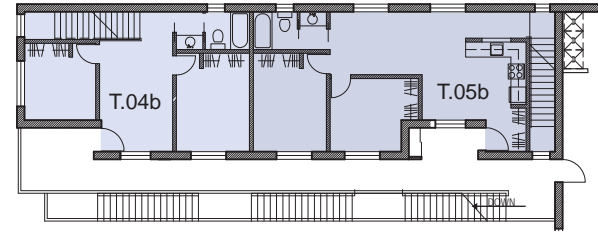
Unit F09  
5th and 6th Floor Plan, Residential | D-05

- Unit Type A: L-Configuration
- Unit Type B Garden Living
- Unit Type C: Linear
- Unit Type D: Insert

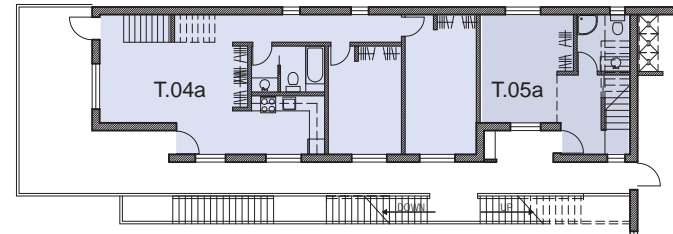
*\* refer 3.5.2 Designing a Flexible Home for details*

