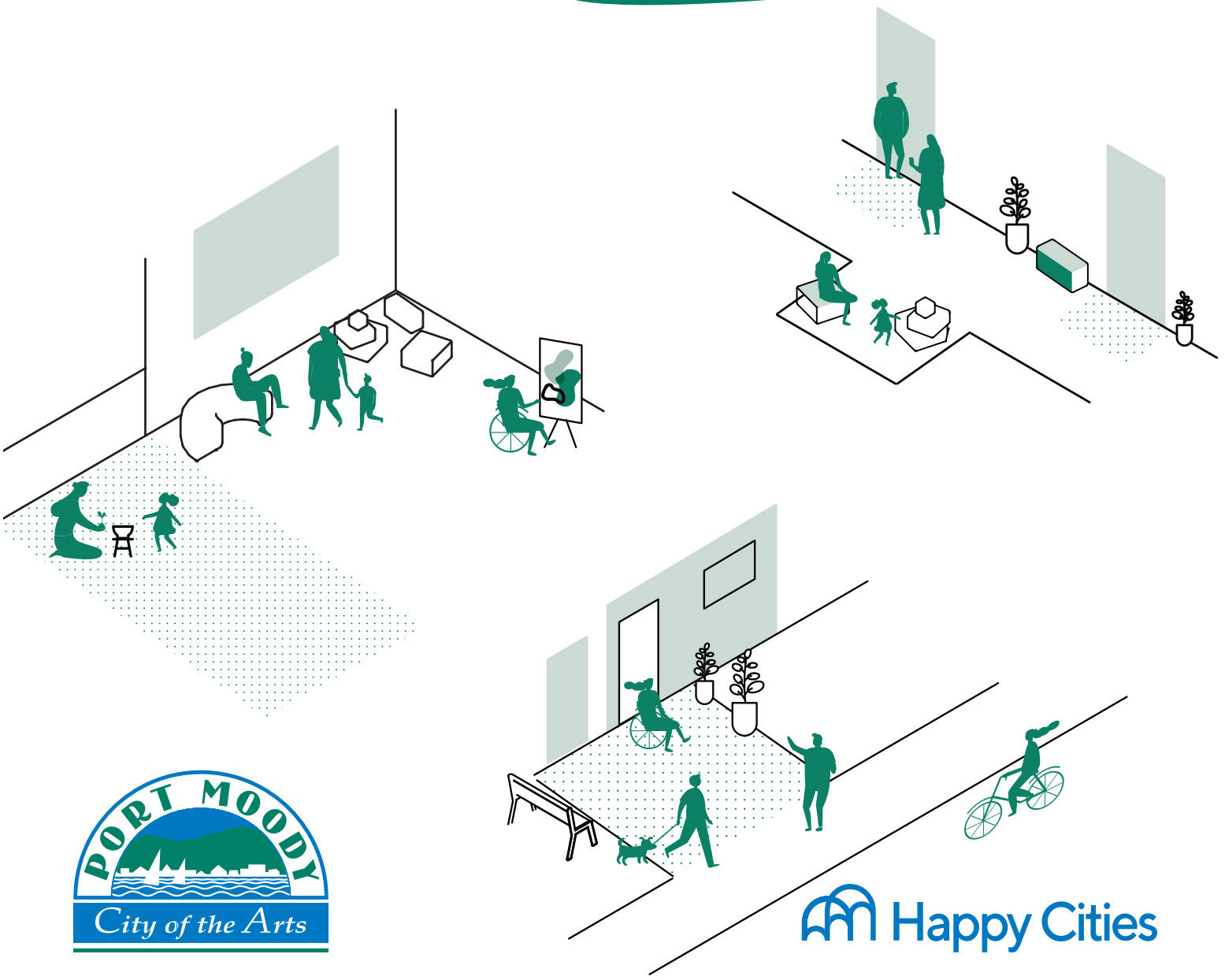
# City of Port Moody Social Well-being Design Guidelines

March 2024

Updated February 2026



PORT MOODY
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# Part 1:
# Introduction and purpose

## 1.1. Introduction

**The City of Port Moody is committed to supporting the health and well-being of all residents, no matter what type of housing they live in. All residents deserve access to attainable housing that supports health, happiness, and inclusion, regardless of age, gender, household size, income, ability, race, or other lived experiences.**

The design of housing can significantly impact people's mental and physical health, for example by promoting or inhibiting opportunities for social connection or physical activity. Previous City documents, including the *Housing Needs Report* (2021, updated 2024) and the *Housing Action Plan* (2022), have identified a greater need for affordable multi-residential housing options in Port Moody, with particular attention to:

- Diverse occupants including single people living on their own; low-income households; families; new immigrants; older adults, persons with disabilities; and people experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness.
- Housing gaps including family-friendly homes; affordable homeownership; secured market rental housing; low-end of market rental housing; and non-market housing.

As more multi-residential homes are built to accommodate a growing population, these guidelines seek to promote healthy growth, prioritize equity, and support a greener, more connected and resilient community. These guidelines are not anticipated to significantly impact the cost of housing, as incentives are provided to offset design elements that go above and beyond what developers are already doing.

### Creating the guidelines

The guidelines were informed by engagement with Council, City of Port Moody planning staff, the Community Advisory Group (CAG), as well as developers and architects who have worked, or are currently working, on projects in the city.

Following Council approval of the *Social Well-being Design Guidelines* in June 2024, the City of Port Moody launched a process in 2025 to update the guidelines with new guidance on the design of age- and family-friendly homes. This process involved re-engaging the CAG, developers, and architects through online workshops and engagement sessions.

# 1.2. Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to ensure that all new multi-residential development projects are designed to support the physical, mental, and social health of residents, and to advance equity and connectedness in the Port Moody community.

More specifically, the guidelines seek to:

- Provide clear, specific, and measurable criteria for developers on how to achieve well-being-focused incentives in different housing typologies.
- Provide clear, specific, and measurable criteria for City staff and Council to identify the well-being performance of new development applications.
- Encourage well-being as an integral part of the development process in Port Moody.

The guidelines are a resource for developers and the City alike. For developers, the guidelines provide incentives to incorporate healthy built environment features into new multi-residential buildings. For City staff and Council, the guidelines inform decision-making related to the performance and assessment of new multi-residential housing development applications and OCP amendments in Port Moody.

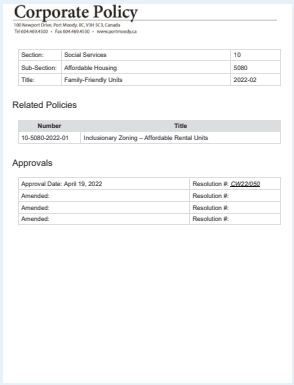
# 1.3. Policy context

These guidelines seek to support existing policy goals in Port Moody, including those identified in:

***The Official Community Plan (OCP)***




***The Family-Friendly Units Policy***


Corporate Policy

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Section: | Social Services | 10 |
| Sub-Section: | Affordable Housing | 5080 |
| Title: | Family-Friendly Units | 2022-02 |

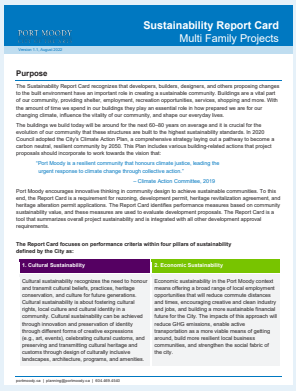
Related Policies

| Number | Title |
|---|---|
| 10-5080-2022-01 | Inclusionary Zoning – Affordable Rental Units |

Approvals

| | |
|---|---|
| Approval Date: April 19, 2022 | Resolution #: CW22/050 |
| Amended: | Resolution #: |
| Amended: | Resolution #: |
| Amended: | Resolution #: |

***The Multi-residential and Mixed-use Sustainability Report Cards***


PORT MOODY
Sustainability Report Card
Multi Family Projects

Purpose

The Sustainability Report Card recognizes that developers, builders, designers, and others proposing changes to the built environment have an important role in creating a sustainable community. Buildings are a vital part of our community, providing shelter, employment, recreation opportunities, services, shopping and more. With the amount of time we spend in our buildings they play an essential role in how prepared we are for our changing climate, influence the vitality of our community, and shape our everyday lives.

The buildings we build today will be around for the next 60–80 years on average and it is crucial for the evolution of our community that these structures are built to the highest sustainability standards. In 2020 Council adopted the City's Climate Action Plan, a comprehensive strategy laying out a pathway to become a carbon neutral, resilient community by 2050. This Plan includes various building-related actions that project proposals should incorporate to work towards the vision that:

"Port Moody is a resilient community that honours climate justice, leading the urgent response to climate change through collective action."
– Climate Action Committee, 2019

Port Moody encourages innovative thinking in community design to achieve sustainable communities. To this end, the Report Card is a requirement for rezoning, development permit, heritage revitalization agreement, and heritage alteration permit applications. The Report Card identifies performance measures based on community sustainability value, and these measures are used to evaluate development proposals. The Report Card is a tool that summarizes overall project sustainability and is integrated with all other development approval requirements.

The Report Card focuses on performance criteria within four pillars of sustainability defined by the City as:

1. Cultural Sustainability
2. Economic Sustainability

Cultural sustainability recognizes the need to honour and transmit cultural beliefs, practices, heritage conservation, and culture for future generations. Cultural sustainability is about fostering cultural rights, local culture and cultural identity in a community. Cultural sustainability can be achieved through innovation and preservation of identity through different forms of creative expressions (e.g., art, events), celebrating cultural customs, and preserving and transmitting cultural heritage and customs through design of culturally inclusive landscapes, architecture, programs, and amenities.

Economic sustainability in the Port Moody context means offering a broad range of local employment opportunities that will reduce commute distances and times, encouraging creative and clean industry and jobs, and building a more sustainable financial future for the City. The impacts of this approach will reduce GHG emissions, enable active transportation as a more viable means of getting around, build more resilient local business communities, and strengthen the social fabric of the city.

***A Guide to SSMUH (Small-Scale, Multi-Unit Housing) Development***


PORT MOODY
A Guide to SSMUH
(Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing) Development
Version 1.0, July 4, 2025

INTRODUCTION

Purpose and intent

In December 2023, the Province enacted new legislation, Bill 44: Housing Statutes (Residential) Act to amend the Local Government Act with the goal of increasing housing supply. Bill 44 is intended to enable Small-Scale, Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) by allowing additional density and dwelling units on single-family and duplex-zoned lots. These housing forms create opportunities for more diverse unit types than larger multi-family housing projects, more affordability than single-family dwellings, and can provide the following benefits:

- Increased housing stock;
- Increased housing diversity;
- More ground-oriented dwelling units for young people, seniors and families.

SSMUH is a significant change to the permitted density, number of dwelling units and form of development in Port Moody's existing single-family and duplex neighborhoods. The density permitted under SSMUH was not considered when these neighbourhoods were originally built and there will be challenges at the outset to this new purpose. Implementation of SSMUH will be an ongoing process as issues are encountered and understood. Applicants and those working on SSMUH projects will need to proceed with diligence, working creatively and collaboratively with the various parties involved.

Is my property eligible? What is the development potential?

portmoody.ca | ssmuh@portmoody.ca | 604.461.4548

# 1.4. Guiding principles

Social well-being includes people's sense of belonging, inclusion, and overall satisfaction with their social relationships and connections. It is a core dimension of overall well-being and is closely linked to mental, physical, and emotional health. Guiding principles for the guidelines were created through engagement with City staff and key stakeholders, including the CAG, members of the development and design industry and public health organizations. The principles are intended to guide development applications and encourage the design of housing that supports social well-being for all Port Moody residents.

## Affordable



Create housing that provides an affordable place to live for people with diverse income levels. Affordability allows people to remain in their homes long-term and build a sense of community over time.

## Family- and age-friendly



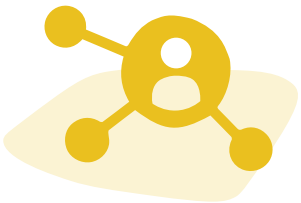
Create housing that supports well-being for diverse populations, including older adults, single adults, young families, and multigenerational households. Design accessible and diverse common spaces that feel safe and comfortable for people of different ages, backgrounds, and abilities.

## Healthy



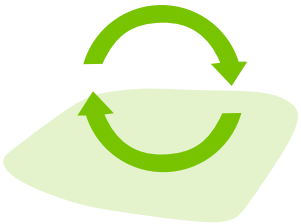
Create housing that encourages people to live an active lifestyle in a walkable, bikeable, accessible community. Enhance access to nature, sunlight, and social connections to support general well-being.

## Socially connected



Create housing that encourages people to connect with their neighbours by providing a diversity of safe, accessible common spaces with supportive social programming and policies. Allow people to control their sense of exposure through design, by providing opportunities for both privacy and connection.

## Resilient



Create housing that supports social, cultural, and environmental sustainability through design features such as courtyards and bicycle and scooter storage.

Part 2:

# Using the guidelines

## 2.1. Applicability

- These guidelines are **voluntary and incentive-based.**
- The guidelines apply to all new multi-residential buildings in the City of Port Moody.
- The guidelines apply to the following different housing forms and tenure types:
  - **Low-rise buildings** (2 to 3 storeys), such as stacked townhomes
  - **Mid-rise buildings** (4 to 8 storeys), such as courtyard apartments or mixed-use residential buildings
  - **High-rise buildings** (3 to 8 storey podium / 9+ storey tower), such as a podium and tower building
- Each action page identifies which typologies it applies to.
- The guidelines apply equally to non-market, affordable, and market housing.

### Is my project eligible for incentives?

- *Applications submitted to the City before the February 2026 update to the Social Well-being Guidelines are not eligible for incentives under these updated guidelines. Such projects are eligible for incentives outlined in the 2024 Social Wellbeing Design Guidelines.*
- Incentives that affect Floor Area Ratio (FAR) must be confirmed through the rezoning process, prior to Council's consideration of second reading or public hearing. **FAR-related incentives cannot be applied at the Development Permit stage.**
- Incentives or bonus points tied to the City's *Sustainability Report Card* may be considered at both the rezoning and Development Permit stages.

# 2.2. Process

These *Social Well-being Design Guidelines* are **voluntary and incentive-based**.

- Applicants who wish to receive **FAR-related incentives** listed in these guidelines are required to prove compliance as part of their rezoning application.
- Applicants who wish to receive **Sustainability Report Card–related incentives** are required to prove compliance as part of either their rezoning or development permit application.

There are four steps to follow in receiving incentives:

**1** Consult with City planning staff to discuss your proposal and determine whether you wish to adopt some or all of the criteria in these guidelines. Please note that some of the incentives provide bonus points in the *Sustainability Report Card*, which is a required submission as part of rezoning, development permit, heritage revitalization agreement, or heritage alteration permit applications. Other incentives that are applicable to applications are identified in Part 3 of this document.

**2** Following the initial conversation with City staff, and while preparing your application, complete the worksheet by filling in the appropriate information that applies to your application and submit a completed copy to your file manager.

### Worksheet instructions

- The worksheet must be supported by enough detail to evaluate compliance. Reference appropriate plans, drawings, and reports to demonstrate how criteria are met.
- Different actions apply to different building typologies.
- For each guideline, check the appropriate box on the worksheet to indicate whether or not your proposal is pursuing the criteria.
- Refer to the worksheets for guidance on measuring the spaces in these guidelines.

**3** Compliance with the criteria in these guidelines will be assessed three times:

- Prior to first reading;
- Prior to Advisory Design Panel and Land Use Committee; and
- Final assessment prior to Development Permit issuance.

At each of these intervals, planning staff will review your worksheet for completeness and accuracy and forward it to staff in various departments for review. Staff will make comments, and provide opportunities to revise the worksheet as needed. The worksheet will be included in the land use reports that are distributed to the Advisory Design Panel, Land Use Committee, and City Council. The community well-being actions incorporated within a proposed development will be summarized in the land use reports. Community well-being actions that are eligible for the floor area exclusions should be summarized on the statistics information page of the submission package.

**4** Commitments indicated on the worksheet will be secured through various means including, but not limited to, development permit conditions, securities, and various legal agreements, such as servicing agreements or covenants, as appropriate.

# 2.3. Definitions

**Accessibility:** Common areas, including common toilet areas and laundry facilities, shall comply with the accessibility requirements set by the most recent version of the British Columbia Building Code.

**Adaptable home:** A home that is constructed to comply with the adaptable home standards in the British Columbia Building Code.

**Active edge:** A ground-floor edge (or first adjacent storey) that is activated with a combination of doors and windows. An active edge must have an entrance every 20 to 30 feet (6.1 to 9.1 metres) with window openings in between.

**Common amenity space:** An outdoor or indoor area specifically designed for use by all residents living on a site for cultural, social, and recreational activities. Refer to the Zoning Bylaw for applicable exclusions. For the purposes of these guidelines, we define two scales of common amenity spaces:

- **Social nooks:** Space is less than 150 square feet (13.9 square metres) and accommodates approximately three to six occupants.
- **Common amenity space:** Space is greater than 150 square feet (13.9 square metres).

