LIVING TOGETHER:
Connecting housing, social well-being and resilience

Dates: June 7–8, 2022
Format: Attend in-person for one or both days, OR attend select panels virtually via Zoom livestream.
In-person venue: SFU Wosk Centre for Dialogue, 580 W Hastings St, Vancouver

Please join us for a two-day series of engaging presentations and dialogues about tackling loneliness and social isolation in our homes and urban communities.

Well before COVID-19, loneliness and social isolation were on the rise locally and globally, deeply impacting personal and collective health and well-being. Unlike the United States, which has declared a loneliness epidemic, or the U.K. and Japan, which have appointed Ministers of Loneliness, Canada has yet to meaningfully identify loneliness as a public health crisis, though trends here are similar.

Many socio-economic factors create higher vulnerability to loneliness and social isolation, including where and how we live. Some studies have shown that residents of multi-unit housing are less likely to know their neighbours or do small favours for them than residents of less dense housing types, and that they report higher levels of loneliness and lower levels of trust in neighbours.

In the Metro Vancouver region, most of our communities are growing up, making multi-unit housing the norm, particularly for low- and middle-income residents. ***This should compel us to creatively interrogate how we design, redesign and program housing and surrounding neighbourhoods.***

The good news is that, although Canada does not have a unified or adequately funded strategy to help us tackle loneliness and social isolation, much is happening locally and across Canada.

Living Together **is a space for concerned professionals and advocates to exchange ideas about efforts happening now and develop a stronger collective voice.** You'll be in good company: we are expecting a diverse gathering of housing professionals, municipal planners, public health professionals, architects, non-profits, funders, emergency management professionals, academics and students.

JUNE 7	In-person	Virtual
8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m.	Networking, coffee, registration	No virtual programming
9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.	**Tackling loneliness: Lessons from near and far** • **Sarah Silva,** CEO, Hiy̓ám̓ ta Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Housing Society • **Joan Ramon Riera Alemany**, Councillor, City of Barcelona • **Ashley Flanagan**, Research Fellow, National Institute on Ageing	
11:00 a.m.–11:30 a.m.	BREAK	Online discussion
11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.	DIALOGUE ACTIVITIES WITH ATTENDEES	No virtual programming
12:30 p.m.–1:45 p.m.	CATERED LUNCH	No virtual programming
1:45 p.m.–3:15 p.m.	**FLUID Sociability tool: Demonstration and panel discussion** • **Bruce Haden**, Co-Founder, Human Studio • **Sadhu Johnston**, Former City Manager, City of Vancouver • **Iris Lok,** University of British Columbia, Department of Psychology • **Madyson McKay**, Project Manager, City of Calgary	
3:15 p.m.–3:20 p.m.	BREAK	No virtual programming
3:20 p.m.–4:20 p.m.	**Towards Metro 2050: Equity report and mapping tools** • **Erin Rennie**, Senior Regional Planner, Metro Vancouver • **Laurie Bates-Frymel,** Senior Planner (Environment), Metro Vancouver	
JUNE 8	**In-person**	**Virtual**
10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.	**Resilient and socially connected housing: Learning from industry champions** • **Michael Eliason,** Founder, Larch Lab • **John Wall,** Public Architecture, Vienna House project • **Kent Patenaude**, Development Manager, Lu'ma Development	
12:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m.	CATERED LUNCH	No virtual programming
1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.	**WORKSHOP -** **Guidelines and policies for social connection in multi-unit housing: A co-creative workshop** • **Michael Epp**, Director of Planning, City of North Vancouver • **Madeleine Hebert,** Housing Researcher / Intern Architect, Happy Cities • **Houssam Elokda**, Interim Managing Principal, Happy Cities	

PROFESSIONAL PLANNERS: Each day of the symposium is eligible for 5.0 PIBC CPL units. Individual sessions are eligible for 1 CPL unit for each hour.