\* 1:300

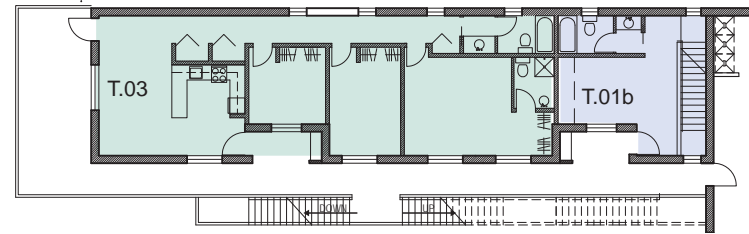
Sixth Floor Plan



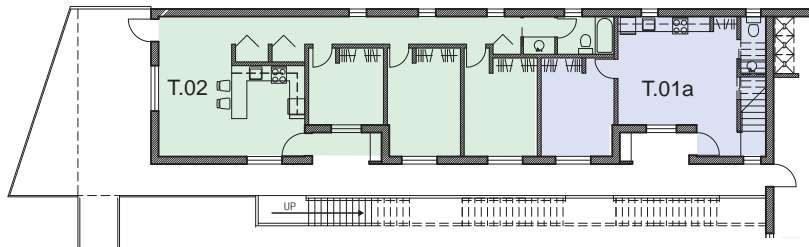
Fifth Floor Plan



Fourth Floor Plan

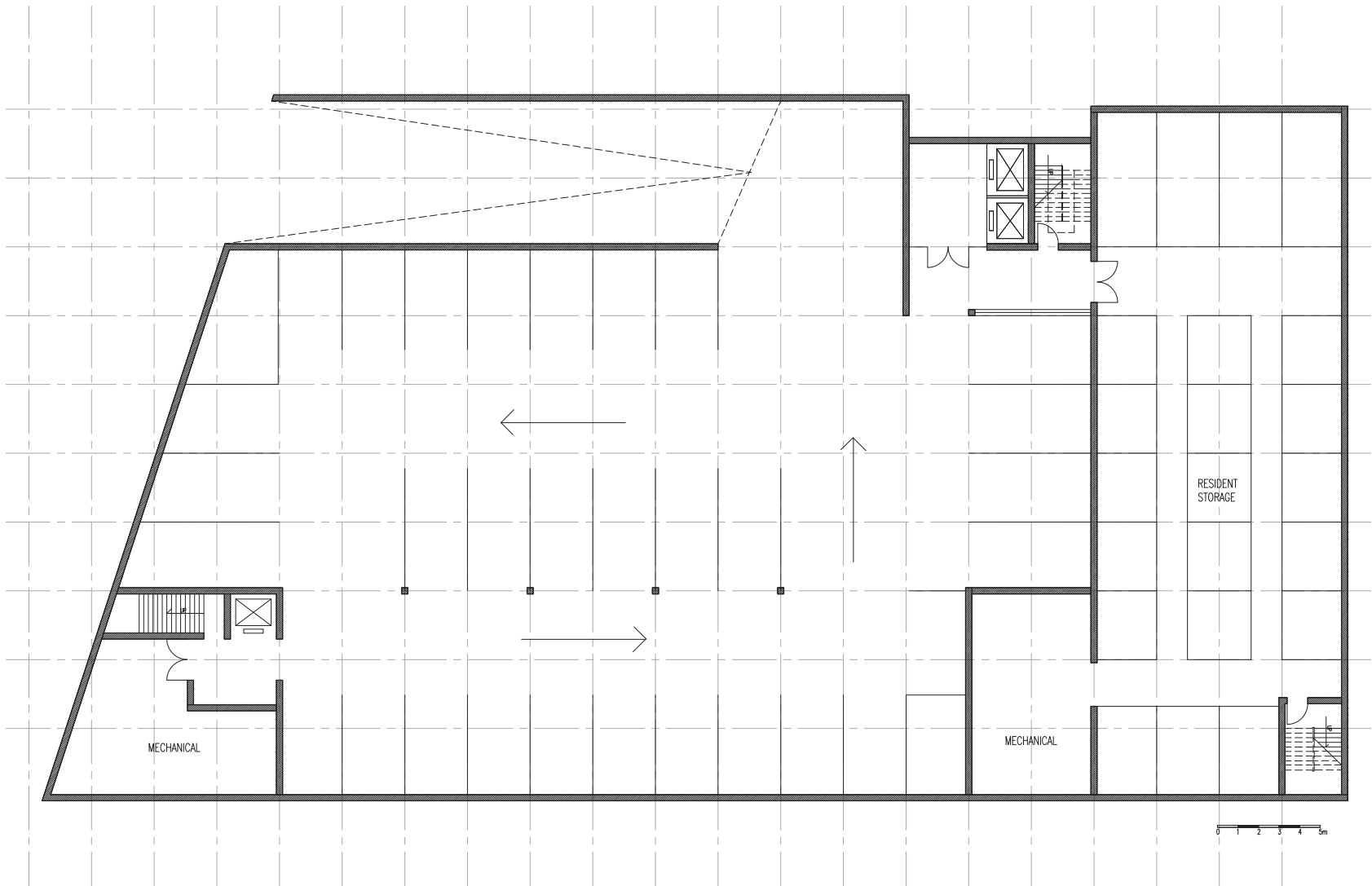


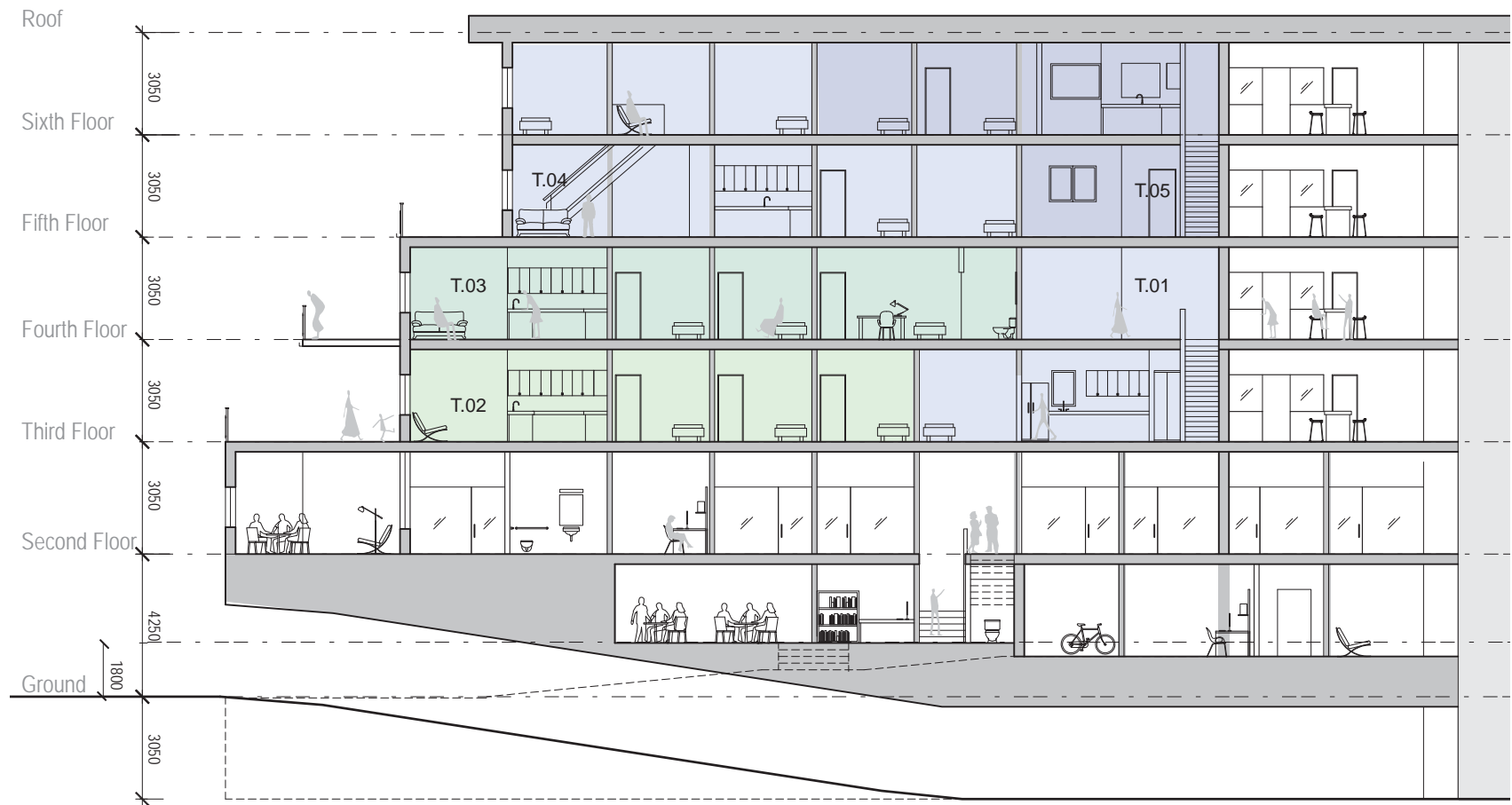
Third Floor Plan



Townhouse Floor Plans, Residential | D-06







\* 1:500

Townhouse Units Section (A) | D-08



\* Not to Scale

Courtyard Section (B) | D-09

### 3.4 The Neighbourhood House

With gentrification happening all around the project site area, many affordable social venues, like the local coffee houses, are being replaced with expensive, trendy bars. As a result, some seniors are relocating their daily social interactions along the sidewalks just outside of the SCH building.

The redeveloped neighbourhood house is designed as an everyday social destination. Its physical existence has a much stronger relationship with surrounding neighbourhood and city life. An open-concept design visually spills people activities out into the streets (see Fig. 3.18). An animated building façade attracts pedestrian interest and keeps the neighbourhood safe. Even when a person is doing nothing more than sitting in the lobby looking out, their presence fends off suspicious behaviours and adds interest to the streetscape.

Social nodes are located where people activities most often take place or cross paths. These are convenient venues for unplanned socializations as people go about their daily errands. Spontaneous interactions are a natural way for strangers to meet. Acquaintances that started off as a friendly smile every morning can grow to become a deep neighbourly friendship. The longer people stay in one place and the more frequently they are seen, the more likely bonding and relationship formation will take place. Having a place to sit, stand or even lie down provides support for resting and lingering in different ways.<sup>10</sup>



Fig. 3.17 Different types of people activities

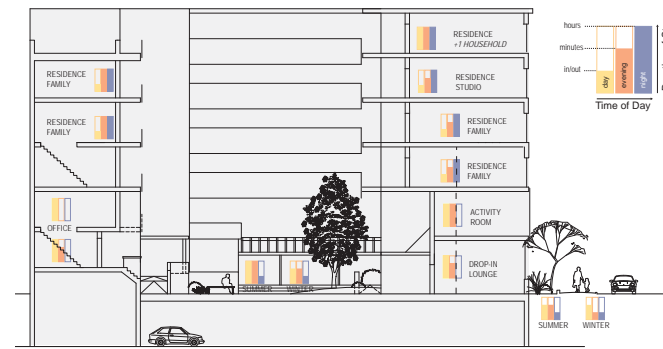


Fig. 3.18 Animated building edge and interesting activities keep public realm lively throughout the day and seasons



Fig. 3.19 Community Kitchen. People chatting around the communal table in an open and friendly setting.

### 3.4.1 Designing a Versatile Social Destination

**For All Occasions** | People come to the neighbourhood house for different reasons. A community leader can use the facility to host big events; a casual visitor will drop in from time to time to chat around the kitchen table; and a shy new neighbour can read in a corner and simply take pleasure in being around people. The choice for visitors to experience community life at their comfort level and preference is a key quality that makes this a socially inclusive meeting place (Fig. 3.19).

**For All Seasons** | Aside from the very hottest days, summer in Canada is usually comfortable, but getting used to Canada's cold winter is more difficult, especially for newcomers from warmer climates. Harsh conditions reduce the season for comfortable outdoor activities, such as evening walks in the park. The reluctance to leave the house, decreased mobility and deprived social life patterns as a result of winter inconveniences all combine to depreciate people's physical and social well-being.<sup>11</sup>

An all-season courtyard garden is proposed to lessen winter's negative impacts and boost the possibilities for outdoor public life throughout the year (Fig.3.20 to 3.23). Cold and snowy Canadian winters are unavoidable, but a microclimate with good protection against inhospitable conditions makes the season more tolerable. Shelter from strong winds and snow, with positive characteristics enhanced (eg. warm south sun exposure), improves the experience. A desirable setting for people to go outside is good for their health, and teaches newcomers to embrace winter living with a positive mind. Making snowmen or gazing at the first snow fall is a fun way to celebrate winter. A liveable winter requires both physical and attitude adjustments. The appreciation of the changing season is an art of living agreeably with the environment.

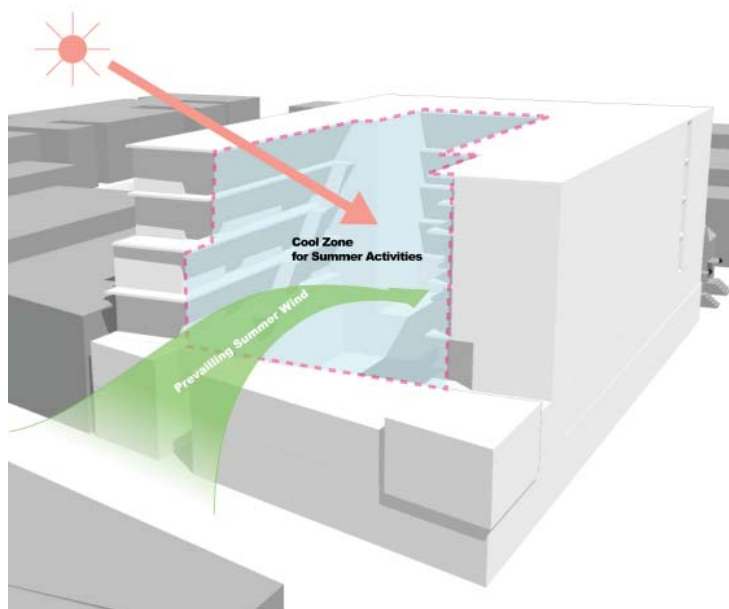


Fig. 3.20 Summer Outdoor Living

The u-shaped courtyard works like a scope to catch the prevailing summer breeze from the south. Overhangs and trees provide shading to keep the courtyard garden cool and breezy, while allowing for some natural light to filter through.

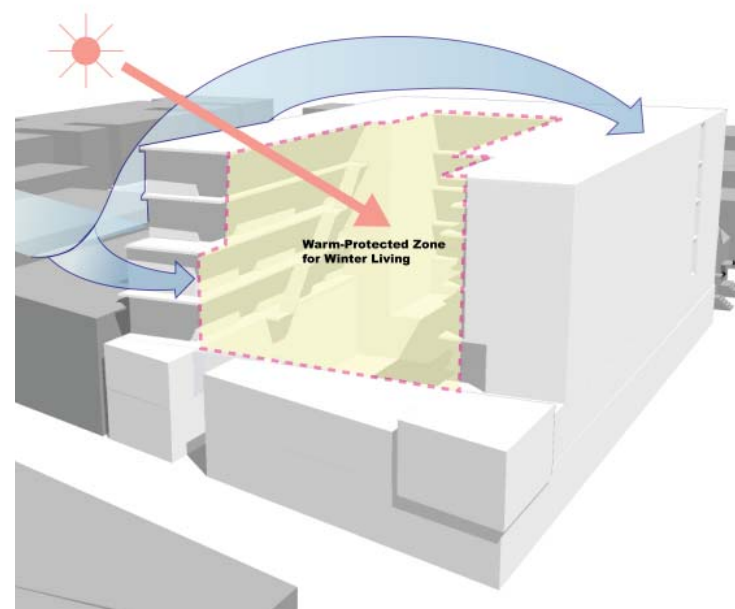


Fig. 3.21 Winter Outdoor Living

The taller west-massing is an effective wind breaker that blocks the harsh prevailing wind, and reduces snow accumulation in the commons. Generous solar heat and wind protection make this space a pleasant outdoor room during the winter time. North and West facing windows (direction of prevailing wind) are minimized to avoid infiltration heat loss.





Fig. 3.22 A relaxing summer afternoon at St.Christopher Commons.



Fig. 3.23 St. Christopher Commons is an enjoyable place for all kinds of winter fun.

### 3.5 Residential Units Explained

The residential component of the project is designed to reflect the atypical living arrangements of immigrants, such as the growing number of multiple families living under one roof. This design will help families with housing requirements outside of common market demands, who will have more difficulties finding something to suit their needs. A diverse range of flexible unit designs offer alternatives to fill this gap of demands. Specifically, growing families and those planning to sponsor additional members to immigrate to Canada will fluctuate in household size and arrangements. Versatile space configuration gives families the security and choice to stay in the home, despite upsizing or downsizing their living arrangements.

As well, this is a rental development for two main reasons. First, local observations have shown a need for more affordable rentals in the area. Second, since most less-advantaged immigrants will not have the resources to enter ownership any time soon, rental housing is not a short-term situation. Good-quality rentals are necessary alternatives to match the demands and financial availability of these families.