**Courtyard:** Courtyards are shared outdoor spaces framed by the surrounding building mass. They provide semi-private areas for residents and visitors to gather, play, and rest, while bringing natural light and ventilation into the building interior.

- **Low-rise courtyard:** A semi-enclosed, semi-private outdoor space framed by building edges on two to four sides. (See 1.1)
- **Mid-rise courtyard:** A fully or semi-enclosed outdoor space framed by building edges on three or four sides, typically formed by an O- or C-shaped building. (See 1.2)
- **High-rise podium courtyard:** A fully or semi-enclosed outdoor space within a three- to six-storey podium, framed by building edges on two to four sides, typically formed by an L-, C-, or O-shaped building. (See 1.2)

**Enclosed balconies:** Enclosed balconies have 60% or more of their perimeter enclosed by building walls or glazing. (See 6.7)

**Family- and age-friendly**: Homes that are designed to accommodate the needs of people across different life stages, including children, adults, and older adults. They include elements such as flexible layouts, accessible design features, and adaptable spaces that support independent living, mobility, social connection, and family life.

**Floor area ratio (FAR):** Refer to the definition as provided in the Zoning Bylaw (BL2937-C).

**FAR exclusion:** This refers to eligible floor area space that is excluded from (i.e. not counted in) the calculation of a project's overall floor area. FAR exclusions are also identified in the Zoning Bylaw.

**FAR subtraction:** This refers to an additional subtraction of eligible floor area (e.g. for a particular common space or amenity) from the overall project floor area, after any applicable FAR exclusions have already been applied.

# 2.3. Definitions (continued)

**Lock-off suite:** A self-contained secondary unit within a larger dwelling that can be independently secured, accessed, and rented. It typically includes a separate entrance, bathroom, and kitchen or kitchenette, allowing it to function as a standalone unit while remaining part of the primary dwelling. (See 6.2)

**Privately owned, publicly accessible space:** These spaces are typically on private property, but allow public access and are considered as an amenity for the wider community. (See 1.3)

**Prominently sited/easily accessible:** Amenities that are prominently sited and easily accessible are directly accessible or visible from the main entrance to the building or major elevator or stairway. The spaces are easily accessible to people of all ages and abilities. For example:

- A roof deck is visible to residents and visitors as they come out of the elevator on that level and can be seen from the street.
- A courtyard is visible from the building's lobby.
- A bike maintenance nook is visible (or a short distance with visible wayfinding elements) to the elevator on the parkade level.

**Semi-private space:** A shared space that is accessible to residents of the building and their guests.

**Social well-being:** Social well-being refers to the extent to which individuals and communities experience a sense of belonging, social inclusion, and overall satisfaction with their social relationships and connections. It is one of the dimensions of overall well-being and is closely linked to mental, physical, and emotional health.

# Part 3:
# The guidelines

## Navigating the guidelines

This section describes each of the social well-being, design guidelines in detail. There are six categories of guidelines:

1. Site layout and use
2. Prominent entrances and active transitions
3. Purposeful parking
4. Social circulation
5. Shared amenity spaces
6. Family- and age-friendly homes

Each category includes a high-level description of the action's importance for resident well-being.

Each category contains specific design actions. Each design action includes:

- A short **description**, followed by a list of specific **design criteria and/or guidelines.**
- **Images or illustrations** for ease of comprehension.
- A specific **incentive(s)**, if applicable, that can be achieved with compliance.

The following pages provides a table of all actions in this policy, including each action's page number, level of priority, and applicability to different building types.

### A.A. Example action

▶ **Action description**

**Incentive:** These boxes detail the incentive(s) that compliant applications are eligible to receive.

These boxes indicate the eligibility requirements for bonus points in the *Sustainability Report Card.*

**Criteria for incentives**

These boxes include a list of design criteria that applications must consider and adhere to in order to receive the incentive.

**Design guidelines**

These boxes include a list of design guidelines and are linked to the *Sustainability Report Card*.

# List of all guidelines


| Guideline | Applies to | Priority | Page |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1. Site layout and use** | | | **13** |
| 1.1. Low-rise courtyards | Low-rise | High | 14 |
| 1.2. Mid-rise and podium courtyards | Mid-rise, high-rise | High | 16 |
| 1.3. Privately owned, publicly accessible spaces | Mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 18 |
| 1.4. Locating family-friendly homes | Mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 18 |
| **2. Prominent entrances and active transitions** | | | **19** |
| 2.1. Distinctive entrances | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 20 |
| 2.2. Sheltered entrances | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 20 |
| 2.3. Accessible entrances | Mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 21 |
| 2.4. Transition from public to private | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 22 |
| 2.5. Animating transition spaces | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 23 |
| **3. Purposeful parking** | | | **24** |
| 3.1. Diverse bicycle storage | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 25 |
| 3.2. Parkade visuals | Mid-rise, high-rise | Low | 25 |
| 3.3. Designated bicycle and pedestrian circulation | High-rise | Medium | 26 |
| **4. Social circulation** | | | **27** |
| 4.1. Lobbies for lingering | Mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 28 |
| 4.2. Active stairways with a lobby area | Mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 28 |
| 4.3. Social nooks | Mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 31 |
| 4.4. Entryway transitions | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | Low | 33 |
| 4.5. Exposure at home entrances | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 33 |
| **5. Shared amenity spaces** | | | **34** |
| 5.1. Diverse amenity spaces | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | High | 35 |
| 5.2. Shared storage spaces | Mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 39 |
| 5.3. Universal washrooms | Mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 39 |

# List of all guidelines


| Guideline | Applies to | Priority | Page |
|---|---|---|---|
| **6. Family- and age-friendly homes** | | | **40** |
| 6.1. Diverse homes | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | High | 41 |
| 6.2. Lock-off suites | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 42 |
| 6.3. Livable homes | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | High | 43 |
| 6.4. Adaptable homes | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | High | 47 |
| 6.5. Efficient storage | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 48 |
| 6.6. Usable private balconies and patios | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 49 |
| 6.7. Enclosed balconies | Low-rise, mid-rise, high-rise | Medium | 51 |
| **7. Best practices for programming and policy** | | | **52** |

# 1. Site layout and use

### Importance for well-being:

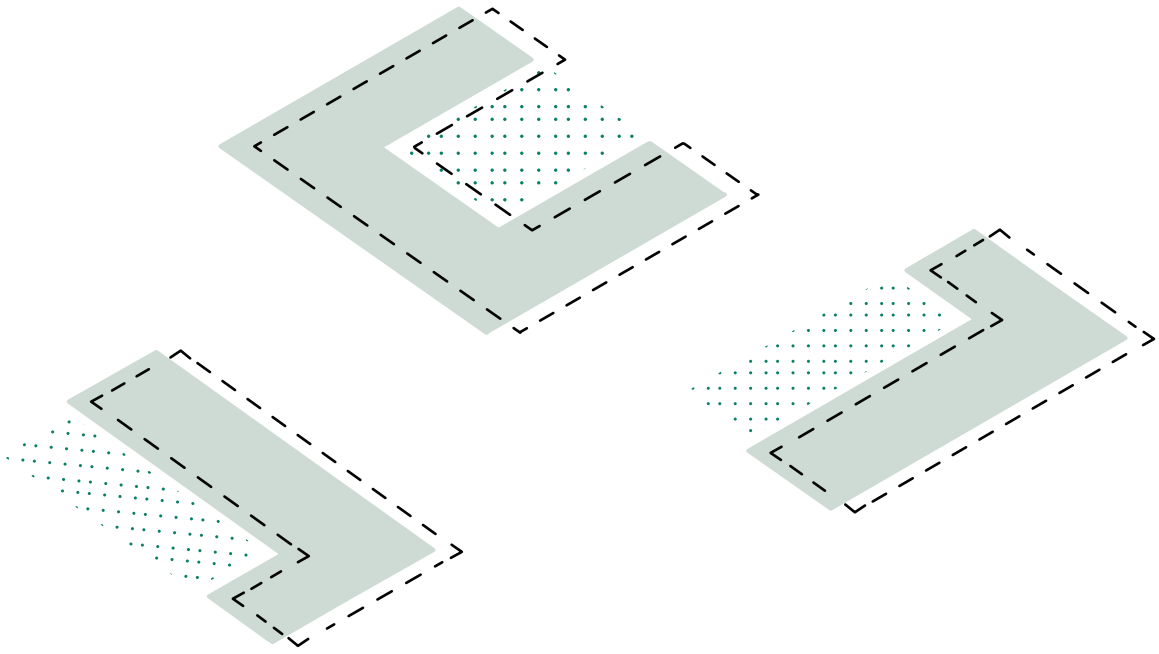
Site layout and use set the foundation for social well-being in multi-residential housing. Both site layout and use directly influence the functionality, aesthetics, and social dynamics of a community. The scale of the building—including the number of storeys and homes—influences how people feel and interact at the site. Thoughtful building form considerations can provide communal spaces for residents to interact, such as shared courtyards. Additionally, the strategic placement of family-friendly homes near common amenity spaces or exterior entrances ensures convenience and accessibility. Designing a mixed-use site (for example, a mix of housing, retail, services, and institutional uses) can further enhance the livability of the space—promoting a dynamic environment where residents can live, work, and play in close proximity.

1.1. Low-rise courtyards

1.2. Mid-rise and podium courtyards

1.3. Privately owned, publicly accessible spaces

1.4. Locating family-friendly homes



# 1.1. Low-rise courtyards

**▶ In low-rise buildings, include a semi-enclosed courtyard that can be open on one or two sides. Courtyards are typically semi-private, catering to residents and their visitors.**

**Applies to:** Low-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** High

**Incentive:** Developers who comply with the criteria in 1.1 can receive a FAR subtraction from the overall project floor area equal to 1.0 times the courtyard area. City staff may also consider setback reductions or an additional storey on a case-by-case basis.



**Courtyard at Vancouver Cohousing**
*Image: Vancouver Cohousing*



**Courtyard at Bishop's Landing, Halifax**
*Image: Happy Cities*

**Criteria for incentives**

**1.1.1.** Do not use courtyards for regular vehicular access or parking.

**1.1.2.** Design courtyard dimensions to provide programmable, interactive, and accessible space for residents.

**1.1.3.** Accommodate at least three different uses and activities in the courtyard (supported by infrastructure as needed, such as seats and outlets).

**1.1.4.** Include at least one function that allows residents to take ownership of the space (e.g. a community garden, flexible furniture, or a place to create a mural).

**1.1.5.** Orient the courtyard to maximize the amount of daily sunlight in the space.

**1.1.6.** Provide a weatherproof area (through awnings, permanent umbrellas and other covered structures).

**1.1.7.** Ensure all building edges that face the courtyard meet the following edge conditions:

(A) Design home entrances at grade (such as townhomes with stoops) and/or private patios at the courtyard level that are adjacent to the home's living space (kitchen/living room).

(B) Provide a clear transition between these private spaces and the semi-public courtyard by using a mixture of taller and lower architectural and landscape elements for moderate privacy, while retaining opportunities to interact with neighbours.

(C) Include balconies that overlook the courtyard above ground level.

**1.1.8.** Provide at least one element that celebrates nature, such as a large mature tree, a rain garden, a pollinator garden, green wall, or other features.

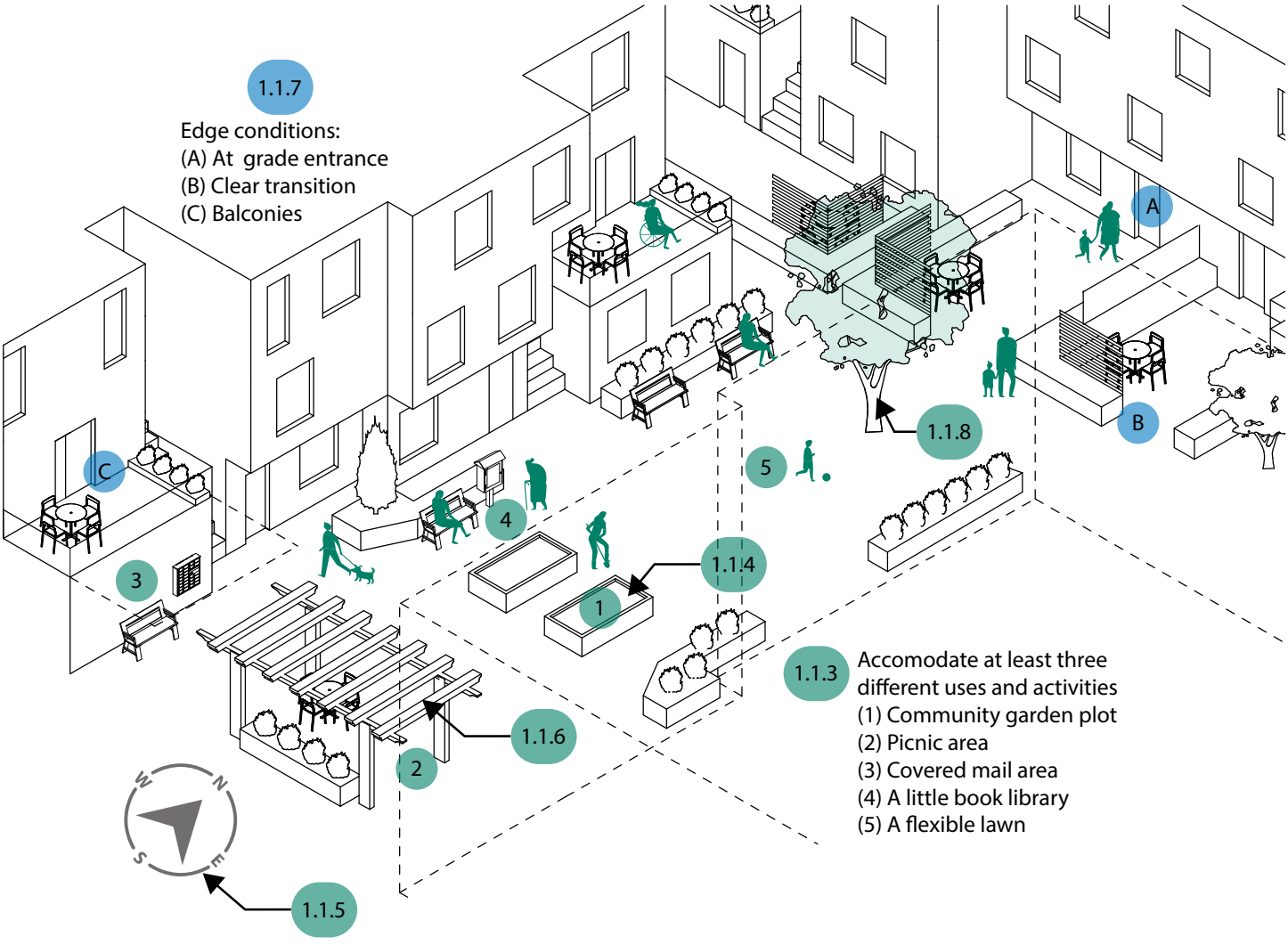
# 1.1. Example: Low-rise courtyard illustration

***Sample courtyard statement:***

*This courtyard in a low-rise townhome complex provides a focal community gathering place through the provision of flexible and programmed spaces. The space will allow residents of all ages to interact. The space will allow residents to bump into neighbours on their way home, or wave to passersby from private patios. The future courtyard will include:*

*1- Community garden plots*
*2- An outdoor covered picnic area*
*3- A covered mail area with seating*
*4- A little book library and seating area*
*5- A flexible lawn*

*The building edges have a mixture of exterior stairs, windows, second floor patios, and ground level patios with a mix of planting and vegetation. The orientation of the court-yard will allow for ample sun in the central space.*



## 1.2. Mid-rise and podium courtyards

- **In mid-rise buildings, include a fully enclosed (O-shaped building) or semi-enclosed (C-shaped building) shared courtyard.**
- **In high-rise buildings, incorporate a three- to six-storey podium base beneath the tower of the building that includes a semi-enclosed courtyard (C- or L-shaped building).**

**Applies to:** Mid-rise and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** High

**Incentive:** Courtyards that comply with the criteria list in 1.2 are eligible for a FAR subtraction from the overall project floor area equal to 1.0 times the courtyard area. City staff may also consider setback reductions or an additional storey on a case-by-case basis.



**Courtyard at Station Center Family Housing, USA**
*Image: Bruce Damonte / David Baker Architects*

**Criteria for incentives**

**1.2.1.** Design a courtyard area that is large enough to create programmable, interactive, and accessible space for residents.

**1.2.2.** Accommodate at least five different uses and activities in the courtyard (supported by infrastructure as needed, such as seats and electrical and water outlets).

**1.2.3.** Include at least one function that allows residents to take ownership of the space (e.g. a community garden, flexible furniture, or a place to create a mural.