ARCHITECTS: You can self-report the following sessions as non-core learning units to the AIBC Continuing Education system.
- FLUID demonstration (Tuesday 7th) = <u>1.5 hours</u>
- Resilient & connected housing presentation (Wednesday 8th) = <u>2 hours</u>
- Guidelines & policies for social connection in multi-unit housing workshop (Wednesday 8th) = <u>3 hours</u>

SESSION DESCRIPTIONS & SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Tackling loneliness: Lessons from near and far

Tuesday June 7ᵗʰ, 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.
In-person OR virtual

No one is immune from loneliness or social isolation, but strong evidence shows that this crisis disproportionately affects lower-income households, seniors and people facing discrimination (not unlike socio-economic factors putting people more at risk of COVID-19). In recent years, younger people have also expressed worrisomely high rates of loneliness—often higher than seniors. For seniors, though—the demographic that receives the strongest attention from Canadian policymakers on this issue—the health consequences can be severe, often compounding other age-related vulnerabilities.

We all have a role to play in tackling loneliness and social isolation. The leadership that we need includes government policymakers and funders; municipal planners and health professionals; developers, architects and housing operators; non-profits, faith groups and businesses; researchers and consultants and individuals.

Learn from a fantastic panel of Indigenous, local, national and international leaders and then join fellow participants—both online and in person—to learn from each other, find ideas for deepening your work and build a stronger collective voice.

Sarah Silva, Chief Executive Officer, Hiy̓áṁ ta Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Housing Society

- What have Hiy̓áṁ Housing leaders learned so far on their journey to providing new affordable housing that helps welcome more Squamish home? How will Hiy̓áṁ Housing offer solutions to social isolation for residents, and how can Squamish culture be advanced within new buildings? What can non-Indigenous communities learn from this journey to improve opportunities for social connections and better relations within other homes and communities?

Joan Ramon Riera Alemany, Councillor, City of Barcelona

- *What are the roots of loneliness as a problem demanding civic action in Barcelona, giving rise to their 2020-2030 Municipal Strategy Against Loneliness? What were the key steps in crafting and launching this 10-year strategy? What impacts have they seen so far and what can Canadian municipalities learn?*

Ashley Flanagan, Research Fellow, National Institute on Ageing

- Where are we at in Canada in terms of policy attention on loneliness and social isolation as it pertains to older adults? How do we compare internationally and what can we learn from other jurisdictions? Where are there strengths and gaps in Canadian policy approaches and how might we build upon efforts underway and perhaps expand beyond older adults to encompass all impacted Canadians?

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Sarah Silva, CEO, Hiy̓áṁ ta Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Housing Society

Hiy̓áṁ ta Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Housing Society is a non-profit organization mandated to develop and manage affordable housing for the Squamish People and raise the standard of housing for the community. The organization is mandated to build on strong cultural practices and traditions of the Squamish Nation.

Sarah Silva is a proud member of the Sḵwx̱wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) with lineage on her mother and grandmother's side and Scottish/German on her father's. Indigenous and housing rights drive her career and values, believing everyone deserves a safe and affordable home to thrive and be healthy. She is also passionate about building diverse and sustainable communities, while respecting traditional practices. Previously, Sarah was the Manager of Housing Operations with the Aboriginal Housing Management Association (AHMA). In this senior role Sarah oversaw all provincially funded Indigenous off-reserve non-profit housing operations in B.C. and was responsible for funding delivery of 4,000 units and 35 programs and managing the department and staff. Her most treasured work experience was as the Property Manager at the Squamish Nation, Business Revenue & Services Department.

Sarah is a certified property manager and has worked as a real estate agent on the North Shore for many years. Sarah brings lived experience and expertise in Indigenous non-profit housing, real estate management, best practices, and leadership to the organization.