#### 3.5.1 Common Living Space

Each floor works like a small community of in-house residents within the larger complex. As a cluster of units, there is a common area for meetings and other domestic activities. Like a local street lined up with small front porches, the units are arranged around the exterior courtyard garden (Fig. 3.24). The entrances are pushed back to form a small patio that doubles as extra living space. Residents can see what other neighbours are doing right outside their doors. Domestic activities, like watering plants and watching children play, spark conversations. These small, yet meaningful events transform a regular circulation path into a lively street.



Fig. 3.24 A lively “local street” for residents.

### 3.5.2 Designing a Flexible Home

Different design types give residents choices in order to find a place that best suits their personal needs. The units are composed of a system of building components that can be combined or broken down to adapt to varying household arrangements. Flexibility is a key design and planning concept. Common features like open layout, and compartmentalized washroom configuration for multi-users are examples of design strategies integrated to add flexibility in the units' usability.

This system of design is defined by two criteria: *size* and *lifestyle* needs. Size refers to the number of rooms in the unit. Lifestyle describes the housing characteristics that are uncommon for single-family households. These unique features are: live and work, shared household, growth potential, split potential and outdoor friendly, as described below. Working from these characteristics, four basic types of unit configurations are designed (Fig.3.25 to 3.28).

**W** Live and Work:

Units have a separate work or studio area that can be accessed from a side entrance or through the main living room without disturbing the private sleeping quarters.

**+1** Shared Household:

Units can comfortably fit two households, with one shared living room and a separate washroom for each group. A sizable bedroom or living room is included in the secondary unit for small-group socialization.



Growth Potential

Units with the potential to add more rooms or spatial function.



Split Potential

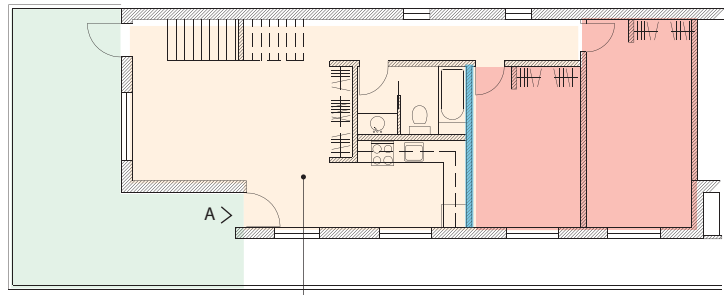
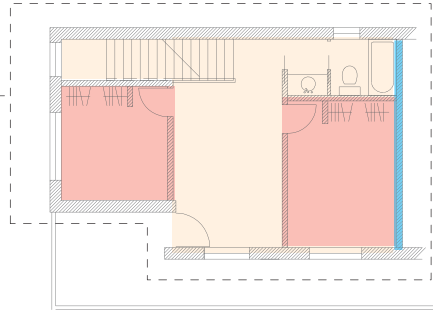
Units can be separated into two contained units, each with its own front patio entry niche.



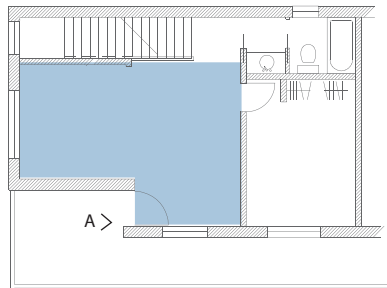
Outdoor-Friendly

Units with an extra-large patio garden space.

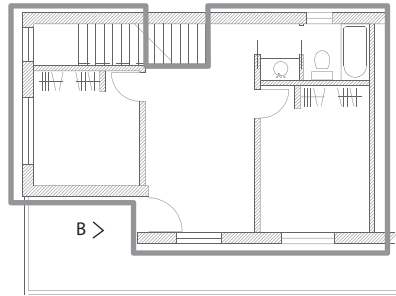
\* Refer to Appendix C.3 for a full set of possible arrangements for each unit.



Main floor- Fixed arrangement  
Shared common area



Opt 2 | **w**  
Bedroom converted into a work studio  
with separate access on second floor




Opt 3 | **+1**  
Private living for household B; can be linked or separated  
from household A (main floor).

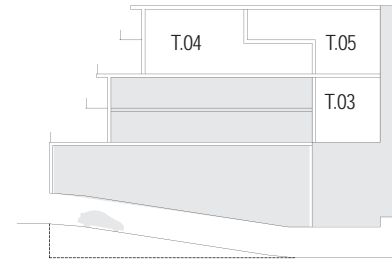
**Type A: L-Configuration** Fig. 3.25

Two floor units that has bedrooms on each floor. The quiet rest areas are joined at the centre by a common living and kitchen area.

The layout of the main floor is fixed, with the other floor interchangeably occupied as: additional bedrooms, (opt 2) a workspace, and (opt 3) a linked or separate contained unit for household B. These units can be accessed from both levels.

**Example Unit: T.04**

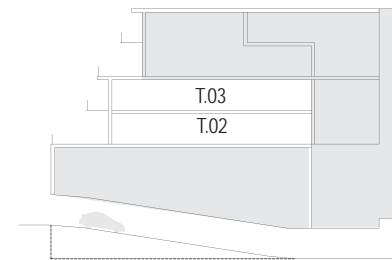
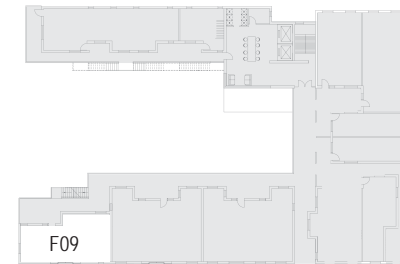
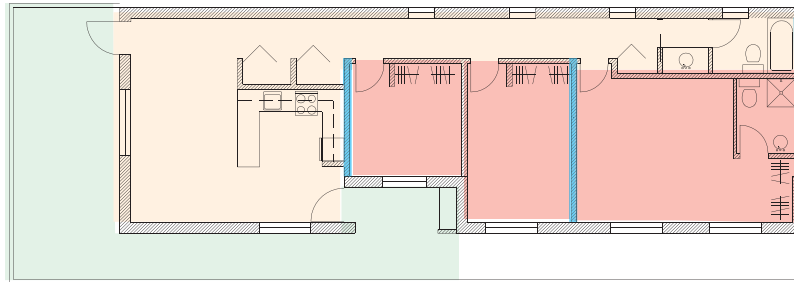
Opt 1 |   
4 bedroom apartment with garden  
patio. Access on each floor.



- ROOM
- LIVING + EATING
- WORK SPACE
- PLUMBING WALL
- STUDIO (WASHROOM + KITCHENETTE)
- PATIO GARDEN
- SEPARATE UNIT
- > ENTRANCE (Unit A, B)

■ □ Type B: Garden Living Fig. 3.26

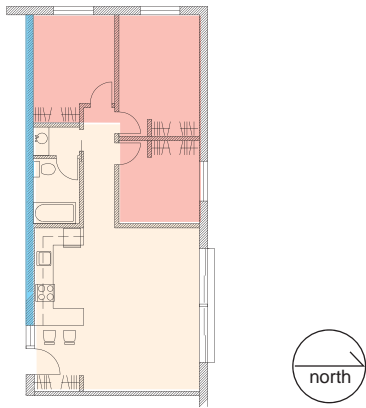
Large family-friendly units with a generously sized outdoor patio garden space. The south facing patio is a safe and inviting space for the family. It is a convenient outdoor garden for seniors and a play area for children where parents can easily monitor from inside.



**Example Unit: T.03**  
 Opt 1 |   
 4 bedroom apartment with garden patio. Access on each floor.

Type B Units: T.02, T.03, T.09

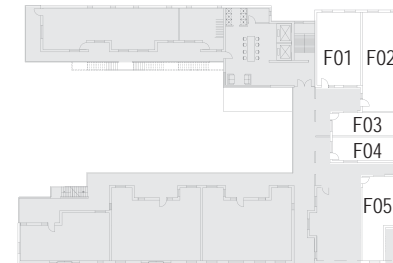
- ROOM
- LIVING + EATING
- WORK SPACE
- PLUMBING WALL
- STUDIO (WASHROOM + KITCHENETTE)
- PATIO GARDEN
- SEPARATE UNIT
- > ENTRANCE (Unit A, B)



■ ■ ■ Type C: Linear

Fig. 3.27

Simple units suitable for single family household types. Active living spaces are located towards the front to best capture views and natural lighting. Bedrooms are pushed to the back, away from the busy living spaces. These units have no additional options.