**1.2.4.** Orient the courtyard to maximize the amount of daily sunlight in the space.

**1.2.5.** Provide a weatherproof area (through awnings, permanent umbrellas and other covered structures).

**1.2.6.** Ensure that all building edges that face the courtyard include **two or more** of the following edge conditions:

(A) Home entrances at grade (such as townhomes with stoops) with private patios at the courtyard level that are adjacent to the home's living space (kitchen/living room) and that provide a clear transition between private homes and the semi-public courtyard (using a mixture of taller and lower architectural and landscape elements for moderate privacy, while retaining opportunities to interact with neighbours).

(B) Balconies that overlook the courtyard above ground level.

(C) Direct access from the courtyard to indoor amenity spaces or lobbies.

(D) Exterior circulation above the courtyard level with weather protection and that:

- Provides a visual connection between the courtyard and home entrances.
- Provides wider corridors to allow space for residents to interact or linger (minimum 1.5 metres / 4.9 feet wide).

**1.2.7.** Provide at least one element that celebrates nature, such as a large mature tree, a rain garden, a pollinator garden, green wall, or other features.

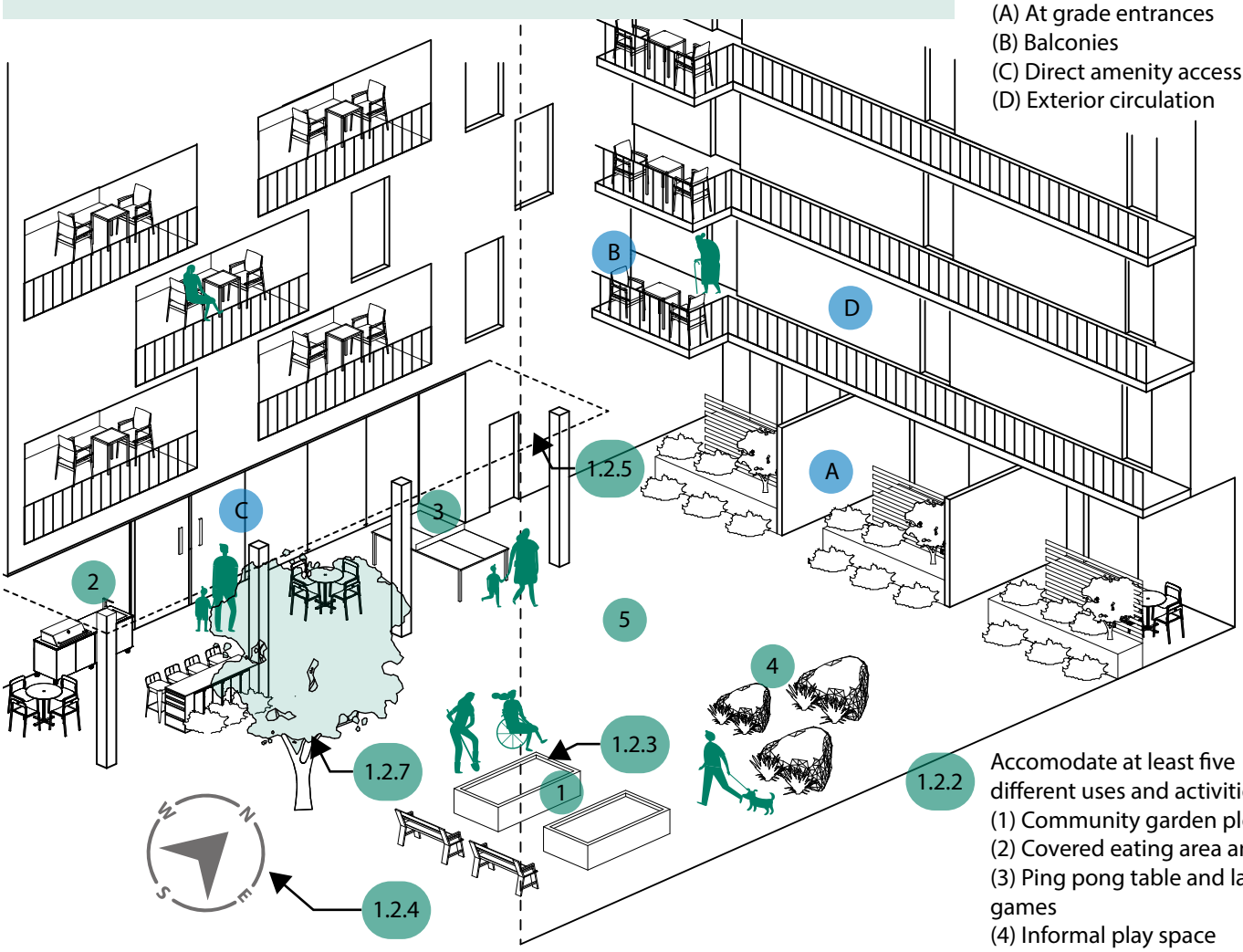
# 1.2. Example: Mid-rise and podium courtyard illustration

***Sample courtyard statement:***

*This courtyard is part of a six-storey rental building and provides a focal community gathering place through the provision of flexible and programmed spaces. The space will allow residents of all ages to interact. The space will allow residents to bump into neighbours on their way home due to direct proximity to the building's main lobby and direct access to ground-floor homes, or wave to passersby from private patios. The future courtyard will include:*

*1- Community garden plots*
*2- An outdoor covered eating area with BBQ*
*3- A ping pong table and other lawn games, with access to a shared storage*
*4- Boulders than can serve as informal play spaces*
*5- A flexible lawn*

*The building edges have a mixture of windows, balconies, and ground-level patios with diverse planting and vegetation. The orientation of the courtyard will allow for ample sun in the central space. In addition, the courtyard provides direct access to an interior lounge, the building's main lobby, a small shared storage, and an accessible washroom.*



## 1.3. Privately owned, publicly accessible spaces

### ▶ Include a privately owned, publicly accessible, non-commercial destination, such as a mews, plaza, or other shared outdoor space.

**Applies to:** Mid-rise and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card* and is eligible for bonus points where applicants demonstrate compliance with the majority of the design guidelines associated with this action. It is included in this document for reference.

**Design guidelines**

**1.3.1.** Include at least five programming elements, such as play spaces, a community garden, public artwork, seating, vegetation, walking paths, or a space for pets.

**1.3.2.** Design the majority of the edges facing the mews or plaza space to be "Active Edges" (refer to definitions on page 8).



**Rendering of public mews at Mary Anne's Place, Port Moody**
*Image: Placemaker Communities*



**Dog park at Potrero 101, USA.**
*Image: Bruce Damonte / David Baker Architects*

## 1.4. Locating family-friendly homes

### ▶ Locate family-friendly homes (with three bedrooms or more) with direct access to a ground-level courtyard, elevated courtyard, or occupiable roof deck space.

This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card*. It is eligible to receive bonus points in the *Sustainability Report Card*. It has been included in this document for reference.

**Applies to:** Mid-rise and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

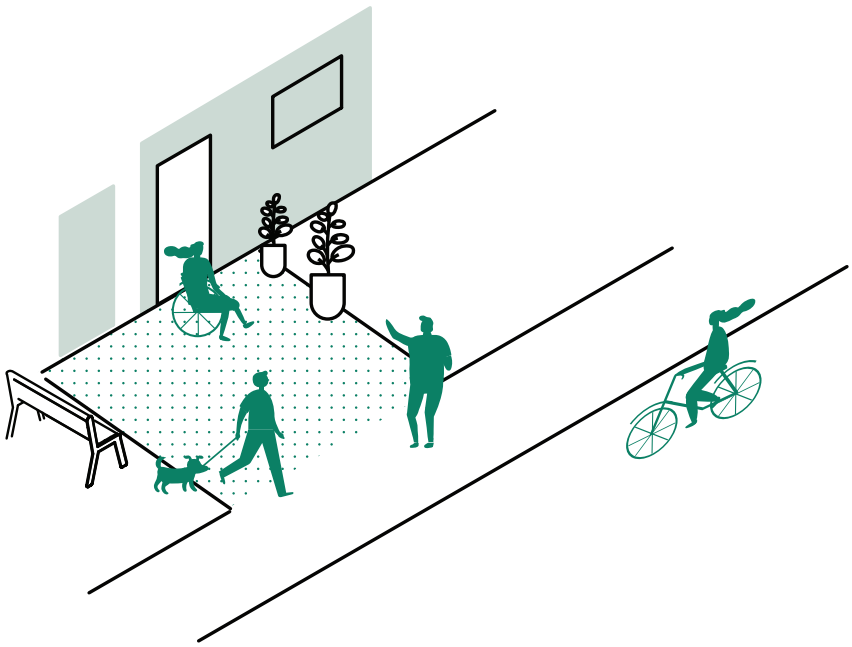
# 2. Prominent entrances and active transitions

2.1. Distinctive entrances
2.2. Sheltered entrances
2.3. Accessible entrances
2.4. Transition from public to private
2.5. Animating transition spaces

## Importance for well-being:

Building facades and entrances are an interface between private and public space. Clear wayfinding helps ensure that visitors, residents, and emergency responders can easily access the premises, while active building edges and entrances can foster a sense of belonging and community. Well-designed transition spaces thoughtfully connect the building's interior life with the surrounding public realm, creating a seamless integration.

Transition spaces at building edges and entrances should enable residents of all ages, backgrounds, abilities, and preferences to control their exposure to the public realm, while allowing eyes on the street to create a sense of safety. The dimensions and design features of these spaces impact how residents and passersby interact. Building edges should be visually complex and include activity nodes, offering multiple functions to generate activity and conversations between neighbours. Research has found that people are more trusting and helpful along visually diverse facades than along blank ones.[1]



**1** For more information, see:

Brielmann, A.A., Buras, N.H., Salingaros, N.A., and Taylor, R.P. (2022). What Happens in Your Brain When You Walk Down the Street? Implications of Architectural Proportions, Biophilia, and Fractal Geometry for Urban Science. Urban Science 6(3). https://doi.org/10.3390/urbansci6010003

Ellard, C. (2020). Neuroscience, Wellbeing, and Urban Design: Our Universal Attraction to Vitality. *Psychological Research on Urban Society* 3(1), 6-17. https://scholarhub.ui.ac.id/proust/vol3/iss1/9

Happy Cities and Futurewise. (2015). *Editable Urbanism*. https://happycities.com/projects/editable-urbanism

## 2.1. Distinctive entrances

### ▶ Create distinctive entrances through building articulation, material variation, and placing entrances in prominent locations.

This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card*. It is eligible to receive bonus points in the *Sustainability Report Card*. It has been included in this document for reference.

**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

## 2.2. Sheltered entrances

### ▶ Provide awnings and overhangs at all private and shared entrances for weather protection.

**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card* and is eligible for bonus points where applicants demonstrate compliance with the majority of the design guidelines associated with this action. It is included in this document for reference.

**Design guidelines**

**2.2.1.** Design shared entrances in mid-rise and high-rise buildings with a cover that is at least 1.8 metres (6 feet) deep.

**2.2.2.** Ensure private exterior entrances have a shelter that is at least 0.9 metres (3 feet) deep.




**Entrance kiosk at Silver Gardens seniors housing**
*Image: Rose Romero*




**Sheltered entrance at Five88 affordable housing, USA**
*Image: Mariko Reed / David Baker Architects*

## 2.3. Accessible entrances

▶ **Create accessible, visible entrances for visitors and residents of all ages and abilities. Refer to the building code for base criteria for accessibility.**

**Applies to:** Mid-rise and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card* and is eligible for bonus points where applicants demonstrate compliance with the majority of the design guidelines associated with this action. It is included in this document for reference.

**Design guidelines**

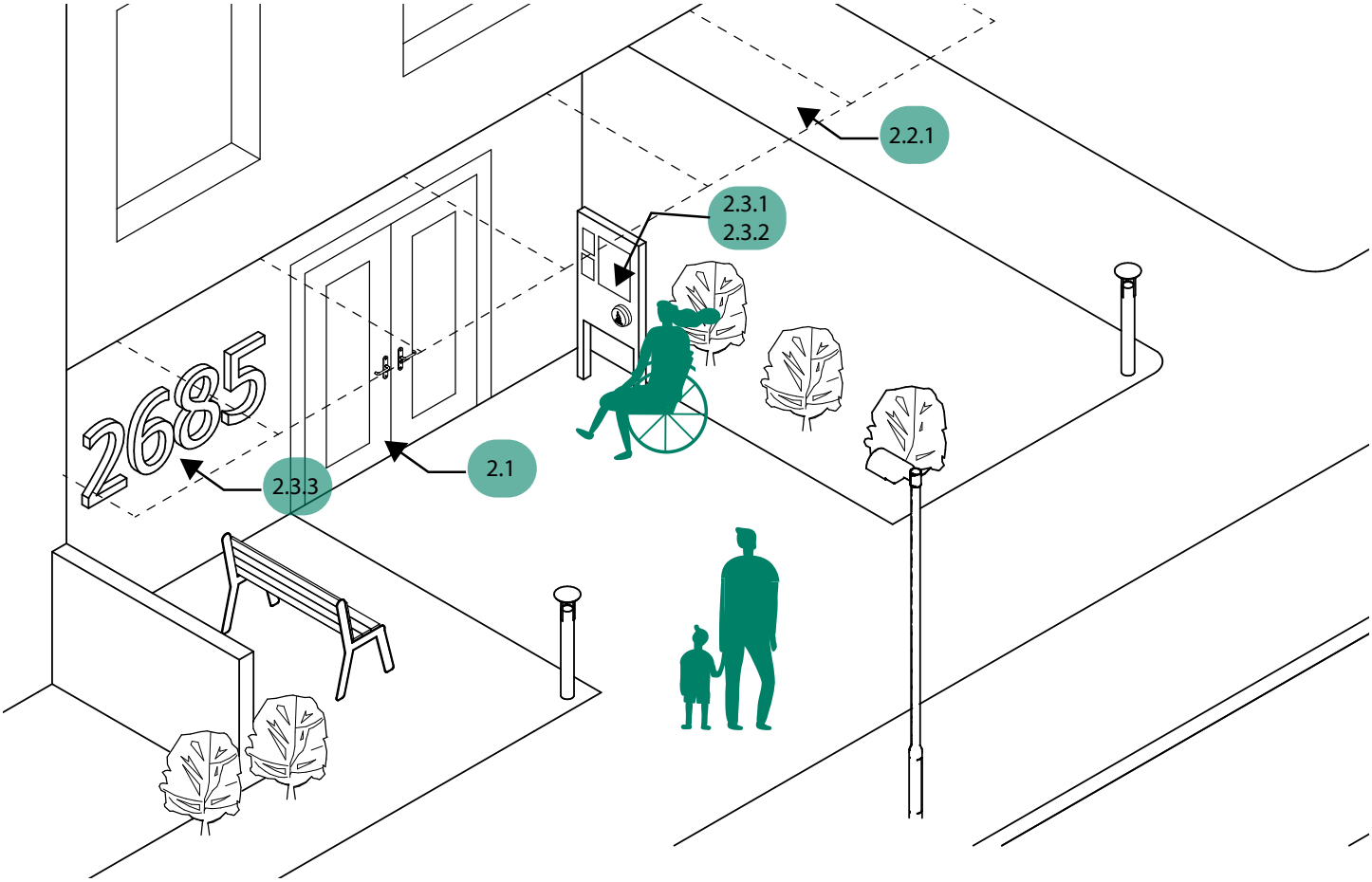
**2.3.1.** Include an easily accessible push button to open the doorway.

**2.3.2.** Include an easy-to-use call system.

**2.3.3.** Include clear graphics showing the address.

**2.3.4.** Where there are grade changes, create ramps that feel of equal prominence to stairs.

**2.3.5.** Include a variety of lighting types (e.g. in-ground, overhead, wall-mounted) at entrances to ensure good visibility for people of all ages and abilities.




Accessible entrance example

## 2.4. Transition from public to private

### ▶ Use accessory structures and landscape elements to create a clear transition from the public realm to the building edge, through the use of fences, stoops, or other layered architectural elements.

In particular, pay attention to transition areas around individual, ground-level entrances and private patios. These design strategies allow residents to control their exposure to passersby while still creating opportunities for social interactions.