Joan Ramon Riera Alemany, Councillor, City of Barcelona

Joan was elected to Barcelona City Council in 2020 as a Councillor in charge of the Children, Youth, the Elderly and People with Disabilities Office, the same year he presented the 2020-2030 Strategy Against Loneliness. His background includes 10 years of experience in publishing sector, degrees in Business Science at the University Pompeu Fabra (UPF), Business Management and Administration at Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC), and a postgraduate course in Public Policy at University of Barcelona (UB).

Ashley Flanagan, Research Fellow, National Institute on Ageing
Ashley is a Research Fellow at the National Institute on Ageing (NIA), a Ryerson University think tank focused on the realities of Canada's ageing population. She was also recently named Research Chair in Rural Diversity & Aging at Gateway Centre of Excellence in Rural Health and is a member of the Ontario Centre for Learning, Research and Innovation (CLRI)'s Supporting Diversity & Inclusion in Long-Term Care Advisory Group. She completed her PhD in Ageing, Health, and Wellbeing at the University of Waterloo and brings extensive expertise in the areas of socio-cultural gerontological and leisure perspectives, social justice and diversity, qualitative research methodologies, and social theory. Specifically, Ashley's research focuses on 2SLGBTQIA+ ageing and old age with the goal of advancing comprehensive health and wellness policy, programs, and services for older adults with diverse gender and sexual identities.

Ashley is part of the NIA team working on an upcoming report that will provide a comprehensive overview of the risk factors and consequences of social isolation and loneliness in older adults, with a focus on why social isolation and loneliness are important public health concerns that need to be addressed. It will also synthesize existing estimates on the prevalence of social isolation and loneliness in Canada, as well as at-risk individuals, to identify the full extent of the problem. Finally, drawing on both existing Canadian initiatives and best practices of other countries, the report will outline six policy recommendations to address the growing issue of social isolation and loneliness in older Canadians.

FLUID Sociability tool: Demonstration and panel discussion

Tuesday, June 7th, 1:45 p.m.–3:15 p.m.
In-person OR virtual

Join us for a session led by Bruce Haden from Human Studio. During the session, Human Studio will do a demonstration of the FLUID Sociability tool. FLUID is a public good agent-based online simulation tool that allows for quantitative sociability comparisons of different options while buildings are in the early design stages.

The FLUID demonstration will be followed by a panel-style discussion featuring Sadhu Johnston, former City of Vancouver City Manager, Iris Lok from UBC Psychology and Madyson McKay of the City of Calgary. Together, they will discuss the potential impact of FLUID for architects, developers and municipalities and its ability to provide quantitative and comparative data to support design for social connection. They will also discuss the next steps in the project's evolution.

About FLUID

The FLUID project helps address social connection within our built environment. Social connectivity is a central tool for increasing societal resilience and being able to successfully respond to challenges such as economic

inequality, climate change and other potential shocks. Architectural and environmental design can foster (or hinder) certain aspects of social interaction, and so make it easier or harder to form the relationships that lead to individual and community resilience.

FLUID Sociability allows architects to compare designs at early stages in terms of how they support Encounters (the physical opportunity for social interaction), Greetings, and Conversations. The FLUID work is led by Human Studio as a public good project. It is funded by BC Housing and the Robert Woods Johnson Public Health Foundation. Software builders are Distnc.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Bruce Haden, Co-Founder, Human Studio
In 2017 Bruce Haden founded Human Studio with Peter Atkinson. Human Studio's work includes multiple social housing projects, Indigenous cultural and housing projects, and post-secondary and cultural work.Bruce leads work on FLUID Sociability. He is also an author (with Mark Holland and Bruce Irvine) of *Urban Magnets*, a book about enhancing sociability in the public realm through a focus on activity. Urban Magnets and FLUID are the urban and building-level strategies for Human Studio's focus on evidence-based sociability.