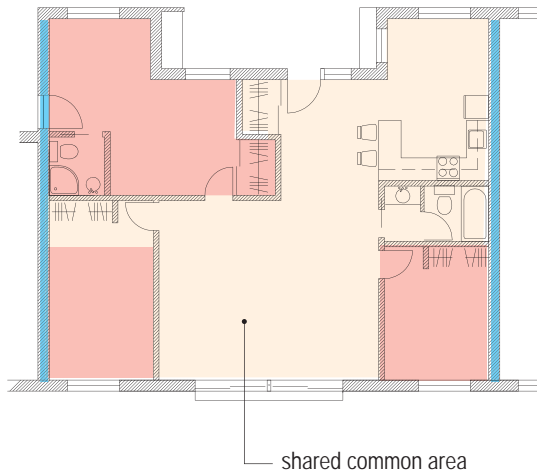


Example Unit: F.02  
Opt 1 | 3 room unit

Type C Units: F.01, F.02, F.03, F.04, F.05

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #e91e63; border: 1px solid black;"></span> ROOM            | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #9c27b0; border: 1px solid black;"></span> STUDIO (WASHROOM + KITCHENETTE) |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #ffcc80; border: 1px solid black;"></span> LIVING + EATING | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #c8e6c9; border: 1px solid black;"></span> PATIO GARDEN                    |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #42a5f5; border: 1px solid black;"></span> WORK SPACE      | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; border-bottom: 1px solid black;"></span> SEPARATE UNIT  |
| <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:15px; background-color: #00bcd4; border: 1px solid black;"></span> PLUMBING WALL   | <span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; border-left: 1px solid black; border-right: 1px solid black;"></span> ENTRANCE (Unit A, B)                |





Example Unit: F.08  
 Opt 1 | 3 room unit

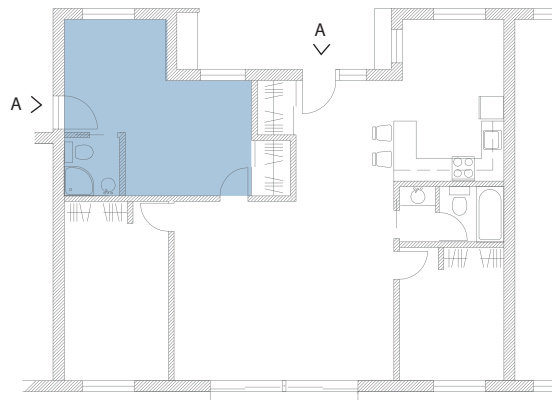
Type E Units: F.07, F.08



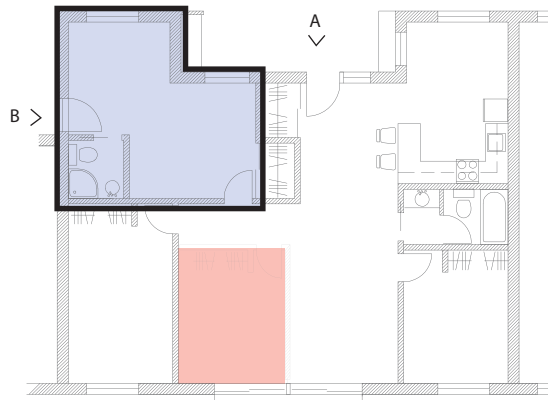
Type D: Insert



Fig. 3.28

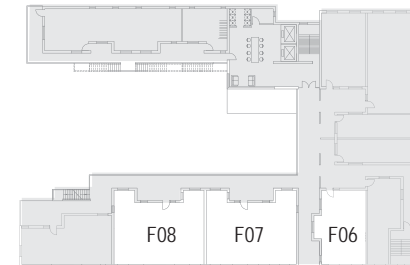
Situated at a corner location, these apartments have two separate frontages, each with its own patio niche. Small changes can transform them into two independent units, for household groups A and B.







Opt 2 | **W**  
 Bedroom converted into a work studio with separate side access.



Opt 3 | **+1**    
 Studio for household B; can be linked or separated from household A. Potential for additional bedroom.



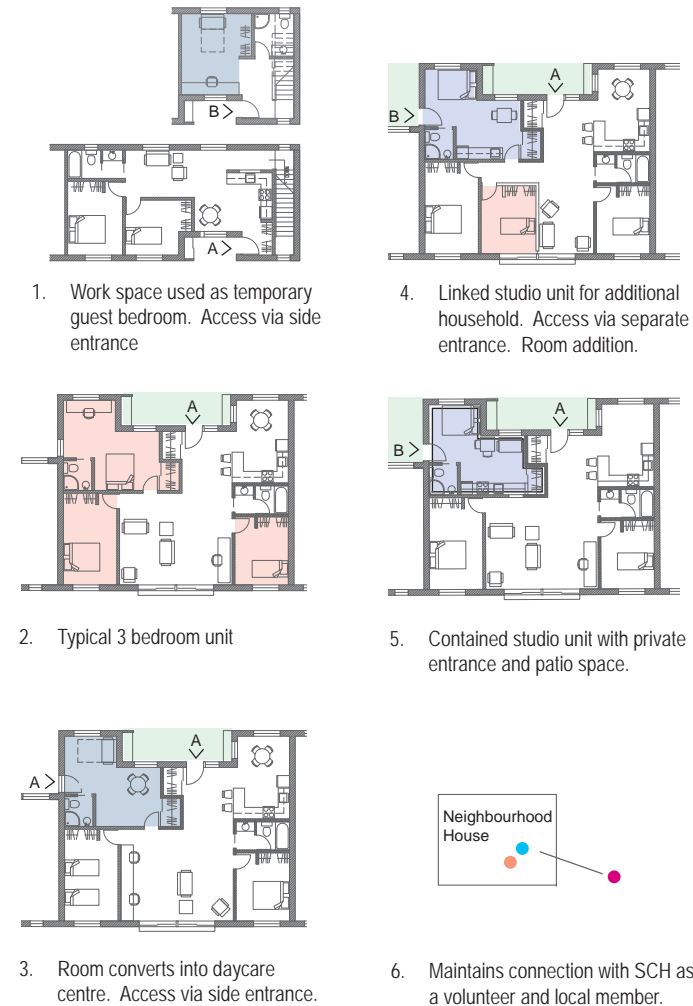
-  ROOM
-  LIVING + EATING
-  WORK SPACE
-  PLUMBING WALL
-  STUDIO (WASHROOM + KITCHENETTE)
-  PATIO GARDEN
-  SEPARATE UNIT
-  ENTRANCE (Unit A, B)

## Case Study Example

In telling the story about a typical family's immigration experience, it is possible to visualize the benefits of the thesis' proposed flexible unit designs and the support via community life.

	Life Event	Living Arrangements	Support/ Benefit
1	Father arrives in Canada to prepare for family's immigration.	Temporary stay at friend's work studio, that doubles as guest room.	Easy access to social services at the neighbourhood house.
2	Mother and children arrive in Canada	Rents a three-room unit with studio option.	Family participates in community activities and builds a new circle of friends.
3	Mother seeks for part-time employment to help with living costs.	Mother earns extra income from running daycare services in the studio space.	Additional income helps with rent, and mother gains Canadian work experiences.
4	Sponsors brother and sister-in-law to immigrate to Canada.	Converts studio into a separate unit. Room addition for the main unit. Each household have some privacy while living together under one roof.	Next door convenience strengthens family support.
5	Household down-sizes. Older child leaves home for university and brother moves out.	Rents out studio unit for additional income.	Parents as established immigrants can offer help to other newcomers via community work.
6	With enough savings, parents decide to purchase a small property.	Become home owners of a one bedroom apartment in the neighbourhood.	Family can keep close contact with friends and neighbours after their move by continuing community work at the neighbourhood house.

Fig. 3.29 Flexible unit design examples



## Conclusion

The life-changing decision made by every immigrant that chooses to move permanently to Canada involves not only an investment of money, but also a leap of faith. Despite their best optimism, expectations can easily turn into shattered hopes. Many new Canadians arrive in Canada with few contacts and little grasp of English or the cultural norms of their new found home. The lack of support and the challenges of securing basic living necessities compromise their chances of gaining the necessary stability that allow them to fit into the mainstream culture. Less-advantaged newcomer families are often left feeling alienated, disoriented and desperate for help. They rely on their community and newly acquainted friends as their main support system; these are like an adopted home and family.

The thesis seeks to explore the potential of architecture to create a resourceful place that has everything new Canadians search for to fulfill their immigration dream. Four critical design features are used to support this new principle of creating supportive settlement.

First, the hybrid design of a place that offers both private residences and collective uses such as daycare, strategically organizes neighbourly relationships into a support network. Participation in this communal living further connects newcomers with both locals and other newcomers to make them feel a part of a neighbourhood family.

Secondly, the awareness of atypical program requirements for different groups contributes to social inclusion, all kinds of people and activities are accommodated. Residents are given easy access to the tools and expert advices to establish independence and permanency in Canada.

Thirdly, adaptable residential units are designed to be capable of fitting into a variety of family arrangements and lifestyle routines.

Lastly, whenever possible the importance of thresholds and modest place making works to enrich the possibility of public life, and in turn creates vibrant settings for strengthening unity and community bonds. This warm and people-friendly place recognizes that having coffee with new friends can be a mini-celebration on its own. People are encouraged to enjoy their community in multiple ways, just as they take pleasure in a dynamic city life. The lively courtyard garden, a variety of comfortable resting places for socializing, and stimulating outlooks are examples of the deliberate use of all possible architectural intervention to bring interest and diversity to the everyday life experience.

The goal of this architectural exploration is to help ensure a soft landing for new Canadians. Like the secret garden, an architecture of belonging offers a safe, comfortable and dignified place to live and to dream. This is a home for everyone.