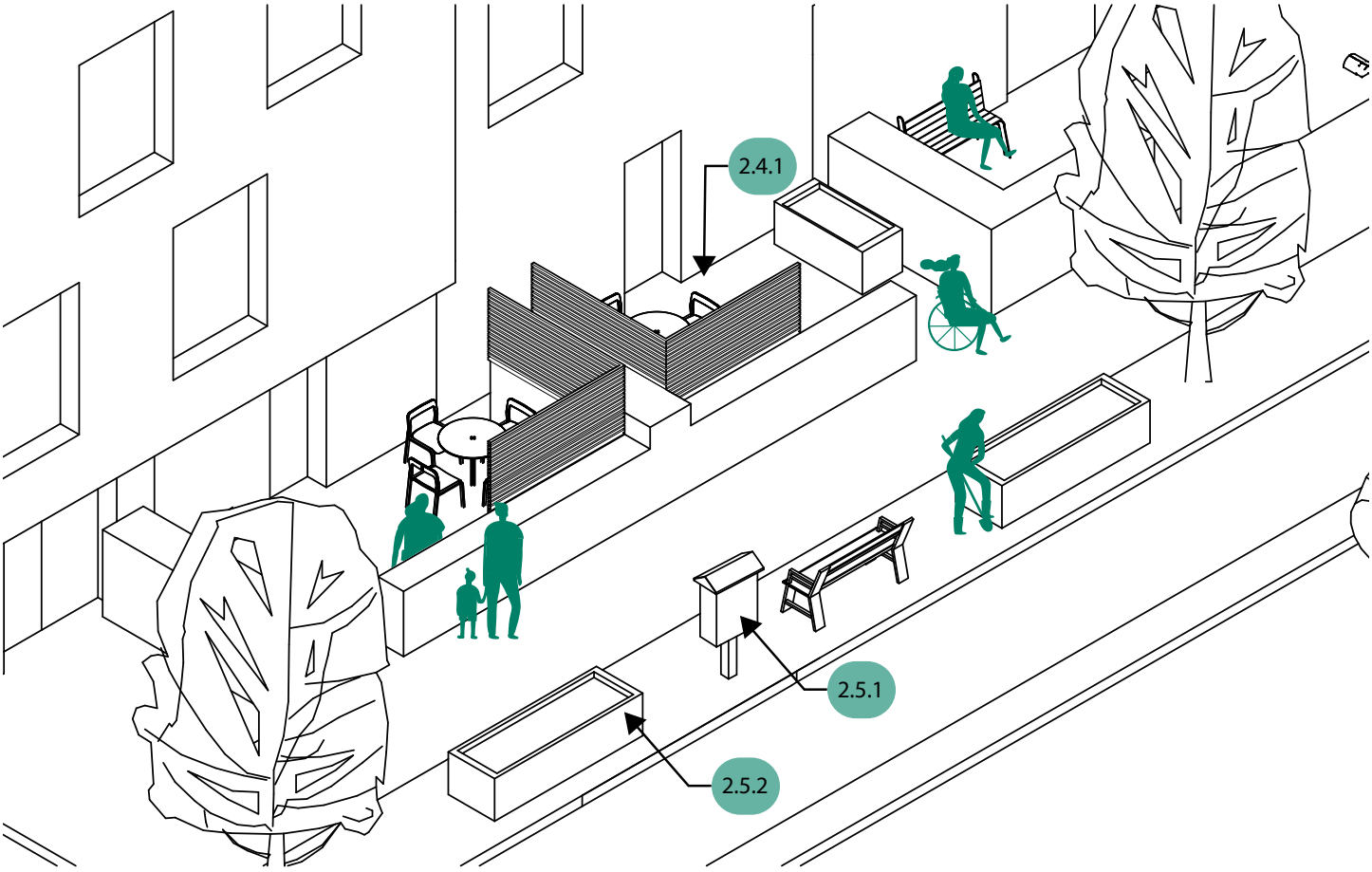
**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

**Design guidelines**

**2.4.1.** Create a distance of 3 to 4 metres (9.8 to 13.1 feet) between the building edges and public or semi-public spaces (e.g. walkways, publicly accessible courtyards, sidewalks).

This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card* and is eligible for bonus points where applicants demonstrate compliance with the design guideline associated with this action. It is included in this document for reference.




Transition space example

## 2.5. Animating transition spaces

- **Minimize leftover or under-designed spaces at setbacks along major building facades adjacent to a public sidewalk. This can be achieved by co-locating a diversity of design features that encourage residents and passersby to pause and interact.**

**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

**Design guidelines**

**2.5.1.** Include features such as seating, feature lighting, placemaking elements, gardens, and landscape features.

**2.5.2.** Co-locate three to five features together to amplify activity.

**2.5.3.** Along major edges, provide an activity node every 5 metres for high-rise buildings, and every 7 to 10 metres for low-rise and mid-rise buildings.



**Water features, light, retail, and placemaking at Marine Gateway, Vancouver**
*Image: PWL Partnership*

**Incentive:** City staff are open to discussing applications that propose placing non-permanent structures on City property adjacent to the building.

This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card* and is eligible for bonus points where applicants demonstrate compliance with the majority of the design guidelines associated with this action. It is included in this document for reference.



**Active building edge next to public space, UK.**
*Image: Space Syntax*



**Active edges at Quayside Village, North Vancouver**
*Image: Meg Wray*

# 3. Purposeful parking

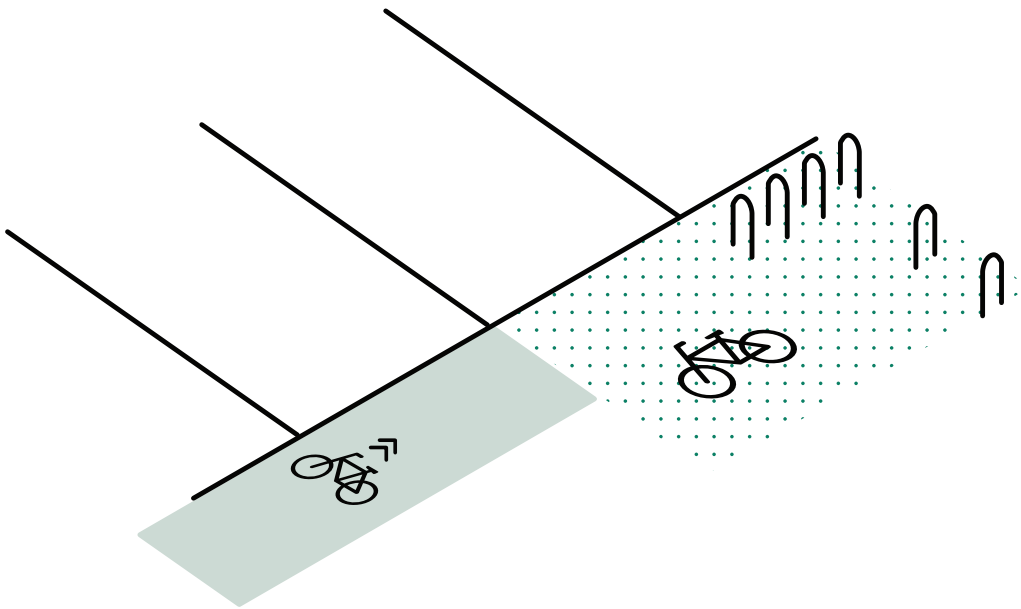
### Importance for well-being:

Parkades are typically designed as functional spaces where residents do not spend time lingering or socializing. These spaces can be uncomfortable, particularly when they lack natural light, clear wayfinding, and any social uses. The construction of private, underground parking also adds significant costs to a project—which are ultimately offloaded onto buyers and renters—and restricts the overall building design. By reducing vehicle parking spots, developers can free up resources and space for other types of amenities—such as music rooms, workshops, enhanced bike facilities, and stroller or scooter storage—that support physical activity and social connection. Bike parking that is well-designed and easy to access encourages more people to use their bikes on a regular basis.

3.1. Diverse bicycle storage

3.2. Parkade visuals

3.3. Designated bicycle and pedestrian circulation



## 3.1. Diverse bicycle storage

### ▶ Provide secure bike parking to accommodate cargo bikes, electric bikes, strollers, and mobility scooters.

**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

**Incentive:**

Developments within the Transit Oriented Area (TOA): This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card*. It is eligible to receive bonus points in the *Sustainability Report Card*. It has been included in this document for reference.

Development outside the Transit Oriented Area (TOA): Reduction of two vehicle parking stalls for every 15 accessible bicycle stalls provided (rounded up to the next whole number).

**Criteria for incentives**

**3.1.1.** Dedicate between 10% to 20% of long-term bike parking spots for larger bikes and wheeled devices, such as cargo bikes, bikes with trailers, strollers, and mobility scooters. These spots should be designed to accommodate a range of bike or mobility device widths and lengths, which can be up to 3 metres (10 feet) in length and 1 metre (3.2 feet) wide.

**3.1.2.** Ensure that racks next to outlets do not require lifting the bicycle in order to lock it.



**Stroller parking at the Bowline, North Vancouver**
*Image: Hey Neighbour Collective*



**Cargo bike docks in a shared bike room**
*Image: Saris Infrastructure*

## 3.2. Parkade visuals

### ▶ Incorporate bold signage, graphics, colour, and murals (on walls or on the ground) in parkades to enhance wayfinding and boost a sense of belonging.

**Applies to:** Mid-rise and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Low

**Design guidelines**

**3.2.1.** Choose artwork that appeals to the expected demographics in the building (e.g. families, older adults, etc.).

This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card* and is eligible for bonus points where applicants demonstrate compliance with the design guideline associated with this action. It is included in this document for reference.

## 3.3. Designated bicycle and pedestrian circulation

### ▶ Design safe and easy pedestrian and bicycle access to and from the parkade.

On parkade ramps, consider either a designated bike or pedestrian pathway beside vehicle access, or design a safe, shared vehicle and bicycle entrance (e.g. with traffic calming, good visibility around corners, signage, and gradual slopes).

Alternatively, provide a bicycle elevator connecting to the bicycle storage from ground level. In mixed-use buildings, provide elevator access to retail at grade from the underground parking.

**Applies to:** High-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

**Criteria for incentives**

**3.3.1.** Include either a bicycle elevator or allow for safe, easy bike access through the parkade ramp.

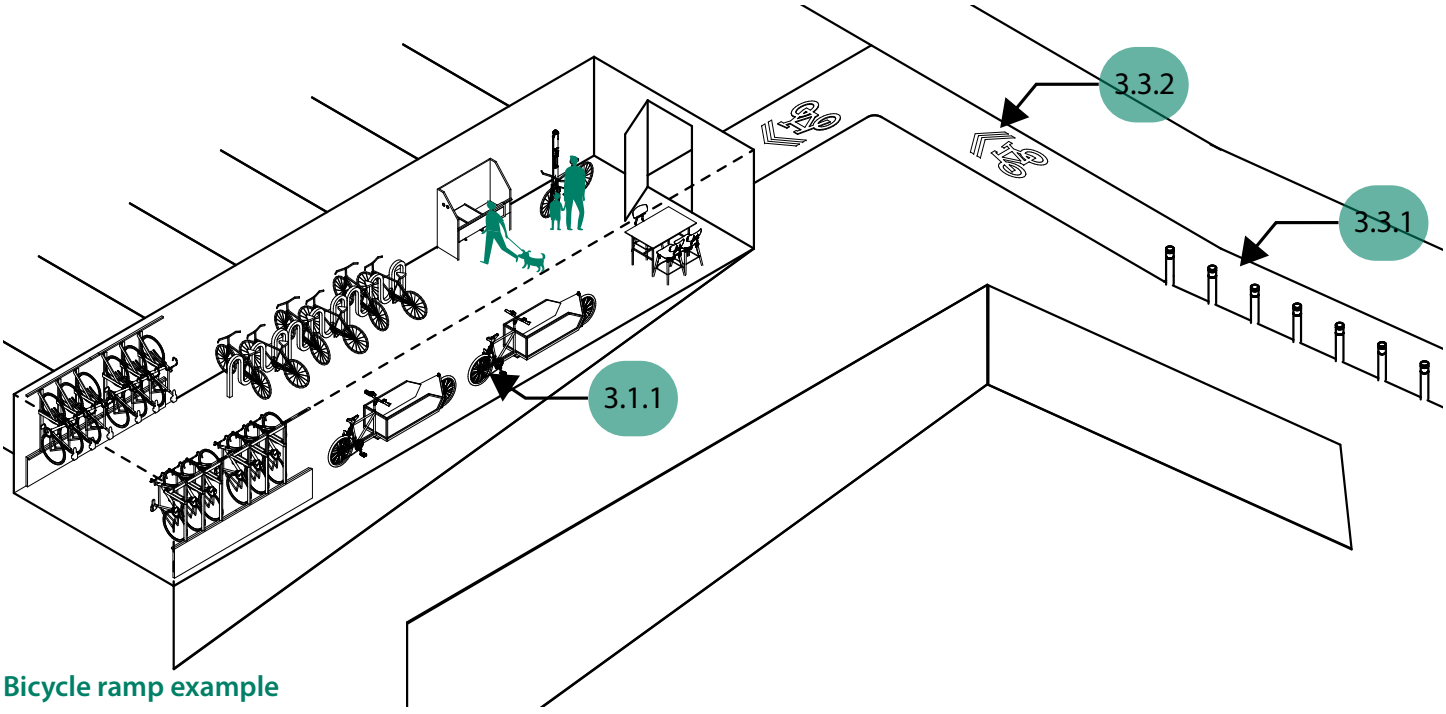
**3.3.2.** Include signage and wayfinding to indicate bicycle access routes.

**3.3.3.** In mixed-use buildings, provide elevator access to retail at grade from the underground parking.

**Incentive:**

Developments within the Transit Oriented Area (TOA): This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card*. It is eligible to receive bonus points in the *Sustainability Report Card*. It has been included in this document for reference.

Development outside the Transit Oriented Area (TOA): Reduction of 1% of vehicle parking stalls (or minimum two stalls, whichever is greater).




Bicycle ramp example

# 4. Social circulation

### Importance for well-being:

Housing that creates opportunities for close contact with a smaller number of neighbours allows more trusting relationships to develop and reduces feelings of overcrowding. Research shows that when people feel overcrowded in multi-residential housing, it can reduce the depth and frequency of their interactions with neighbours and others in the community. Corridors, social clusters (small semi-enclosed or open spaces that allow small groups to gather), and lobbies can create informal opportunities for neighbours to meet, which can spark a rich community life. Lobbies and stairwells are usually forgotten in terms of their potential for boosting social interaction. For example, activating stairwells can provide health benefits and additional opportunities to bump into neighbours. Lobbies can also become important community and social spaces with the inclusion of the right elements.

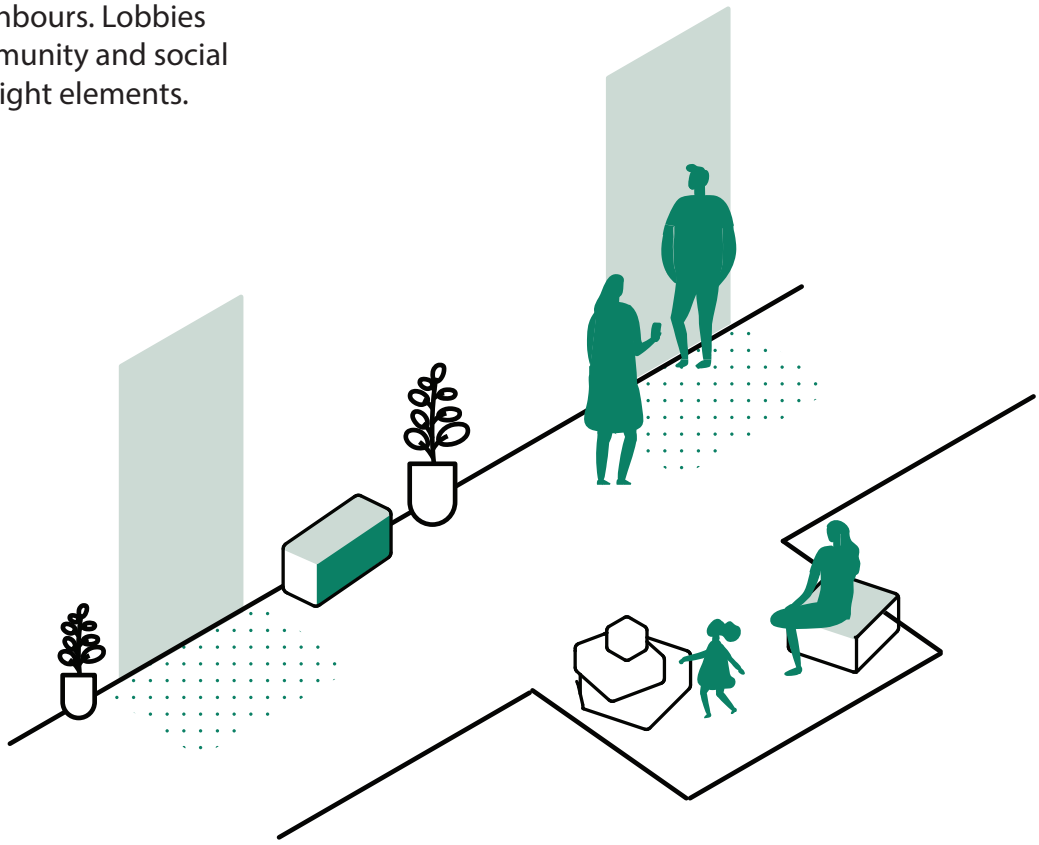
4.1. Lobbies for lingering

4.2. Active stairways within a lobby area

4.3. Social nooks

4.4. Entryway transitions

4.5. Exposure at home entrances



## 4.1. Lobbies for lingering

### ▶ Create a comfortable lobby that encourages people to linger in the space and connect.

**Applies to:** Mid-rise and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

**Incentive:** Lobbies are already excluded from FAR as per the Zoning Bylaw. However, lobbies that comply with the criteria are eligible to receive a FAR subtraction of 1.0 times the lobby area.