As an active member of the Canadian design community, Bruce has many roles. He is the Jury Chair for the international design competition for Block 2 on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. He sits on both the National Capitol Commission's and UBC's design review panels, he is a founding board member of the Urbanarium, he has twice chaired the City of Vancouver Urban Design Panel ,and he assisted both Waterfront Toronto and the City of Toronto in setting up Design Review Panels. Last, he is an advisor and guest on the Urbanarium City Talks housing podcast, "Should I Stay or Should I Go?"

Madyson McKay, Project Manager, City of Calgary
As a registered architect, Madyson brings 10 years of architectural and project management expertise from her work in the private and public sectors. Since joining the City of Calgary's affordable housing team in 2018, she has led design initiatives that focus on tenant outcomes and community building. Madyson is a firm believer in the power of the built environment, and using design as a tool for social equity.

Madyson is active in the community, serving with the Alberta Architects Association (AAA), teaches as a sessional instructor at the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape and is a past volunteer board member of D.talks. She is passionate about creating and discovering vibrant places and is happiest in the mountains.

Sadhu Johnston, Former City Manager, City of Vancouver
Sadhu is a thought leader on cities: how they work, how they can be improved, and how they are evolving to handle the myriad of challenges that they are forced to take on. He was the City Manager of Vancouver, B.C. from March 2016 until January 2021 where he was responsible for managing the operations of the City, including oversight of a budget of over $1.6 billion and over 7,000 staff. As City Manager he spearheaded initiatives to address the growing housing, homelessness and climate change issues in Vancouver.

He was the Chief Environmental Officer of Chicago and Deputy Chief of Staff to Mayor Richard M. Daley where he led the development of the first climate action plan in a major North American city. He is co-author of *The Guide to Greening Cities* (Island Press, 2013) and is a co-founder of the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN).

Iris Lok, University of British Columbia

Iris is a PhD student at the University of British Columbia. She is interested in understanding the barriers that prevent people from making new connections and harnessing social psychology to increase sociability. In the FLUID project, Iris designs experiments to validate FLUID sociability against real world data.

Towards Metro 2050: Equity report and mapping tools

Tuesday June 7th, 3:20 p.m.–4:20 p.m.
In-person OR virtual

As part of its work to inform Metro 2050—this region's draft updated regional growth strategy—Metro Vancouver commissioned a social equity report and produced a set of 49 social equity maps for the region based on different indicators of equity including demographic, housing, environmental, economic, and social development data. These maps will be updated with 2021 census data next year.

In 2022/2023 research into social equity and regional planning will continue with a series of "case studies" looking at how spatial equity analysis can support planning decisions that foster equitable outcomes.

Join other Living Together participants to learn about these resources and tools and to take part in a conversation about what types of future case studies might be useful as we work towards more equitable, complete, socially connected and resilient communities.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Erin Rennie, Senior Planner, Metro Vancouver

Erin Rennie is a Senior Planner at Metro Vancouver working with the Growth Management and Transportation team within the Regional Planning and Housing Services Department. She is also the Metro 2050 Project Manager, working with a cross-sectional team of planners to update the regional growth strategy for Metro Vancouver. Her policy portfolio includes Urban Centres, Complete Communities, Transit-Oriented Development, Health and the Built Environment, and Social Equity in Planning.

Laurie Bates-Frymel, Senior Planner, Metro Vancouver

Laurie Bates-Frymel is currently a Senior Planner in Metro Vancouver's Regional Planning and Housing Department and her work focuses on advancing ecological health, nature-based solutions, climate action, health and the built environment, social equity, and data-driven decision-making across the region. Laurie was a key member on Erin's Metro 2050 team, having led the review and update of environmental policies.

Resilient and socially connected housing: Learning from industry champions

Wednesday June 8th, 10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.
In-person OR virtual

Join us to hear from industry champions who are working to design and develop more sustainable, affordable and socially connected housing. Each presenter will share a short presentation, followed by a guided Q&A discussion.