## **Appendix A | Idea of Multiculturalism**



Canadian Multiculturalism Act ( 1985, c. 24 (4th Supp.))  
Act current to January 9th, 2009  
<<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/ShowFullDoc/cs/C-18.7///en>>

## Canadian Multiculturalism Act 1985, c. 24 (4th Supp.)

C-18.7

An Act for the preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in  
Canada

### NOTE

[1988, c. 31, assented to 21st July, 1988]

### Preamble

WHEREAS the Constitution of Canada provides that every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination and that everyone has the freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief, opinion, expression, peaceful assembly and association and guarantees those rights and freedoms equally to male and female persons;

AND WHEREAS the Constitution of Canada recognizes the importance of preserving and enhancing the multicultural heritage of Canadians;

AND WHEREAS the Constitution of Canada recognizes rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada;

AND WHEREAS the Constitution of Canada and the Official Languages Act provide that English and French are the official languages of Canada and neither abrogates nor derogates from any rights or privileges acquired or enjoyed with respect to any other language;

AND WHEREAS the Citizenship Act provides that all Canadians, whether by birth or by choice, enjoy equal

status, are entitled to the same rights, powers and privileges and are subject to the same obligations, duties and liabilities;

AND WHEREAS the Canadian Human Rights Act provides that every individual should have an equal opportunity with other individuals to make the life that the individual is able and wishes to have, consistent with the duties and obligations of that individual as a member of society, and, in order to secure that opportunity, establishes the Canadian Human Rights Commission to redress any proscribed discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of race, national or ethnic origin or colour;

AND WHEREAS Canada is a party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which Convention recognizes that all human beings are equal before the law and are entitled to equal protection of the law against any discrimination and against any incitement to discrimination, and to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Covenant provides that persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities shall not be denied the right to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion or to use their own language;

AND WHEREAS the Government of Canada recognizes the diversity of Canadians as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society and is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada;

NOW, THEREFORE, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows:

## SHORT TITLE

### Short title

1. This Act may be cited as the Canadian Multiculturalism Act.

## INTERPRETATION

### Definitions

2. In this Act,

“federal institution”

«institutions fédérales »

“federal institution” means any of the following institutions of the Government of Canada:

(a) a department, board, commission or council, or other body or office, established to perform a governmental function by or pursuant to an Act of Parliament or by or under the authority of the Governor in Council, and

(b) a departmental corporation or Crown corporation as defined in section 2 of the Financial Administration Act,

but does not include

(c) any institution of the Council or government of the Northwest Territories or of the Legislative Assembly or government of Yukon or Nunavut, or

(d) any Indian band, band council or other body established to perform a governmental function in relation to an Indian band or other group of aboriginal people;

“Minister”

«ministre »

“Minister” means such member of the Queen’s Privy Council for Canada as is designated by the Governor in Council as the Minister for the purposes of this Act.

R.S., 1985, c. 24 (4th Supp.), s. 2; 1993, c. 28, s. 78; 2002, c. 7, s. 129.

## MULTICULTURALISM POLICY OF CANADA

### Multiculturalism policy

3. (1) It is hereby declared to be the policy of the Government of Canada to

(a) recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage;

(b) recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism is a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity and that it provides an invaluable resource in the shaping of Canada’s future;

(c) promote the full and equitable participation of individuals and communities of all origins in the continuing evolution and shaping of all aspects of Canadian society and assist them in the elimination of any barrier to that participation;

(d) recognize the existence of communities whose members share a common origin and their historic contribution to Canadian society, and enhance their development;

(e) ensure that all individuals receive equal treatment and equal protection under the law, while respecting and valuing their diversity;

(f) encourage and assist the social, cultural, economic and political institutions of Canada to be both respectful and inclusive of Canada’s multicultural character;

(g) promote the understanding and creativity that arise from the interaction between individuals and communities of different origins;

(h) foster the recognition and appreciation of the diverse cultures of Canadian society and promote the reflection and the evolving expressions of those cultures;

(i) preserve and enhance the use of languages other than English and French, while strengthening the status and use of the official languages of Canada; and

(j) advance multiculturalism throughout Canada in harmony with the national commitment to the official languages of Canada.

#### Federal institutions

(2) It is further declared to be the policy of the Government of Canada that all federal institutions shall

(a) ensure that Canadians of all origins have an equal opportunity to obtain employment and advancement in those institutions;

(b) promote policies, programs and practices that enhance the ability of individuals and communities of all origins to contribute to the continuing evolution of Canada;

(c) promote policies, programs and practices that enhance the understanding of and respect for the diversity of the members of Canadian society;

(d) collect statistical data in order to enable the development of policies, programs and practices that are sensitive and responsive to the multicultural reality of Canada;

(e) make use, as appropriate, of the language skills and cultural understanding of individuals of all origins; and

(f) generally, carry on their activities in a manner that is sensitive and responsive to the multicultural reality of Canada.

### IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MULTICULTURALISM POLICY OF CANADA

#### General responsibility for coordination

**4.** The Minister, in consultation with other ministers of the Crown, shall encourage and promote a coordinated approach to the implementation of the

multiculturalism policy of Canada and may provide advice and assistance in the development and implementation of programs and practices in support of the policy.

#### Specific mandate

**5.** (1) The Minister shall take such measures as the Minister considers appropriate to implement the multiculturalism policy of Canada and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, may

(a) encourage and assist individuals, organizations and institutions to project the multicultural reality of Canada in their activities in Canada and abroad;

(b) undertake and assist research relating to Canadian multiculturalism and foster scholarship in the field;

(c) encourage and promote exchanges and cooperation among the diverse communities of Canada;

(d) encourage and assist the business community, labour organizations, voluntary and other private organizations, as well as public institutions, in ensuring full participation in Canadian society, including the social and economic aspects, of individuals of all origins and their communities, and in promoting respect and appreciation for the multicultural reality of Canada;

(e) encourage the preservation, enhancement, sharing and evolving expression of the multicultural heritage of Canada;

(f) facilitate the acquisition, retention and use of all languages that contribute to the multicultural heritage of Canada;

(g) assist ethno-cultural minority communities to conduct activities with a view to overcoming any discriminatory barrier and, in particular, discrimination based on race or national or ethnic origin;

(h) provide support to individuals, groups or organizations for the purpose of preserving, enhancing and promoting multiculturalism in Canada; and

(i) undertake such other projects or programs in respect of multiculturalism, not by law assigned to any other federal institution, as are designed to promote the multiculturalism policy of Canada.



#### Provincial agreements

(2) The Minister may enter into an agreement or arrangement with any province respecting the implementation of the multiculturalism policy of Canada.

#### International agreements

(3) The Minister may, with the approval of the Governor in Council, enter into an agreement or arrangement with the government of any foreign state in order to foster the multicultural character of Canada.

#### Responsibilities of other Ministers

6. (1) The ministers of the Crown, other than the Minister, shall, in the execution of their respective mandates, take such measures as they consider appropriate to implement the multiculturalism policy of Canada.

#### Provincial agreements

(2) A minister of the Crown, other than the Minister, may enter into an agreement or arrangement with any province respecting the implementation of the multiculturalism policy of Canada.

#### Canadian multiculturalism advisory committee

7. (1) The Minister may establish an advisory committee to advise and assist the Minister on the implementation of this Act and any other matter relating to multiculturalism and, in consultation with such organizations representing multicultural interests as the Minister deems appropriate, may appoint the members and designate the chairman and other officers of the committee.

#### Remuneration and expenses

(2) Each member of the advisory committee shall be paid such remuneration for the member's services as may be fixed by the Minister and is entitled to be paid the reasonable travel and living expenses incurred by the member while absent from the member's ordinary place of residence in connection with the work of the committee.

#### Annual report

(3) The chairman of the advisory committee shall, within four months after the end of each fiscal year, submit to the Minister a report on the activities of the committee for that year and on any other matter relating to the implementation of the multiculturalism policy of Canada that the chairman considers appropriate.

### GENERAL

#### Annual report

8. The Minister shall cause to be laid before each House of Parliament, not later than the fifth sitting day of that House after January 31 next following the end of each fiscal year, a report on the operation of this Act for that fiscal year.

#### Permanent review by a Parliamentary committee

9. The operation of this Act and any report made pursuant to section 8 shall be reviewed on a permanent basis by such committee of the House, of the Senate or of both Houses of Parliament as may be designated or established for the purpose.

## A Quick Glance at the Immigration Classes

Immigration Class	Description	Immigration Class	Description
Skilled Workers and Professionals	<p>Immigrants selected on their ability to adapt in a fast changing labour market. Selection is based on characteristics such as education, English or French language abilities, work experience, age, arranged employment and adaptability.</p> <p>** Proof of funds to support themselves and family, medical and security requirements, and a minimum of 67 points in the selection grid apply</p>	Provincial Nominees	Immigrants nominated by the provinces and territories who have specific skills that will meet their labour market and economic development needs. A nominee must meet federal admissibility requirements, such as those related to health and security, but is not subject to the selection grid applied to federal skilled workers.
Business Class: <i>Investors</i>	<p>These immigrants have business experience as defined in the Regulations; have a legally obtained net worth of at least \$800,000; and have invested \$400,000 before receiving a visa.</p>	Family Class	A class of immigrants made up of close relatives of a Canadian citizen or permanent resident who may be sponsored to immigrate to Canada.
<i>Entrepreneurs</i>	<p>These Immigrants have managed and controlled a percentage of equity in a qualifying business for at least two years in the period beginning five years before they apply; and have a legally obtained net worth of at least \$300,000.</p>	Refugee Class: <i>Government Assisted</i>	Government-assisted refugees are people who are selected abroad for resettlement to Canada as Convention refugees under IRPA or as members of the Humanitarian-Protected Persons Abroad Class, and who receive resettlement assistance from the federal government.
<i>Self Employed Persons</i>	<p>Immigrants who have shown that (i) they can and intend to create their own employment in Canada; and (ii) they can contribute significantly either to the Canadian economy as farmers or to the cultural or athletic life of Canada.</p> <p>** Proof of funds to support themselves and family</p>	<i>Privately Sponsored</i>	Refugees selected abroad for resettlement to Canada who receive resettlement assistance from private sources.
Canadian Class Experience	Foreign workers or graduates in Canada with selected Canadian skilled work experiences.	<i>Refugee Protection Claimant</i>	Refugee protection claimants are individuals who request refugee protection upon or after arrival in Canada. A refugee protection claimant receives Canada's protection when he or she is determined to be a Convention refugee, or when he or she is found to be a person needing protection based on risk to life, risk of cruel and unusual treatment or punishment, or danger of torture.