**Criteria for incentives**

**4.1.1.** For mid-rise and high-rise buildings, design a lobby size that equals 1% to 2% of the Gross Floor Area (GFA) of all residential homes.

**4.1.2.** Design a functional waiting area in the lobby that allows for visibility to the public realm for pick-up and drop-off.

**4.1.3.** From the lobby, ensure that occupants can directly see or access mailboxes and at least one other indoor amenity, such as a shared amenity room (either located on the same floor or through an interconnecting "open to below" stairwell, see 4.2).

**4.1.4.** Provide three to five social and functional elements (e.g. soft and hard seating, a table, power outlets, WiFi access, a fireplace, a shared bookshelf, a games cupboard, a bulletin board, a coffee station, moveable furniture elements, artwork, a box of toys for kids, and more).

## 4.2. Active stairways within a lobby area

### ▶ Create an interconnecting ("open to below") stairwell that connects the lobby to other shared amenity spaces, office space, or retail space.

**Applies to:** Mid-rise and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

**Incentive:** Stairwells that comply with the criteria are eligible for a FAR exclusion of 1.0 times the stair area.

**Criteria for incentives**

**4.2.1.** Design comfortable stairways that promote use and physical activity by incorporating at least two of the following elements:

(A) Bold signage and graphics

(B) Colour and artwork

(C) Natural light

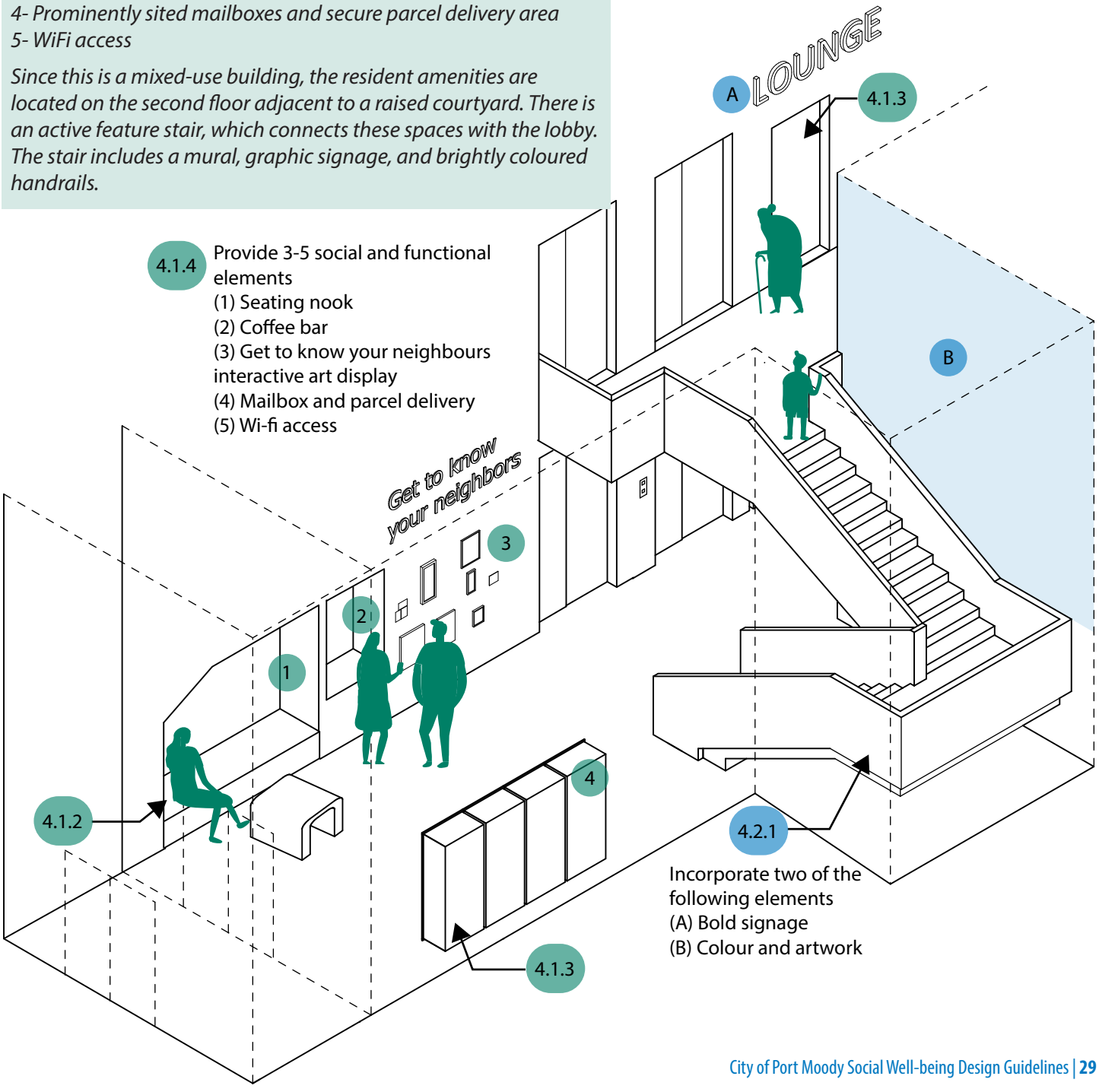
# 4.1. + 4.2. Example: Lobbies for lingering with active stairways illustration

***Sample lobby statement:***

*This lobby at a six-storey rental building creates a functional and social space for residents to interact. The lobby has natural light and a direct visual connection to the street. The lobby includes the following functions:*

*1- A seating nook*
*2- A coffee bar*
*3- A future artwork display by residents*
*4- Prominently sited mailboxes and secure parcel delivery area*
*5- WiFi access*

*Since this is a mixed-use building, the resident amenities are located on the second floor adjacent to a raised courtyard. There is an active feature stair, which connects these spaces with the lobby. The stair includes a mural, graphic signage, and brightly coloured handrails.*



# 4.1. + 4.2. Examples: Lobbies for lingering with active stairways









**Social lobby at the Bowline, North Vancouver, with visible mailboxes, adjoining secure parcel delivery area, free WiFi, diverse seating, and warm lighting.**
*Images: Hey Neighbour Collective*



**Lobby with active stairs at 150 Dan Leckie Way, Toronto.**
*Image: Maris Mezulis / KPMB Architects*



**Lobby with active stairs at House of Generations, Denmark.**
*Image: Jacob Lerche / RUM*

## 4.3. Social nooks

**Design indoor and outdoor social nooks to comfortably accommodate groups of three to five people for smaller and more casual gatherings, located prominently along corridors and elevator landings.**

**Applies to:** Mid-rise and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

**Incentive:** Each social nook is eligible for a FAR exclusion of 1.0 times the area of the nook. If the social nook is adjoining an exterior corridor or a corridor that is wider than 1.5 metres (5 feet), then that portion of the corridor is also eligible for a FAR exclusion (1.0 times the area).

**Criteria for incentives**

**4.3.1.** Design each social nook to be generally open to a corridor (i.e. it does not have a door).

**4.3.2.** Design each social nook to contain at least one function that allows residents to take ownership of the space, such as a book exchange, a place to grow indoor plants, a notice board, flexible furniture, flexible storage for games and books, or a place to display artwork.

**4.3.3.** Ensure each social nook is easily visible and accessible from the elevator or active stairwell to encourage use.



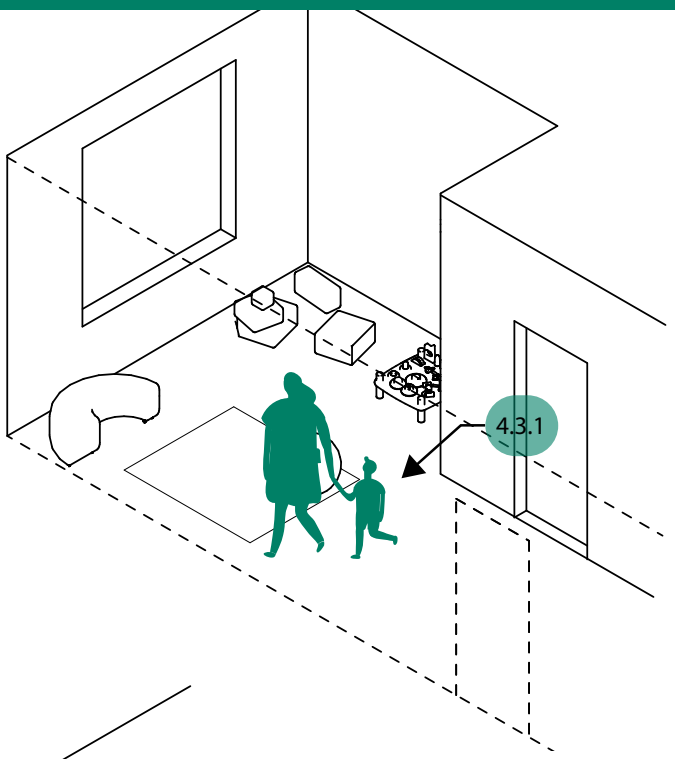
**Exterior social nook at Driftwood Village, North Vancouver**
*Image: Happy Cities*



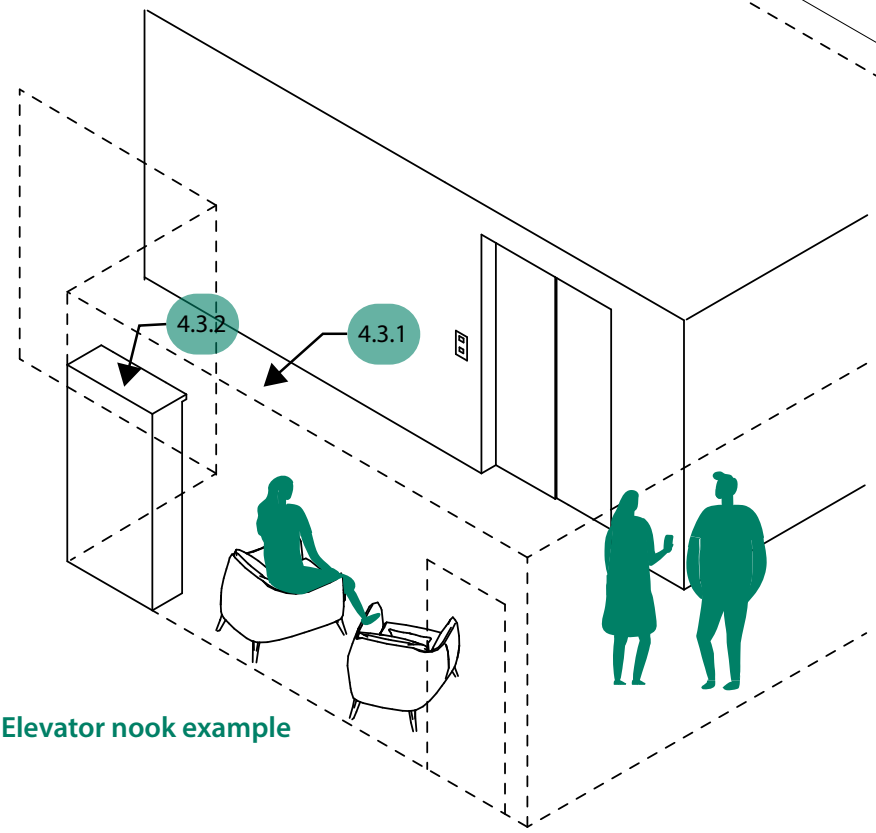
**Social nook at Lakeside Seniors Housing, USA**
*Image: Mariko Reed / David Baker Architects*

## 4.3. Social nooks illustration

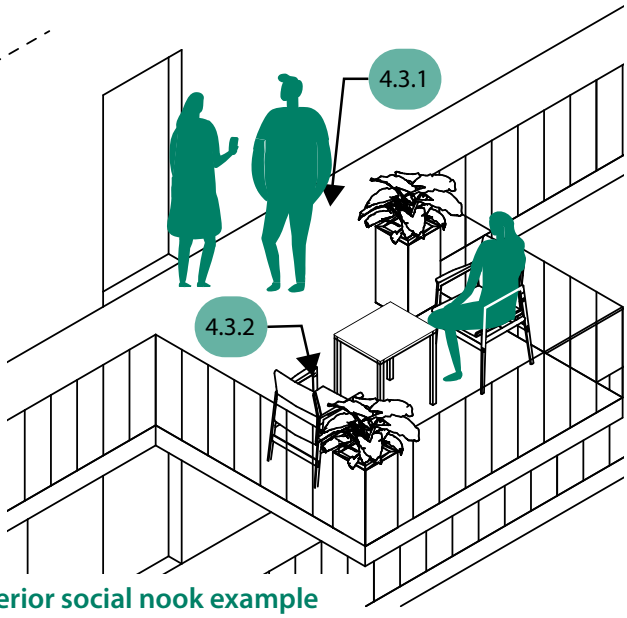
Best practices suggest providing one social nook per floor in high-rise buildings or for every 12 to 24 homes. However, all social nooks are eligible for an incentive (regardless of the total number provided).




Kids' nook next to stairway example




Elevator nook example




Exterior social nook example

## 4.4. Entryway transitions

### ▶ Design home entryways with a semi-private zone between shared corridors and each home.

**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Low

**Design guidelines**

**4.4.1.** Create a buffer space (or indent on the corridor side near the home entrance that serves as a buffer) with a 0.5 metre (1.6 feet) depth.

This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card* and is eligible for bonus points where applicants demonstrate compliance with the design guideline associated with this action. It is included in this document for reference.



**Entryway transition at Vancouver Cohousing**
*Image: Leslie Shieh*



**Personalized entryways at Windsong Cohousing, Langley**
*Image: Windsong Cohousing*

## 4.5. Exposure at home entrances

### ▶ Design the majority of home entrances to be staggered (not directly facing each other) to maximize acoustic and visual privacy.

**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card*. It is eligible to receive bonus points in the *Sustainability Report Card*. It has been included in this document for reference.

# 5. Shared amenity spaces

### Importance for well-being:

Shared amenities allow residents to participate in activities together on common ground, which helps solidify relationships. Over time, relationships with neighbours can bring many benefits, from financial savings to sharing childcare and meals. Neighbours with trusting relationships can rely on each other in the face of unforeseen events—including day-to-day needs, and in the case of a crisis.

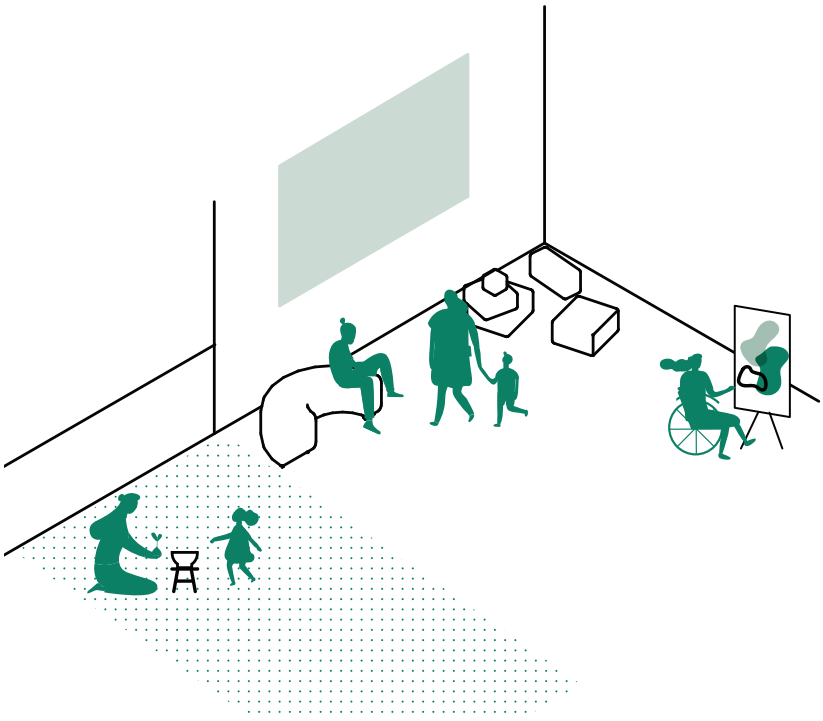
Buildings should provide choice and convenience in amenity spaces. One of the most powerful design moves is to co-locate different types of amenity spaces in clusters to create activity nodes and increase opportunities for social interaction. Activity nodes should consider intergenerational features, such as community gardens, and areas for different group sizes to gather. Programming and policy (for example, how and when residents are allowed to use spaces) are important considerations beyond design. Spaces should provide flexibility and allow residents to modify them to suit their needs as they change over time.