There is enormous opportunity to alleviate loneliness and social isolation—and build community, social connectedness and resilience—through the design and programming of multi-unit housing (while advocating for renter protections, more equitable housing policy and poverty eradication!). Forward-thinking architects, developers, housing operators and non-profits are working hard to create and maintain innovative housing forms that support social connectedness and well-being. However, we need supportive policy and funding systems to mainstream this innovative housing.

Our champions will present innovative projects and policies that overcome systemic barriers to create spaces and programming that foster social connectedness. They will also share examples of challenges and barriers to mainstreaming innovative housing across the province.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Michael Eliason, Founder, Larch Lab (Seattle)
Michael Eliason is the founder of Larch Lab—part architecture and urbanism studio, part "think and do" tank— focusing on research and policy; decarbonized, climate-adaptive, low-energy urban buildings; and sustainable urbanism. Michael is also a writer, and an award-winning architect specializing in mass timber, social housing, baugruppen (urban cohousing), and ecodistricts. His career has been dedicated to advancing innovation and broadening the discourse on sustainable development, passivhaus, non-market housing, and decarbonized construction. His professional experience includes work in both the Pacific Northwest and Germany.

In his presentation, Michael will share results of his recent study with the City of Vancouver on Point Block Access Housing. He will also share examples of how housing policy and design guidelines can impact the sustainability, affordability and social connection potential in neighborhoods.

Kent Patenaude, Development Manager, Lu'ma Development (West Vancouver)
Kent is a development manager with Lu'ma Development. He is a Cree Status Indian from the Sucker Creek First Nation in northern Alberta. Kent provides research and develops professional affordable housing needs assessments for municipalities, government agencies and non-profit organizations, develops and coordinates comprehensive proposal packages to lenders and funding agencies, develops and negotiates contracts and agreements between clients and stakeholders, works to obtain municipal approvals such as rezoning, development and building permits, implements effective public consultation processes, manages a diverse range of stakeholders and supports clients throughout the design, approval and construction processes - resolving issues and managing risks.

In his presentation, Kent will share some of Lu'ma's recent development projects, including Sixth Street Housing in New Westminster and the ALT Hastings project. He will share the success and challenges of creating housing for urban-Indigenous people and the importance of partnerships.

John Wall, Public Architecture, Vienna House (Vancouver)
In his presentation, John will share his experience as the architect of the Vienna House project. The Vienna House project is a proposed East Vancouver housing community that aims to advance innovative solutions to affordability, climate change and social equity. This project includes many partners including BC Housing, Vancouver Affordable Housing Agency (VAHA), More Than a Roof Housing Society and more.

WORKSHOP

Guidelines and policies for social connection in multi-unit housing: A co-creative workshop

Wednesday June 8th, 1:00 p.m.–4:00 p.m.
In-person only

Join us for an in-person workshop led by the team at Happy Cities. The design of the built environment can be pivotal in our ability to feel healthy, safe, and socially connected. During this workshop, we will use design thinking to envision what design guidelines for social connectedness in multi-unit housing could look like and what accompanying policies are needed to implement and incentive such guidelines.

The workshop will feature a presentation by Michael Epp, Director of Planning from the City of North Vancouver, on the Active Design Guidelines. Michael Epp will share how the municipality built, implemented and incentivized the guidelines. Using the Active Design Guidelines and other examples as inspiration, we will work in multidisciplinary breakout teams.

In the first breakout activity, we will look at successful examples of multi-unit housing that enables social connectedness and identify important spatial criteria. Using different lenses including building codes, existing policy and guidelines, affordability, equity and sustainability, we will identify important elements for social connectedness. Once we've identified elements, we will co-create "roadmaps" for stakeholders to design and implement guidelines and policies for social connectedness in multi-unit housing.