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada, "Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration, 2008: Glossary" and "Immigrating to Canada"  
<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/publications/annual-report2008/annex.asp>

## **Appendix B** | Home, a place to belong

## Neighbourhood Change & Building Inclusive Communities Research

### Study Area Change, 1971 to 2001

	1971	2001	Change
Population	124,150	106,780	-17,370
Households	33,120	44,915	11,795
People per Household	3.8	2.4	-1.4
One Person Households	14%	33%	19%
Children and Youth	29%	19%	-10%
Seniors	8%	11%	3%
Persons Who Moved	57%	47%	-10%
Born in Canada	44%	47%	3%
Recent Immigrants, Previous Six Years	23%	10%	-13%
Persons in Management	1%	15%	14%
Persons Unemployed, 15 Years and Over	7%	5%	-2%
Median Household Income (constant 2001 dollars)	\$35,400	\$42,600	\$7,200
Median Household Income compared to Toronto CMA	71%	72%	1%
Average Dwelling Values (constant 2001 dollars)	\$143,500	\$273,000	\$129,500
Average Dwelling Values compared to Toronto CMA	91%	99%	8%
Average Monthly Rent (2001 dollars)	\$560	\$800	\$240
Average Monthly Rents compared to Toronto CMA	86%	93%	7%
Rented Dwellings	52%	62%	10%
Apartments (condos and rentals)	35%	56%	21%

Community University Research Alliance  
[www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/cura](http://www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/cura)  
 Statistics Canada, Census 1971, 2001

**Community Sweep Findings:  
How are Residents Experiencing the Changes?**

Aside from physical transformations, gentrification is also altering the way residents experience and live in their neighborhood. What used to be a “very dirty and rough” neighborhood is attracting very different groups of people, along with many changes in the type of stores and activities available in these neighborhoods. To further understand the changes affect people living there, each year SCH conducts a Community Sweep during which multilingual team of staff and volunteers will talk to local residents. The purpose is to promote the organization’s profile, build relationships and identify any unmet needs or concerns in the community.

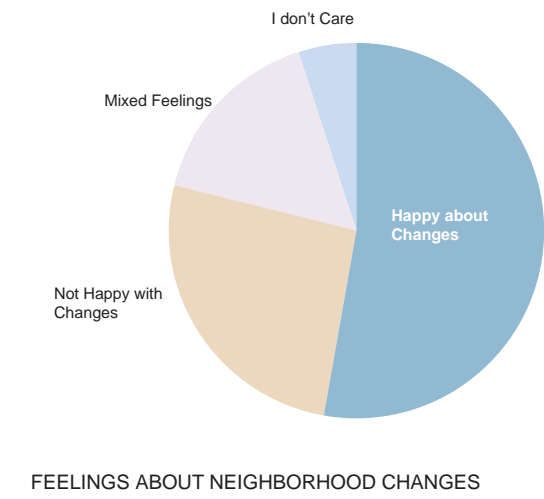
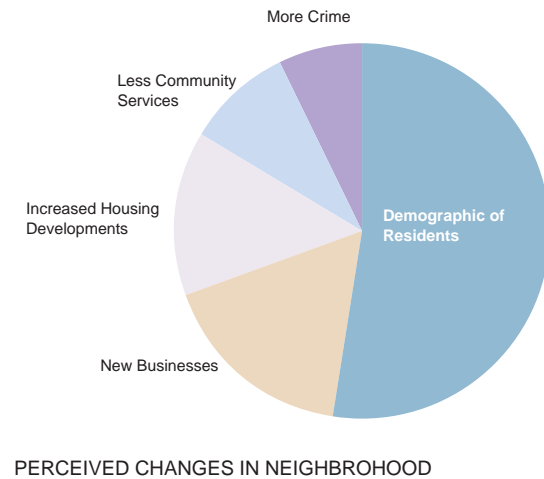
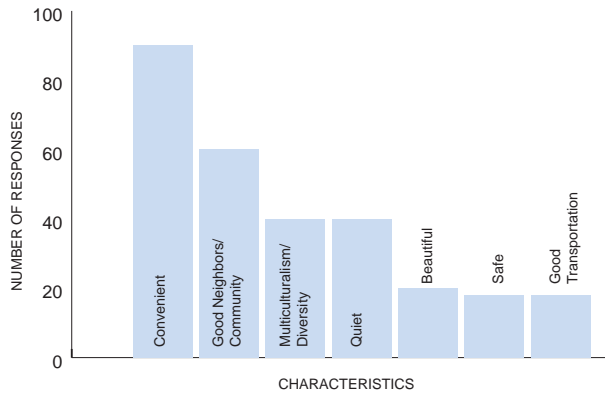
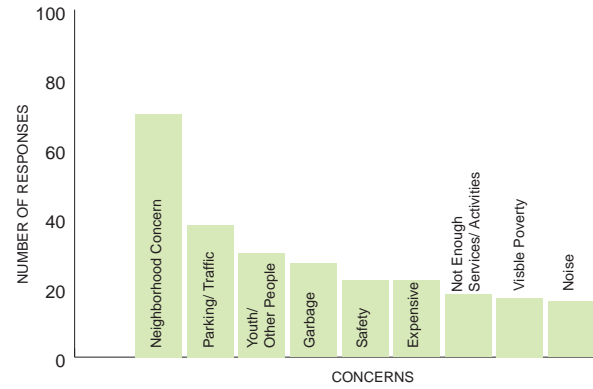


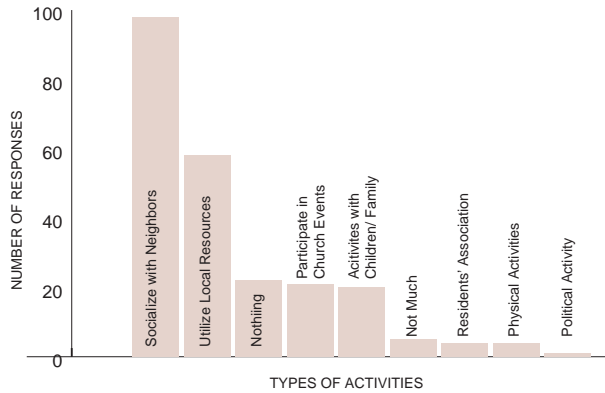
Fig B1 St. Christopher House Community Sweep 2005 Findings (www.stchristhouse.org)



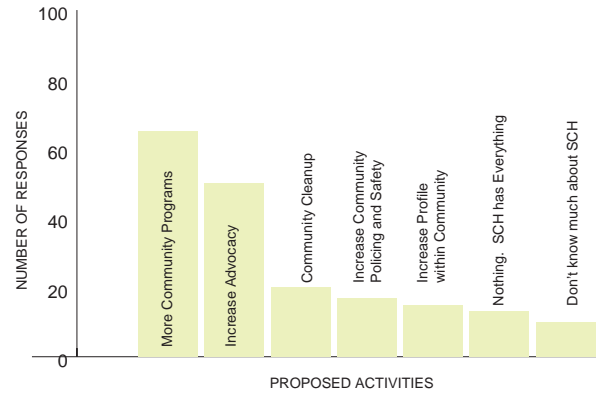
**FAVORITE NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS**  
 \*Respondents can select more than one answer



**NEIGHBORHOOD CONCERNS**  
 \*Respondents can select more than one answer



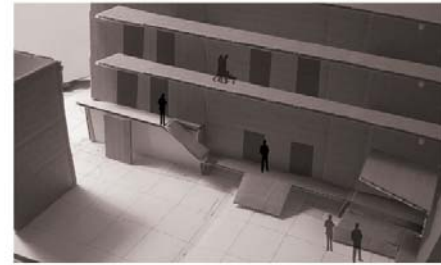
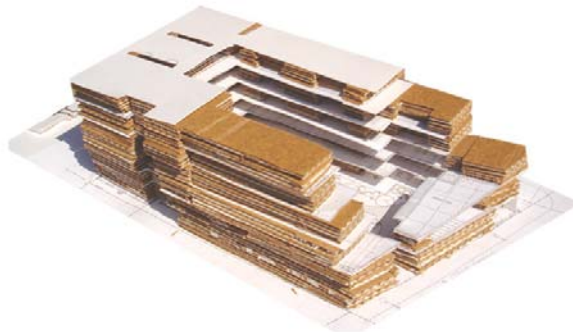
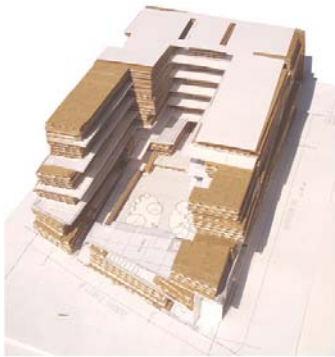
**SOCIAL ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE NEIGHBORHOOD**  
 \*Respondents can select more than one answer