Outdoor amenities—such as courtyards, rooftops, and terraces—allow residents to connect with nature. Rooftops and terraces can provide social opportunities for residents who live at higher levels of a building and do not have a strong connection to the public realm. Rooftops, terraces, and elevated courtyards are a great location for community gardens and play spaces since they are often unobstructed by shadows and feature good sunlight.

5.1. Diverse amenity spaces

5.2. Shared storage spaces

5.3. Universal washrooms



## 5.1. Diverse amenity spaces

**▶ Provide a variety of shared indoor and outdoor amenity spaces that are prominently sited (on the ground floor, or visible from lobbies or terraces), at easily accessible locations, and of functional sizes and purposes.**

**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** High

**Incentive:** Interior amenity spaces are already excluded from FAR as per the Zoning Bylaw. Amenity space is eligible for an additional FAR subtraction of 0.5 times the total amenity area (indoor and outdoor). Although courtyards count in the total number of required amenity spaces as per this action, they are not eligible for a FAR subtraction if incentives have been claimed for 1.1 or 1.2 (courtyards). Projects should comply with the total required amenity area in the Zoning Bylaw.



**Multi-purpose amenity at 222 Taylor Street, USA**
*Image: Bruce Damonte / David Baker Architects*

### Criteria for incentives

**5.1.1.** Meet the minimum criteria for amenity space:

- For low-rise buildings, provide a minimum of one indoor and one outdoor shared amenity space. The indoor space should be adequately sized to support the intended function.
- For mid-rise buildings, provide a minimum of three shared amenity spaces (including both an indoor and outdoor space). At least one of the indoor amenities should be a minimum of 69.7 square metres (750 square feet) in area.
- For high-rise buildings, provide a minimum of five shared amenity spaces (including at least two indoor spaces and two outdoor spaces). At least one of the indoor amenities should be a minimum of 92.9 square metres (1,000 square feet) in area.

**5.1.2.** In mid-rise and high-rise buildings, create a direct and visual (door and glazed window) connection between at least two shared amenity spaces in the building. Priority should be given to co-locating larger amenity spaces together, such as a courtyard and lounge.

**5.1.3.** Where possible, create an opportunity to preview the amenity space prior to entering it, through the use of glazing.

**5.1.4.** Design larger amenity spaces to accommodate at least five different uses and activities (supported by infrastructure as needed, such as seats and outlets).

**5.1.5.** Consider incorporating both quiet and active functions and provide separation between these activities where required.

**5.1.6.** Each space should contain at least one function that allows residents to take ownership of the space, such as a community garden, a place to grow indoor plants, flexible furniture, or a place to display artwork.

**5.1.7.** Ensure outdoor amenity spaces are partially weatherproof (through awnings, permanent umbrellas, and other covered structures).

# 5.1. Example: Diverse amenity spaces statement

***Sample amenity statement:***

*This high-rise building has a three-storey podium and a 20-storey tower. The homes range from studios to three-bedroom townhomes. To encourage social well-being, the building has six proposed amenities, including two outdoor spaces and four indoor spaces.*

*1- Name: Podium rooftop terrace*
- *Size: 278 square metres (3,000 square feet)*
- *Location: At the top of the podium, accessed from level 4 of the building. It is adjacent to the gym.*
- *Functions: Informal play area, covered outdoor workout area, community garden with 15 residents plots, a fire pit with seating area, and a future beehive.*

*2- Name: Courtyard*
- *Size: 139 square metres (1,500 square feet)*
- *Location: Ground level*
- *Functions: BBQ area, covered outdoor dining area, flexible lawn, space for lawn games, flower garden with seating and natural water feature*

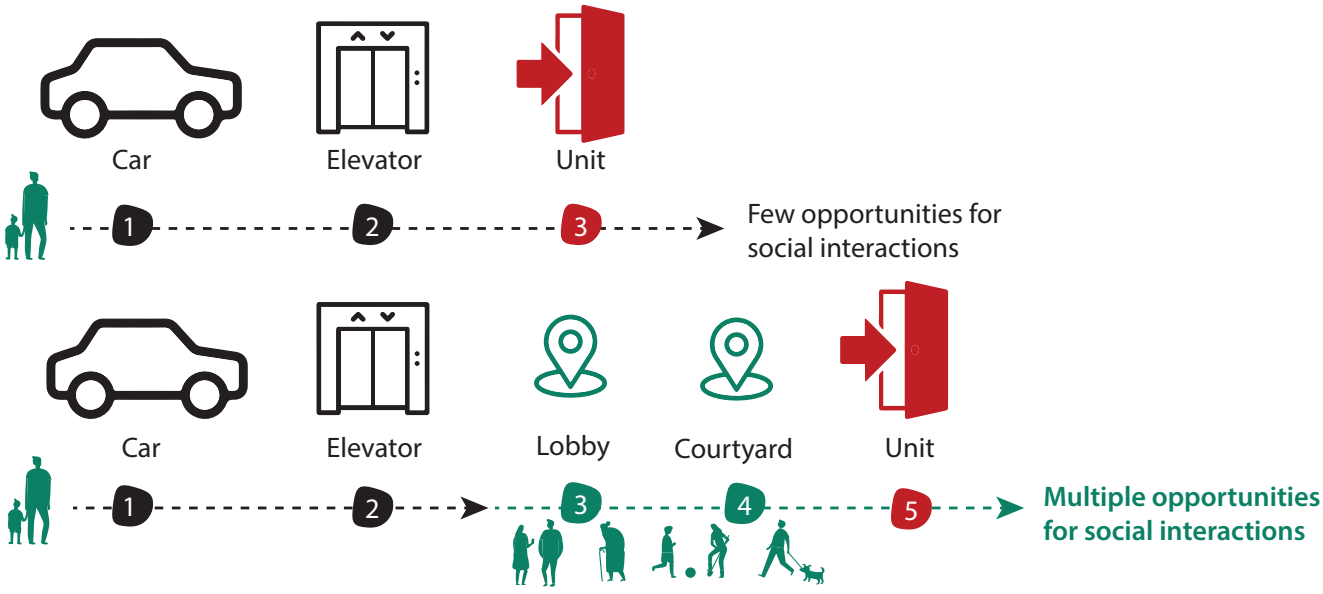
*3- Name: Multi-purpose lounge*
- *Size: 111 square metres (1,200 square feet)*
- *Location: Adjacent to the courtyard on level 1, accessible from the main lobby.*
- *Functions: Kitchen, shared dining area, fireplace with seating, a library, and co-working desks.*

*4- Name: Flexible exercise room*
- *Size: 69 square metres (750 square feet)*
- *Location: Adjacent to the podium rooftop*
- *Functions: Weights, moveable cardio equipment, flexible area for programming and activities, such as yoga.*

*5- Name: Guest suite*
- *Size: 32 square metres (350 square feet)*
- *Location: Ground floor, easily accessible from the lobby*
- *Functions: Bookable guest room for residents, universally designed*

*6- Name: Bike repair room*
- *Size: 32 square metres (350 square feet)*
- *Location: Next to the bike parking on the first floor of the parking garage.*
- *Functions: Bike repair area with social seating, a tool station and bike stand, and a sink.*

***The importance of location:*** *Careful consideration of amenity space location helps enhance use of shared spaces. When amenities are placed in prominent locations, residents are more likely to interact with these spaces on a daily basis. In many multi-unit housing projects, residents who are arriving by car often go straight into the elevator from the parkade to their private suite without having any social interactions. By intentionally considering day-to-day routines of future residents, and locating amenities along these circulation paths, buildings can enhance opportunities for social interaction.*



# 5.1. Examples: Diverse amenity spaces

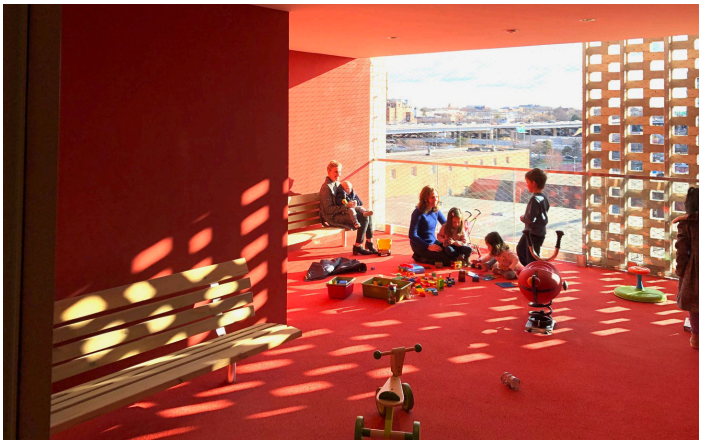
*Active functions: Exercise equipment, flexible open space for yoga or dance, a kids' play space, a space for pets, a shared kitchen, a party room, a workshop to use tools, a playground, and more.*



**Co-located amenities at Station Center Family Housing**
*Image: Bruce Damonte / David Baker Architects*



**Flexible exercise space**
*Image: Essex Apartment House*



**A covered play space for kids at the AYA Housing**
*Image: Hoachlander Davis Photography*



**Shared roof deck next to social circulation spaces**
*Image: Little Mountain Cohousing*



**Co-located amenities, Bayview Hill Gardens**
*Image: Matt Edge / David Baker Architects*



**Kids playroom at Driftwood Village, North Vancouver**
*Image: Happy Cities*

# 5.1. Examples: Diverse amenity spaces

*Examples of quiet functions: A reading room, a co-working space, a community garden, a seating space with water feature, a guest suite, and more.*



**Fireplace and book nook at Quayside Village, North Vancouver**
*Image: Hey Neighbour Collective*

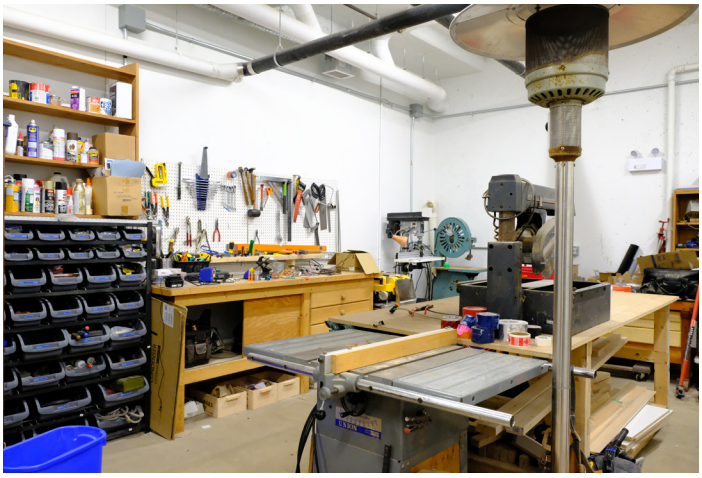


**Small lounge with co-working spaces, located next to patio**
*Image: Bruce Damonte / David Baker Architects*

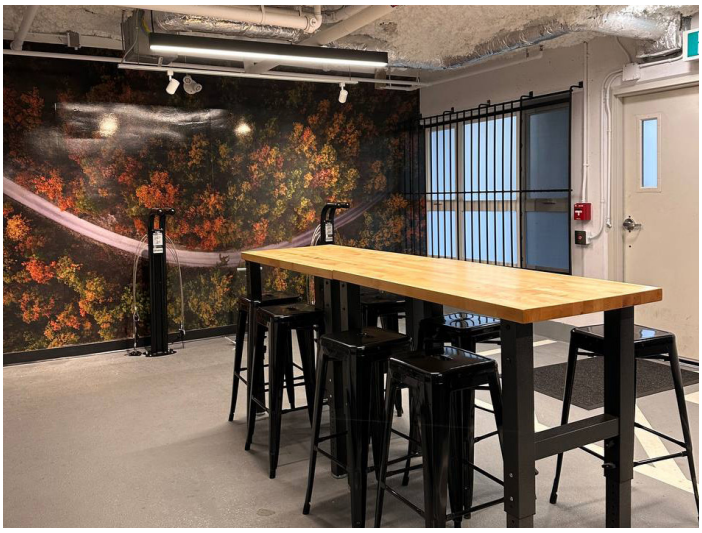


**Rooftop vegetable garden at Via Verde, USA**
*Image: Dattner Architects*

*Examples of amenities located in the parkade: A sound-proof music room, a workshop where residents can use tools, a bicycle repair or pet washing facilities. These should be directly visible from the elevator or main stairwell entrance to the parkade.*



**Workshop at Driftwood Village, North Vancouver**
*Image: Happy Cities*



**Bike maintenance space at the Bowline, North Vancouver**
*Image: Hey Neighbour Collective*

## 5.2. Shared storage spaces

▶ **Provide access to storage for shared equipment and supplies, and locate storage directly adjacent to, or within, the shared amenity space. This action does not include storage for private use.**

**Applies to:** Mid-rise and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

**Incentive:** Shared storage is eligible for a FAR subtraction of 1.0 times the storage area.

**Criteria for incentives**

**5.2.1.** Ensure the shared storage is easily accessible from (on the same floor as) a shared amenity space (such as a lounge) or an exterior amenity (such as a courtyard).

*Examples of shared storage:*

- *Storage for shared games and equipment*
- *Storage for gardening tools*
- *Storage for flexible furniture items (indoor and outdoor)*
- *Storage for shared arts and craft supplies*
- *Storage for emergency kits*

## 5.3. Universal washrooms

▶ **Provide access to a universal washroom on the same floor as indoor and outdoor amenities, located directly adjacent to, or within, the shared amenity space.**

**Applies to:** Mid-rise and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

**Incentive:** A universal washroom is eligible for a FAR subtraction of 1.0 times the universal washroom area.

**Criteria for incentives**

**5.3.1.** Ensure that people can access the washroom independently from accessing an amenity space. For example, if the washroom is located within a lounge, residents should be able to access it even if the amenity is booked for a private function.

*Common toilet areas and universal washrooms shall be designed and built in accordance with the most recent version of the British Columbia Building Code.*

# 6. Family- and age-friendly homes

6.1. Diverse homes
6.2. Lock-off suites
6.3. Livable homes
6.4. Adaptable homes
6.5. Efficient storage
6.6. Usable private balconies and patios
6.7. Enclosed balconies

## Importance for well-being:

Family- and age-friendly homes allow residents to live comfortably through all stages of life, supporting supporting both individual and household well-being. Homes should provide the flexibility to meet changing needs over time whether accommodating young children, supporting aging in place, or enabling multigenerational living. This adaptability helps ensure that people can stay in their homes even as their households evolve, reducing disruption and allowing residents to build long-term relationships with neighbours.

This focus on family and age-friendly housing aligns with the *Council Strategic Plan 2023–2026* Strategic Priority Area: Healthy Community Development, which seeks to "enhance community well-being; facilitate community well-being through programs and long-term planning."



## 6.1. Diverse homes

### ▶ Provide a mix of smaller and larger homes throughout the building to meet the *Family-Friendly Units Policy.*

**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

Excludes townhome developments

**Impact and priority:** High

**Incentive:** Buildings that include more than the minimum required number of three-bedroom or more homes are eligible for a floor area ratio (FAR) exclusion. For each additional three-bedroom (or more) home provided, the excluded floor area will equal the size of the smallest bedroom in that home, as long as it meets BC Housing's Minimum Dwelling Unit Floor Area standards.

*Example: A 100-home market-rental building requires 10 three-bedroom (or more) homes under the Family-Friendly Units Policy. If the building provides 15 three-bedroom homes, the additional 5 homes (three-bedroom or more) with the smallest bedrooms would be selected. The building would receive an FAR exclusion equal to the total area of those 5 smallest bedrooms (1 from each of those 5 homes).*

**Criteria for incentives**

Home mix

**6.1.1.** Exceed the minimum required number of three-bedroom or more homes required in the *Family-Friendly Units Policy* (outlined below) for buildings with 20 or more units.

Due to space constraints, the City will allow for 50% of the three-bedroom units in a Multi-Residential or Mixed-Use building to have the third bedroom be an inboard bedroom, provided that the bedroom receives indirect natural light from at least two sources, such as the doorway, light tube or well, or glass wall.

For reference as per requirements in the F*amily-Friendly Units Policy (2026)*

| All residential projects | |
|---|---|
| **Number of bedrooms** | **Share of units** |
| Studios | 65% max (with a maximum of 30% being studios) |
| One-bedroom | |
| Two-bedroom | 25% min |
| Three-bedroom or more | 10% min |

** As per City of Port Moody Family-Friendly Units Policy (2026)*

## 6.2. Lock-off suites

### ▶ Provide homes that accommodate lock-off suites.

**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

**Incentive:**

A| If a home has a lock-off suite, the full floor area of the secondary dwelling portion of the lock-off suite is eligible for exclusion from the FAR calculation.