This workshop is meant to kick off future cross-sectoral policy design dialogues with municipalities across B.C. Following the workshop, Happy Cities will compile the workshop results into a brief.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Michael Epp, **Director of Planning, City of North Vancouver**

BIO TO COME

Madeleine Hebert, Housing Researcher and Intern Architect, Happy Cities
Madeleine is a researcher, systems-thinker, project manager and Intern Architect AIBC. At Happy Cities, she uses her practical knowledge of housing design to manage and execute multi-year housing research and consulting projects. Madeleine is curious about how buildings influence people's well-being, seeking to understand how big and small design decisions impact people's lives in various housing types.

Recently, Madeleine has played a key role in Happy Cities' CMHC-funded Solutions Lab and Demonstrations projects. Through these projects, she facilitated engagement that helps stakeholders work through complex challenges in the housing system. She enjoys co-creating community-driven solutions to these challenges, grounded in evidence.

Houssam Elokda, Interim Managing Principal, Happy Cities
Houssam is a community designer, transit planner, and housing and land use policy planner. He leads Happy Cities' work in supporting the development of community masterplans and housing projects. Houssam has a passion for creating urban plans, policies and designs that boost human happiness. He brings an evidence-based approach that helps governments, developers and non-profit clients maximize urban health and happiness. Houssam has led complex masterplanning and policy projects in diverse settings that range from the rural Nova Scotian town of Bridgewater to metropoles such as Dubai, Cairo and Vancouver. He also led Shore to Core, Happy Cities' groundbreaking collaboration with neuroscientists to examine the psycho-social effects of public space design in West Palm Beach. Houssam is part of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) college of experts on housing and is an expert reviewer for CMHC grants. He brings to his planning and policy work a background in real estate development and construction. He also helped deliver multi-year research projects investigating how the design and programming of housing influences well-being.

ABOUT THE SYMPOSIUM HOSTS

HEY NEIGHBOUR! Collective

Using a collective impact approach, Hey Neighbour Collective (HNC) brings together housing providers, non-profits, researchers, local and regional governments, housing associations and health authorities. Together with residents of multi-unit housing, our mission is to experiment with and learn about ways of alleviating loneliness and social isolation while building capacity for neighbourly support and mutual aid.

Learn more here: https://www.heyneighbourcollective.ca/

Happy Cities is an interdisciplinary firm working at the intersection of urban design, policy, engagement and human well-being. We turn evidence into action for happier, healthier and more inclusive communities. Since 2016, we have been researching the keys to addressing the loneliness crisis in multi-unit buildings. We now know that planning and housing design decisions can make or break social connections, elevate or reduce health and happiness, foster inclusion or deepen disconnection. In 2017, we published the Happy Homes toolkit, complete with design and programming actions to boost social connection in multi-unit buildings. Since then, we have been working with the Happy Homes framework to conduct research and consult with developers across the province.

Learn more here: https://happycities.com/

SFU Urban Studies is located in the heart of downtown Vancouver, and we use our neighbourhood, city and region as living laboratories.

Our interdisciplinary faculty includes geographers, public policy scholars, political scientists, historians, economists and anthropologists whose teaching and research interests lie both within and outside Metro Vancouver, and who straddle both theory and practice.

The students we attract have diverse academic and professional backgrounds, which makes for robust, dynamic classroom environments where we explore the many different ways to read, understand and analyze the city.

Learn more here: https://www.sfu.ca/urban.html

SFU Public Square is situated at 312 Main, a centre for social and economic innovation in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. We work across all of SFU's campuses, supporting faculty, students, staff, alumni and diverse communities to convene accessible, innovative and inclusive programming that brings people together to find ways to meaningfully contribute to the issues that affect our lives.

Every year, we collaboratively program dozens of workshops, debates, public conversations, discussion panels and other gatherings. These spaces encourage different perspectives and ways of knowing to collide and influence each other. The experience is transformative, inspiring deeper conversations, igniting networks, building capacity and catalyzing curiosity and concern into advocacy and action.

Learn more here: https://www.sfu.ca/publicsquare.html

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