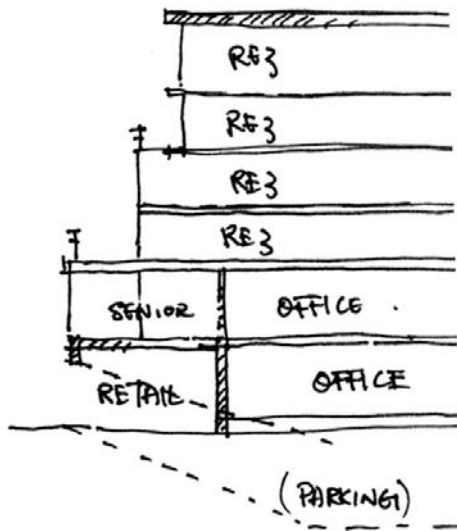
**PROPOSED ROLE OF ST. CHRISTOPHER HOUSE**  
 \*Respondents can select more than one answer

Fig B2 St. Christopher House Community Sweep 2005 Findings  
 (www.stchristhouse.org)

## **Appendix C | The architectural exploration**



Massing Study



Retail Space Option  
(no-parking garage scheme)

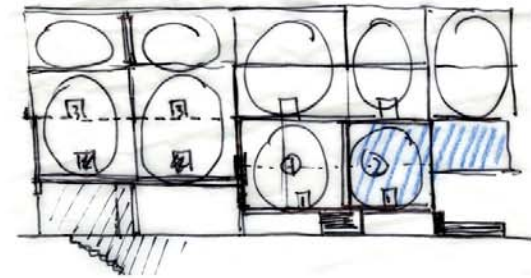
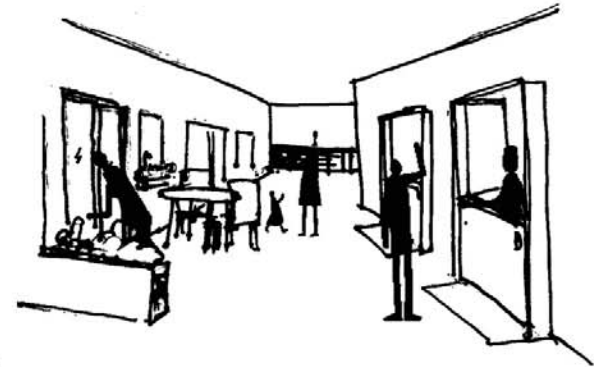
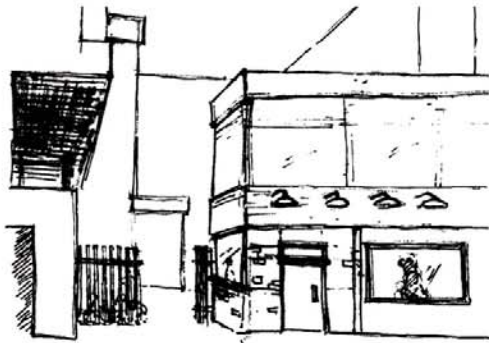
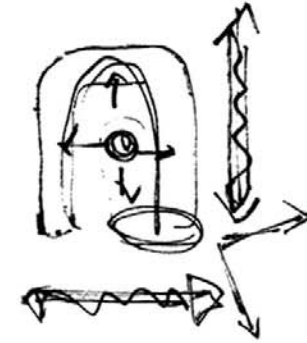
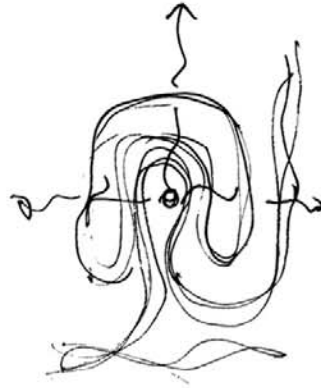