OR

B| A lock-off suite may be counted as one additional bedroom for unit mix requirements (e.g. a two-bedroom plus lock-off suite is counted as a three-bedroom). *See incentive under 6.1 for more.*

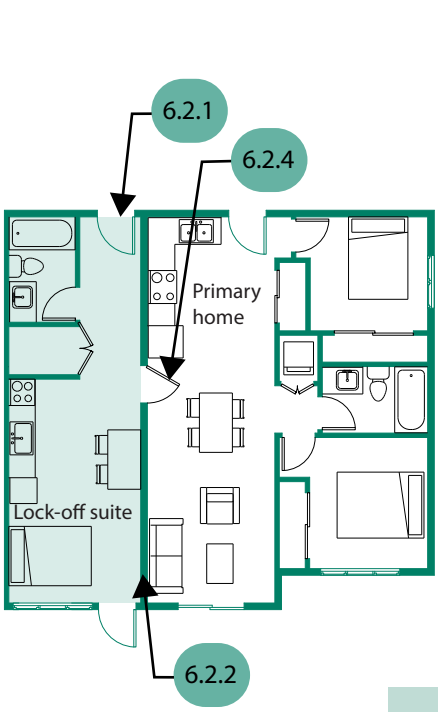
**Criteria for incentives**

**6.2.1.** Provide, at minimum, a designated entrance (from a corridor, stairwell, or exterior), along with a kitchen, bathroom, storage, and access to natural daylight and ventilation for all lock-off suites.

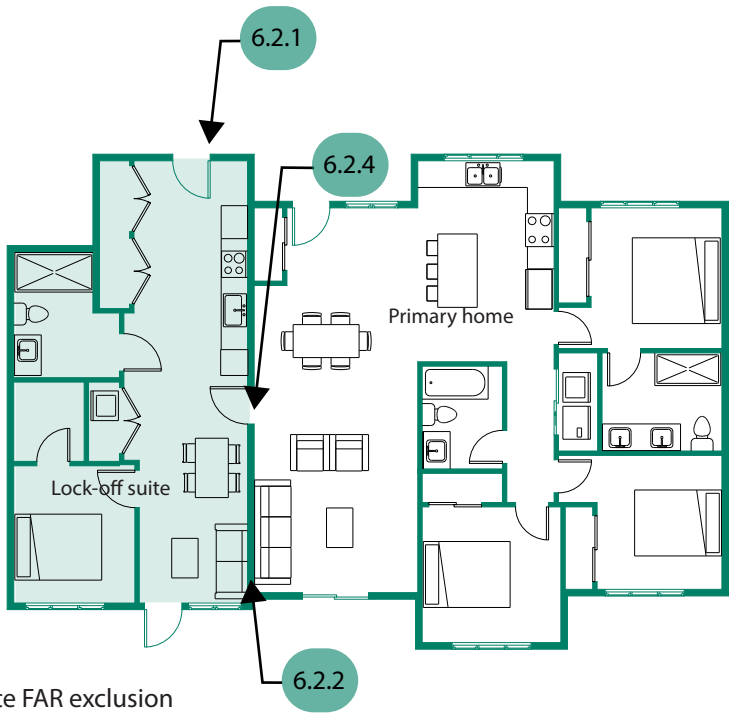
**6.2.2.** Ensure adequate acoustic separation between the lock-off suite and the main home to support privacy and long-term livability.

**6.2.3.** Design lock-off suites so they can be used by people with varying mobility needs.

**6.2.4.** Ensure lock-off suites can be easily re-integrated into the main home to accommodate shifting household needs.




Two-bedroom plus lock-off suite example




Three-bedroom plus lock-off suite example

Lock-off suite FAR exclusion

# 6.3. Livable homes

## ▶ Provide homes that support livability for households/families of all sizes.

**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** High

This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card* and is eligible for bonus points where applicants demonstrate compliance with the majority of the design guidelines associated with this action. It is included in this document for reference.

### Design guidelines

<u>Overall home efficiency</u>

**6.3.1.** Exceed the minimum home sizes as per BC Housing Design and Construction Standards.

**6.3.2.** Stack plumbing walls where possible to reduce construction costs and long-term maintenance.

**6.3.3.** Minimize circulation space within homes and use any remaining circulation areas for storage, such as shelving or closets.



**Kitchen and dining space at Our Urban Village, Vancouver**
*Image: Tomo Spaces + Janis Nicolay Photography*

For reference as per requirements in the *Family-Friendly Units Policy (2026)*

**BC Housing minimum dwelling unit floor areas**

| **Townhomes** | |
|---|---|
| **Bedroom** | **Net unit area (sq.m / sq.ft)** |
| One-bedroom | 56 $m^2$ / 600 $ft^2$ |
| Two-bedroom | 90 $m^2$ / 969 $ft^2$ |
| Three-bedroom | 111 $m^2$ / 1,195 $ft^2$ |
| Four-bedroom | 125 $m^2$ / 1,345 $ft^2$ |
| **Apartment/single storey, apartment (motel type)** | |
| Studio | 33 $m^2$ / 350 $ft^2$ |
| One-bedroom | 49 $m^2$ / 525 $ft^2$ |
| Two-bedroom | 67 $m^2$ / 725 $ft^2$ |
| Three-bedroom | 86 $m^2$ / 925 $ft^2$ |
| Four-bedroom | 112 $m^2$ / 1,200 $ft^2$ |

** As per BC Housing Design Guidelines and Construction Standards (2019)*

# 6.3. Livable homes (continued)

## Design guidelines

### Home entrances

**6.3.4.** Meet BC Building Code requirements for accessible and adaptable design.

**6.3.5.** Provide a coat closet directly accessible from the entrance, sized appropriately for the anticipated number of occupants.

**6.3.6.** Include a designated area for seating such as a bench, in the entryway.

**6.3.7.** Provide space to store and charge a stroller, mobility device, or scooter.

### Laundry

**6.3.8.** Provide space for a side-by-side washer and dryer configuration to support accessibility.

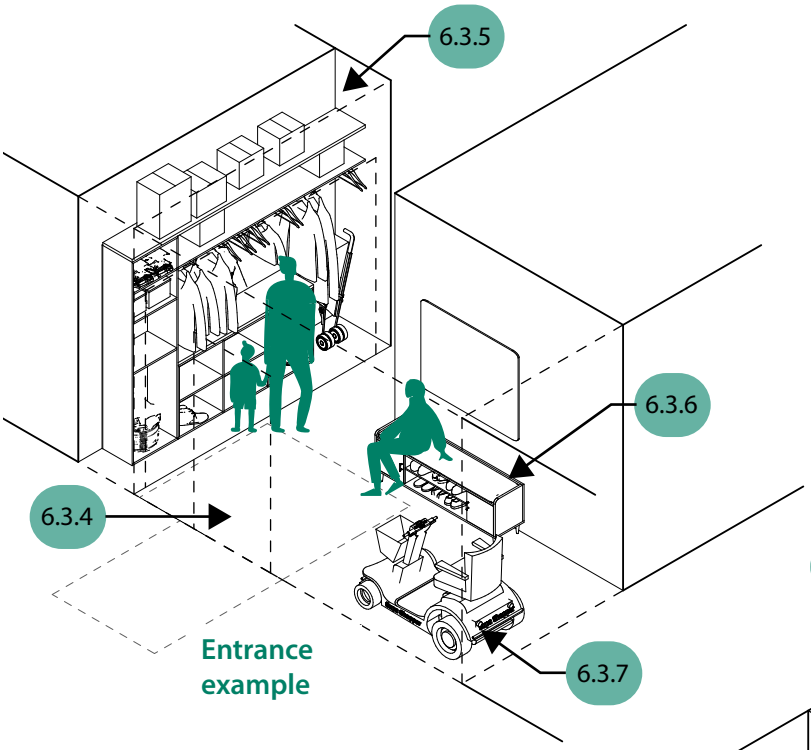
**6.3.9.** Ensure acoustic separation from the home.

**6.3.10.** Provide a utility sink.

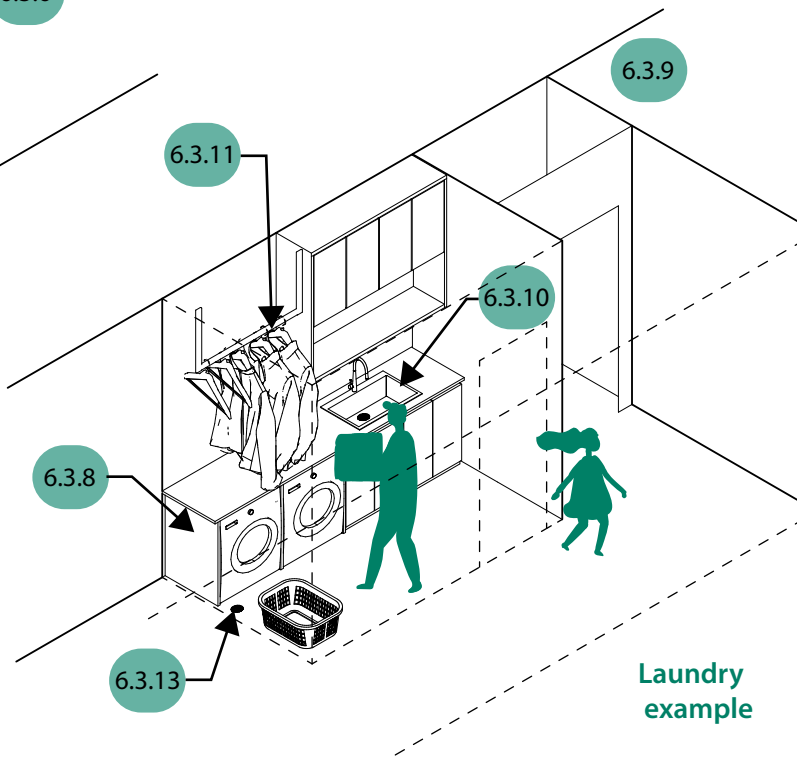
**6.3.11.** Provide space for hanging and drying clothing.

**6.3.12.** Provide an operable window and/or fan.

**6.3.13.** Provide a floor drain where possible.




Entrance example




Laundry example

# 6.3. Livable homes (continued)

## Design guidelines

### Kitchen/dining

**6.3.14.** Design kitchens with functional layouts (e.g. L- shaped configuration) to allow more than one person to cook at the same time.

**6.3.15.** Provide sight lines to the living room or private outdoor space that allows for supervision of kids from the kitchen/dining area.

**6.3.16.** Provide at least two spaces per bedroom (e.g. six for a three-bedroom home) for dining at a table.

**6.3.17.** Provide power outlets for task lighting and devices in dining area.

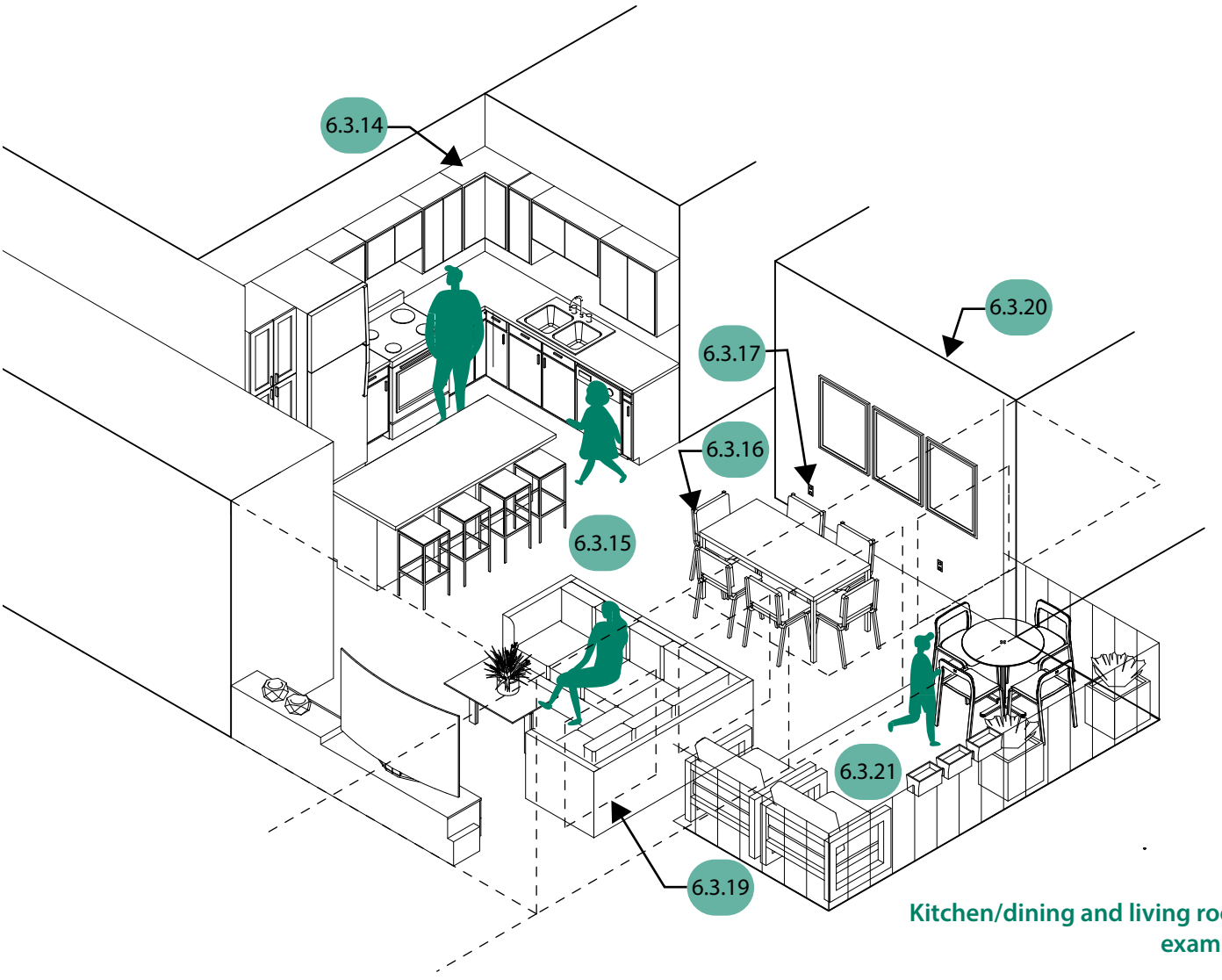
### Living room

**6.3.18.** Design living spaces with a minimum clear area of approximately 9 by 10 feet to support activities.

**6.3.19.** Ensure access to operable windows.

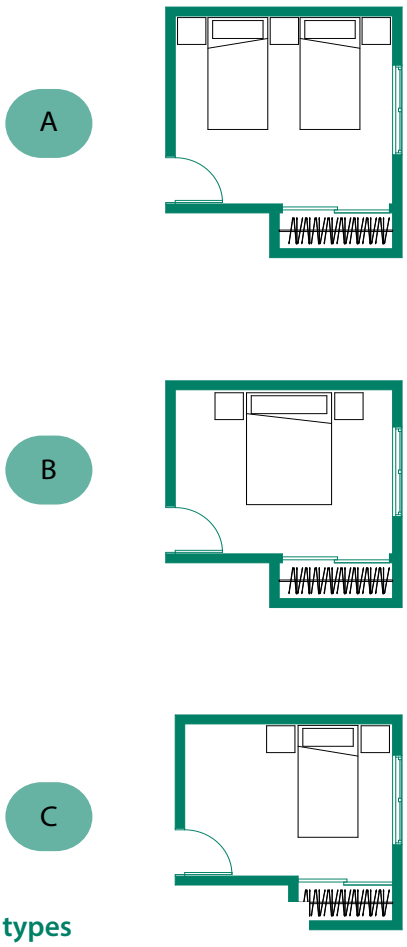
**6.3.20.** Provide acoustic separation from bedrooms.

**6.3.21.** Create private outdoor spaces that extend the living room.




**Kitchen/dining and living room example**

# 6.3. Livable homes (continued)




**Bedroom types examples**

For reference:

**BC Housing minimum bedroom areas and dimensions**

| Bedroom type | Minimum floor area* | Minimum dimension | Minimum closet width |
|---|---|---|---|
| A (2 single beds) | 11.15 $m^2$ / 120 $ft^2$ | 2.8 m / 9′ - 2″ | 1.5 m / 5′ - 0″ |
| B (1 double bed) | 9.3 $m^2$ / 100 $ft^2$ | 2.8 m / 9′ - 2″ | 1.5 m / 5′ - 0″ |
| C (1 single bed) | 8.5 $m^2$ / 92 $ft^2$ | 2.6 m / 8′- 6″ | 0.915 m / 3′ - 0″ |

** Does not include closet areas*
** * As per BC Housing Design Guidelines and Construction Standards (2019)*

## Design guidelines

### Bedrooms

**6.3.22.** Provide bedrooms that meet the BC Housing minimum bedroom areas and dimensions.

**6.3.23**. Where inboard bedrooms are present, provide enhanced ventilation and borrowed light strategies where convenient (e.g. frosted glass sliding doors).