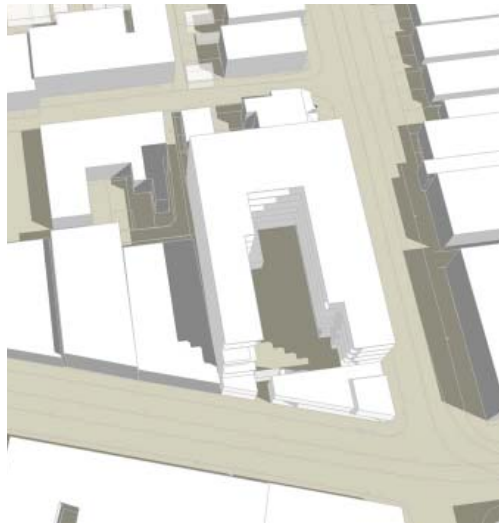
Elevation Study



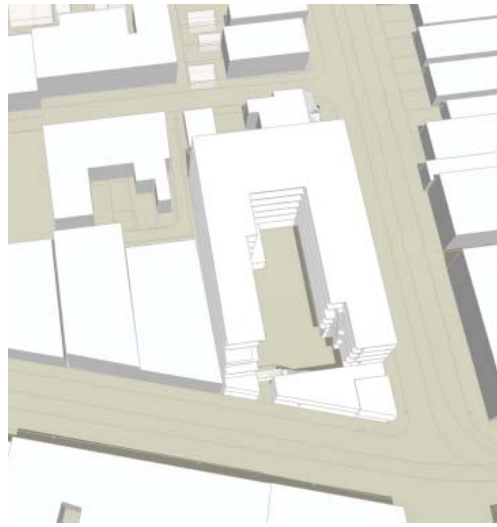
Fig.C.1 Design ideas







Summer Morning



Summer Noon



Summer Evening



Winter Morning



Winter Noon



Winter Evening

Fig. C.2 Sun geometry summer and winter

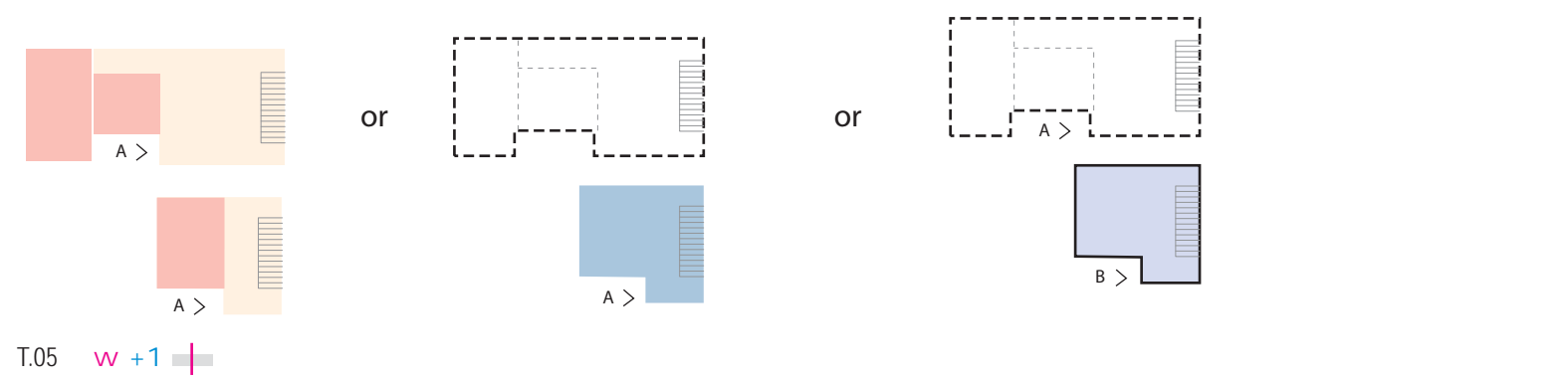
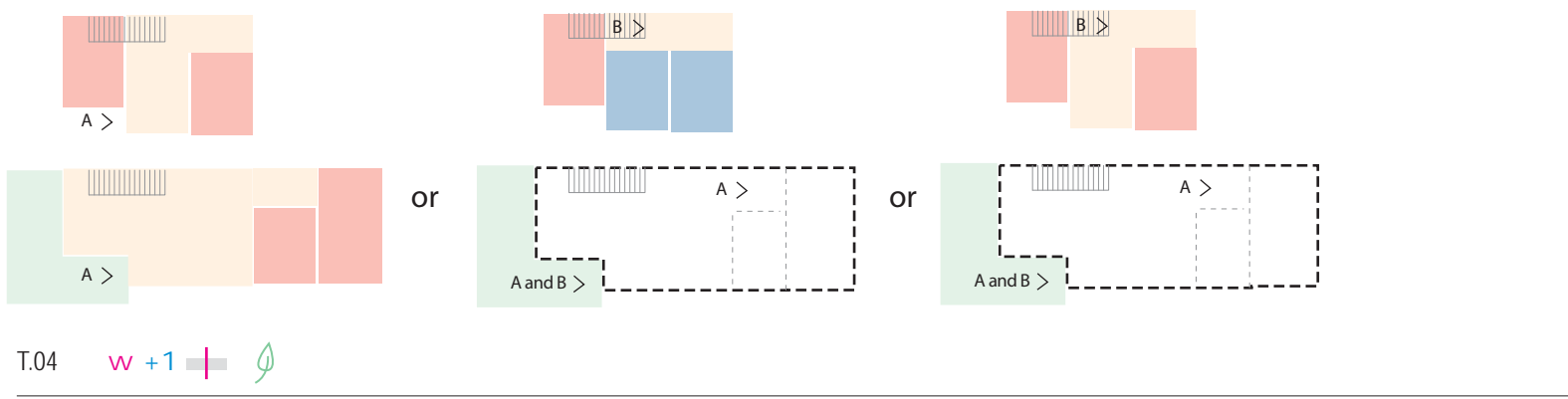
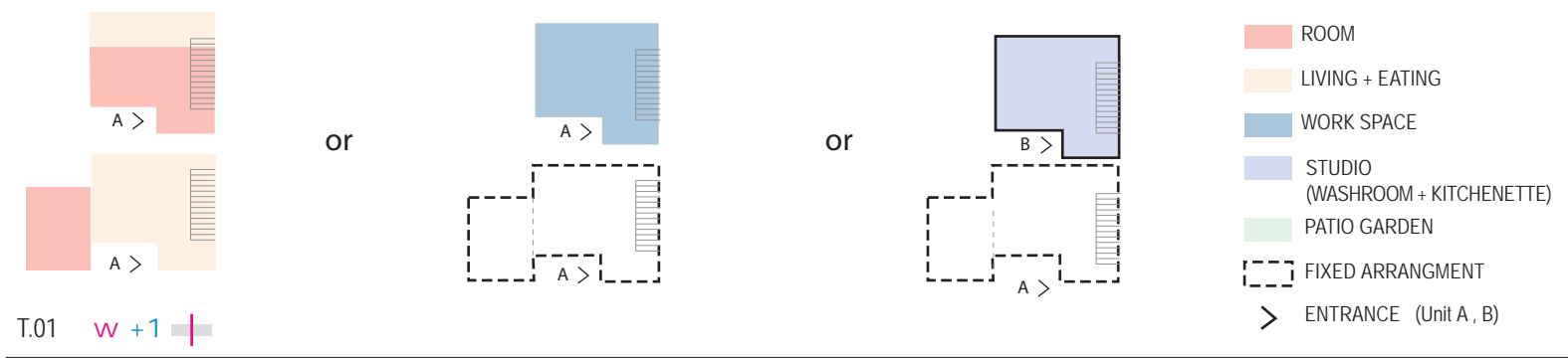
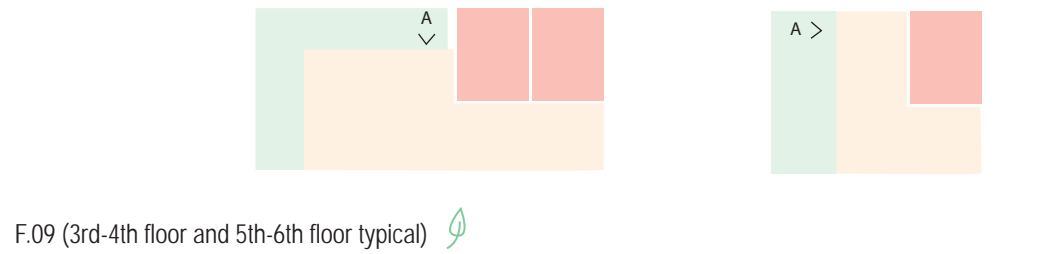
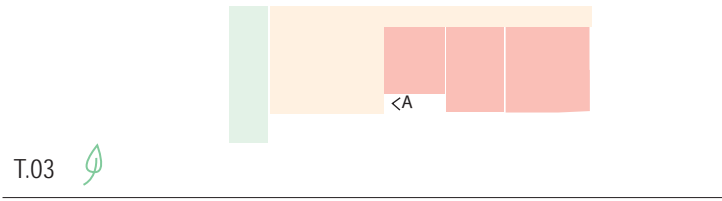
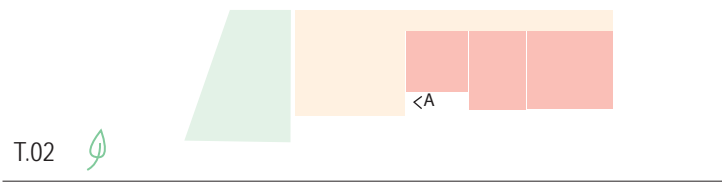
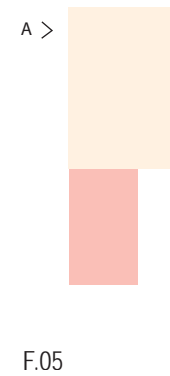
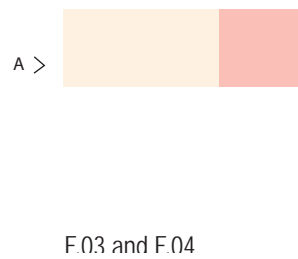
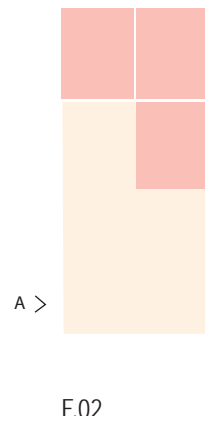
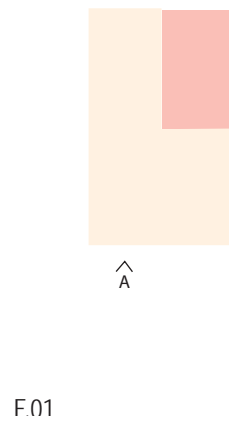


Fig C.3 Possible Unit Layout Combinations

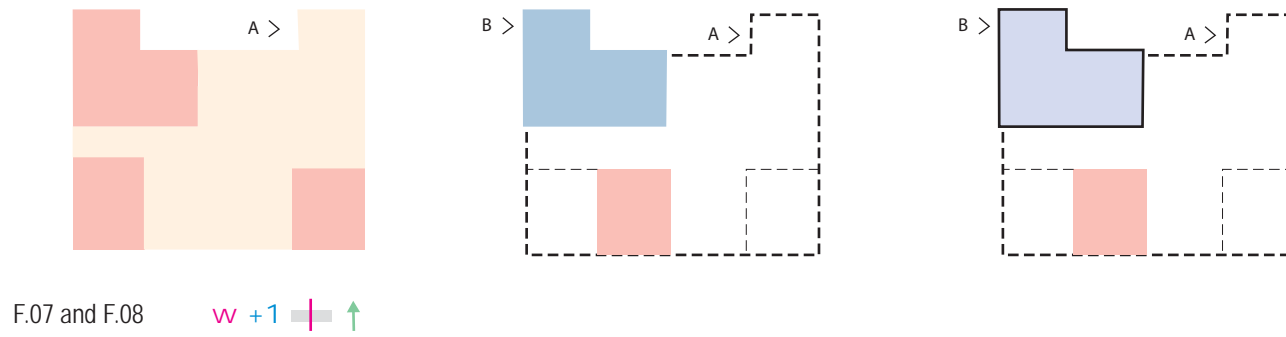
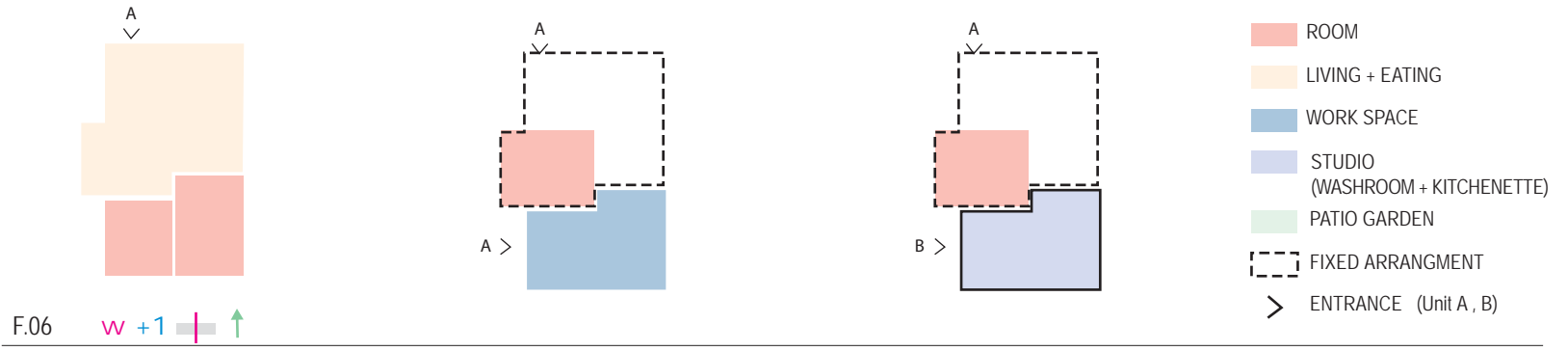
type B: Garden Living



type C: Linear



-  ROOM
-  LIVING + EATING
-  WORK SPACE
-  STUDIO  
(WASHROOM + KITCHENETTE)
-  PATIO GARDEN
-  FIXED ARRANGMENT
-  ENTRANCE (Unit A, B)





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- 18 Mitic, *People in Transition*, 45
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- 11 Pressman, Norman E.P and Livable Winter City Association. *Reshaping Winter Cities: Concepts, Strategies and Trends*. Edited by Norman Pressman. (Palgrave: Livable City Association, 1985)

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- 2 Leigh Snyder, *Bringing People Together First: Gentrification Dynamics and Inclusive Communities in South West Toronto*, (Toronto: Community University Research Alliance, 2006), 8-16
- 3 S. Kalache, L. et al. *Taking Neighbourhood Paule: Gauging Neighbourhood Change in Toronto’s Downtown West End* (Toronto: Centre for Urban and Community Studies, 2005)
- 4 Christopher Day and Rosie Parnell, *Consensus Design: Socially Inclusive Process* (Oxford: Architectural Press, 2003), 41
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