**6.3.24**. Provide at least one closet per bedroom with hanging and shelf space.

**6.3.25.** Ensure visual and acoustic separation from living, and kitchen/dining areas.

**6.3.26.** Provide electrical outlets on at least two walls for flexibility in furniture layout.

### Bathrooms

**6.3.27.** Provide at least one full bathroom (sink, toilet, bathtub or shower) per two bedrooms. Where possible, provide a powder room in homes with three or more bedrooms.

**6.3.28.** Design bathrooms with sufficient maneuvering space to support accessibility.

**6.3.29.** Ensure adequate acoustic separation between bathrooms and adjacent bedrooms or living areas.

**6.3.30.** Provide built-in storage for toiletries, cleaning supplies, and linens (e.g. medicine cabinet, shelving, or linen closet).

**6.3.31.** Ensure adequate lighting at the vanity, with including task and ambient lighting.

## 6.4. Adaptable homes

▶ **Provide homes that can adjust to residents' needs over time, supporting aging in place, evolving family structures, and multigenerational living. Meet the City of Port Moody's adaptable homes requirements.**

**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** High

This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card* and is eligible for bonus points where applicants demonstrate compliance with the majority of the design guidelines associated with this action. It is included in this document for reference.

**Design guidelines**

**6.4.1.** Provide the same level of livability in adaptable homes (natural light, access to outdoor space, proximity to amenities) as in non-adaptable homes.

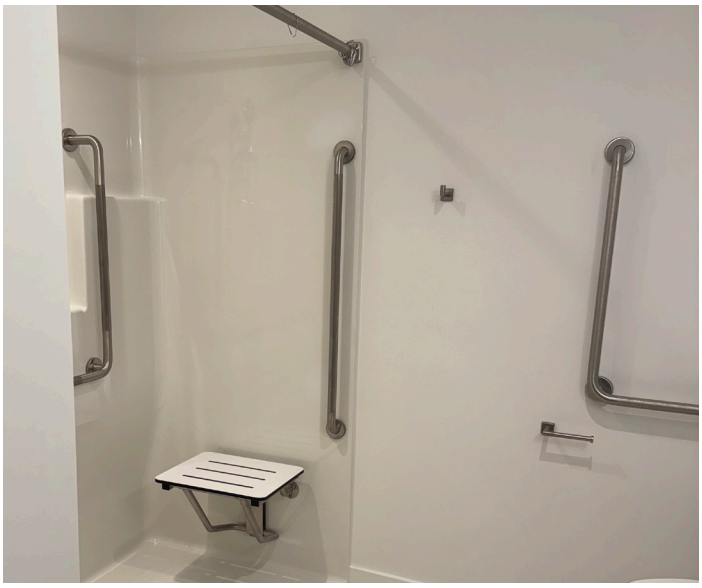
**6.4.2.** Include adaptable homes of all sizes (e.g. not only studios or one-bedrooms homes.

**6.4.3.** Distribute adaptable homes throughout the building, rather than concentrated on one floor or in less desirable locations.

*Under Zoning Bylaw 2937 (July 2025), a maximum of 2.0 m² for each adaptable home (as defined by the BC Building Code 2024) is currently excluded from floor area calculations.*



**Adaptable kitchen at Brightside's Timber & Harmony, Vancouver**
*Image: Happy Cities*



**Adaptable bathroom at Brightside's Timber & Harmony, Vancouver**
*Image: Happy Cities*

## 6.5. Efficient storage

### ▶ Provide homes with efficient storage that maximizes the livability of the home.

**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card* and is eligible for bonus points where applicants demonstrate compliance with the majority of the design guidelines associated with this action. It is included in this document for reference.

**Design guidelines**

**6.5.1.** Provide full-height storage in closets and millwork.

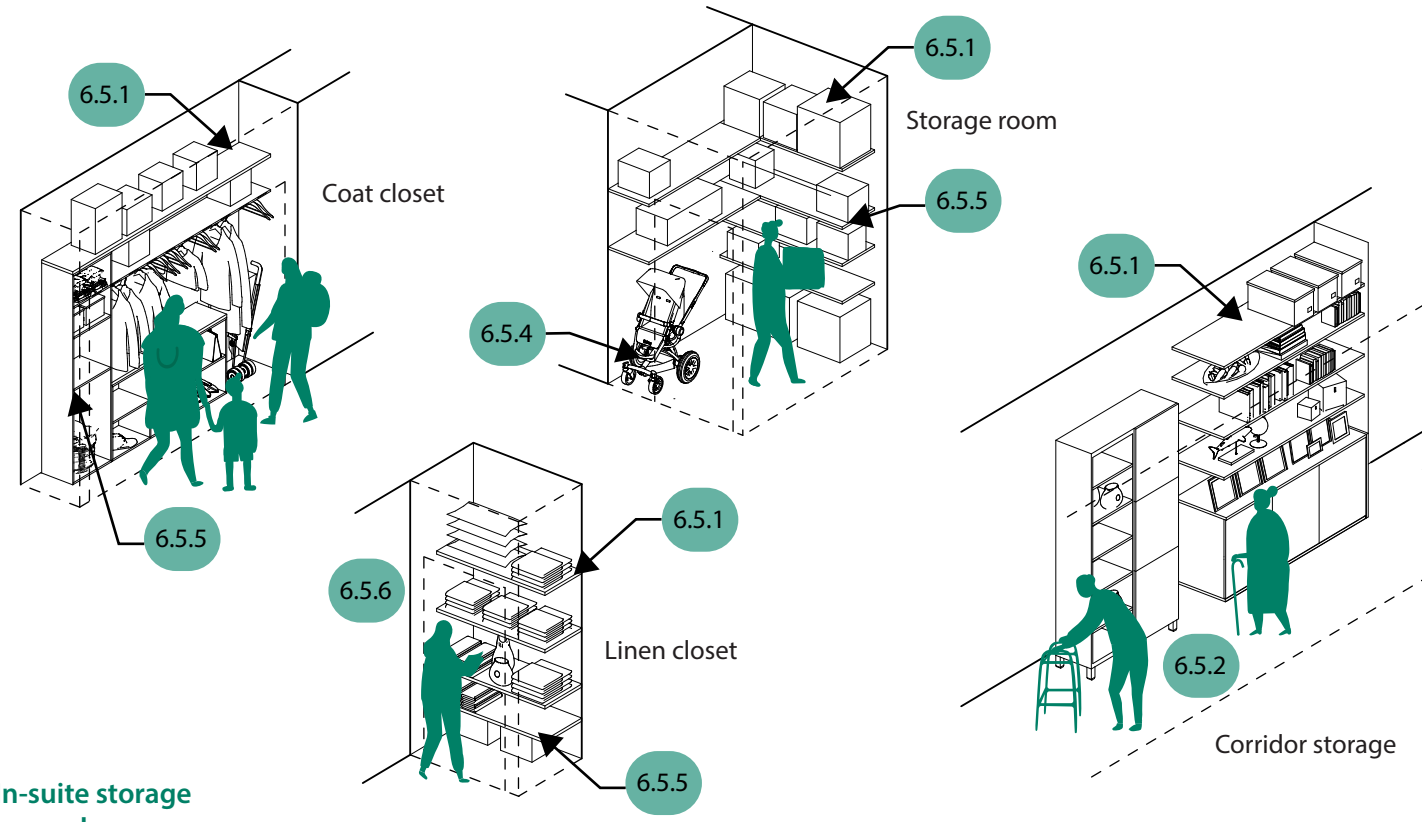
**6.5.2.** Locate storage along circulation spaces within the home (e.g. along access areas or corridors).

**6.5.3.** Provide storage for large items, such as strollers.

**6.5.4.** Include a mix of in-suite and external storage for larger items that cannot fit in suite such as canoes, kayaks, and paddle boards within the building.

**6.5.5.** Incorporate adaptable storage solutions, such as adjustable shelving or modular closets.

**6.5.6.** Include dedicated kitchen, and linen storage to support family needs.




**In-suite storage examples**

# 6.6. Usable private balconies and patios

**Provide usable private balcony and patios spaces that meet the anticipated needs of occupants of each home. Consider a mix of Juliette, standard, and enclosed balconies that complement social nooks and outdoor amenity spaces.**

**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

This action has been incorporated into the *Sustainability Report Card* and is eligible for bonus points where applicants demonstrate compliance with the majority of the design guidelines associated with this action. It is included in this document for reference.

**Design guidelines**

**6.6.1.** Design balconies to be an extension of the home's living spaces.

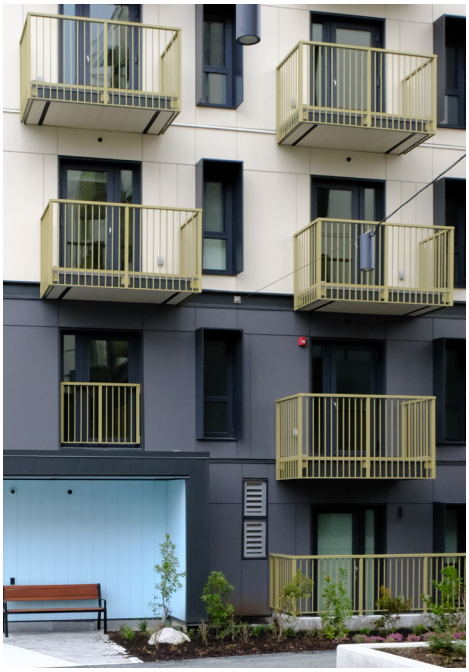
**6.6.2.** Where possible, provide visual connections to the street and/or outdoor shared spaces.

**6.6.3.** Provide space for seating appropriate to the home size (e.g. two people for studio/one-bedroom, four to five people for two-bedroom and three-bedroom homes).

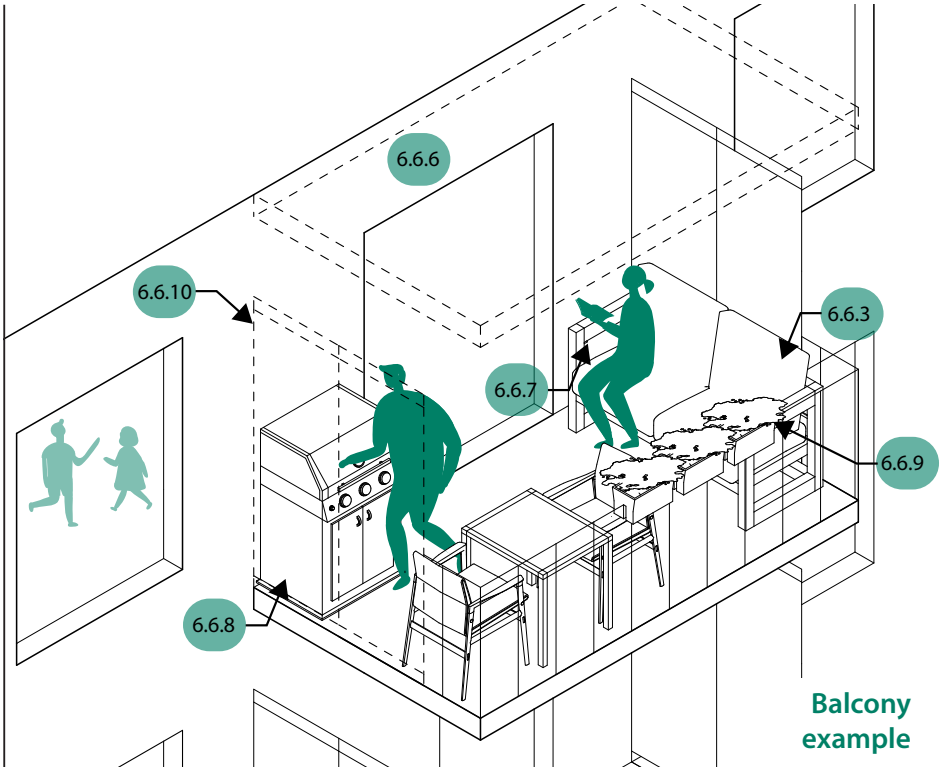
**6.6.4.** Avoid sight lines into other private balconies where possible.

**Where possible, provide:**

**6.6.5.** Sunlight access
**6.6.6.** Overhead shelter
**6.6.7.** Power outlets
**6.6.8.** BBQ hook-up
**6.6.9.** Railings or surfaces that allow for planters
**6.6.10.** Noise or privacy buffers



**A variety of balconies at Brightside's Timber & Harmony, Vancouver**
*Image: Happy Cities*




**Balcony example**

# 6.6. Usable private balconies and patios (continued)

### Design guidelines

**At-grade patios**

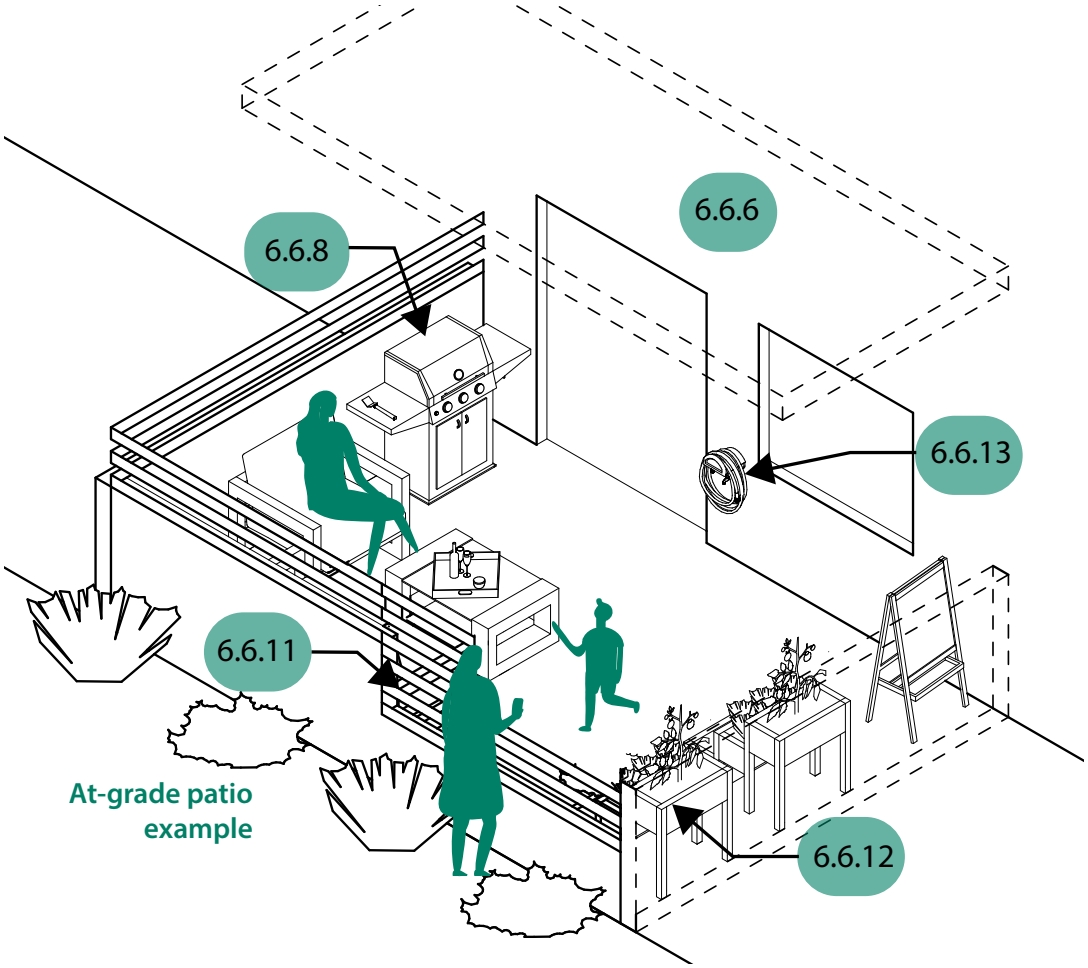
**6.6.11.** Design a mix of taller and shorter privacy screens to allow for privacy when sitting, while leaving the possibility of connecting with neighbours.

**6.6.12.** Create built-in gardening boxes.

**6.6.13.** Provide a hose bib.

**Juliette balconies**

**6.6.14.** If only Juliette balconies are provided on a floor, ensure easy access to a large outdoor space, a social nook (preferably outdoors), or shared balcony.




At-grade patio example

## 6.7. Enclosed balconies

**▶ Provide enclosed balconies that enhance livability, comfort, and year-round usability.**

**Applies to:** Low-rise, mid-rise, and high-rise buildings

**Impact and priority:** Medium

**Incentive:** Enclosed balconies are eligible for exclusion from FAR calculations.

### Criteria for incentives

**6.7.1.** Design balconies to be an extension of the home's living spaces.

**6.7.2.** Where possible, provide visual connections to the street and/or outdoor shared spaces.

**6.7.3.** Provide space for seating appropriate to the home size (e.g. two people for studio/one-bedroom, four to five people for two-bedroom and three-bedroom homes).

**6.7.4.** Avoid sight lines into other private balconies where possible.

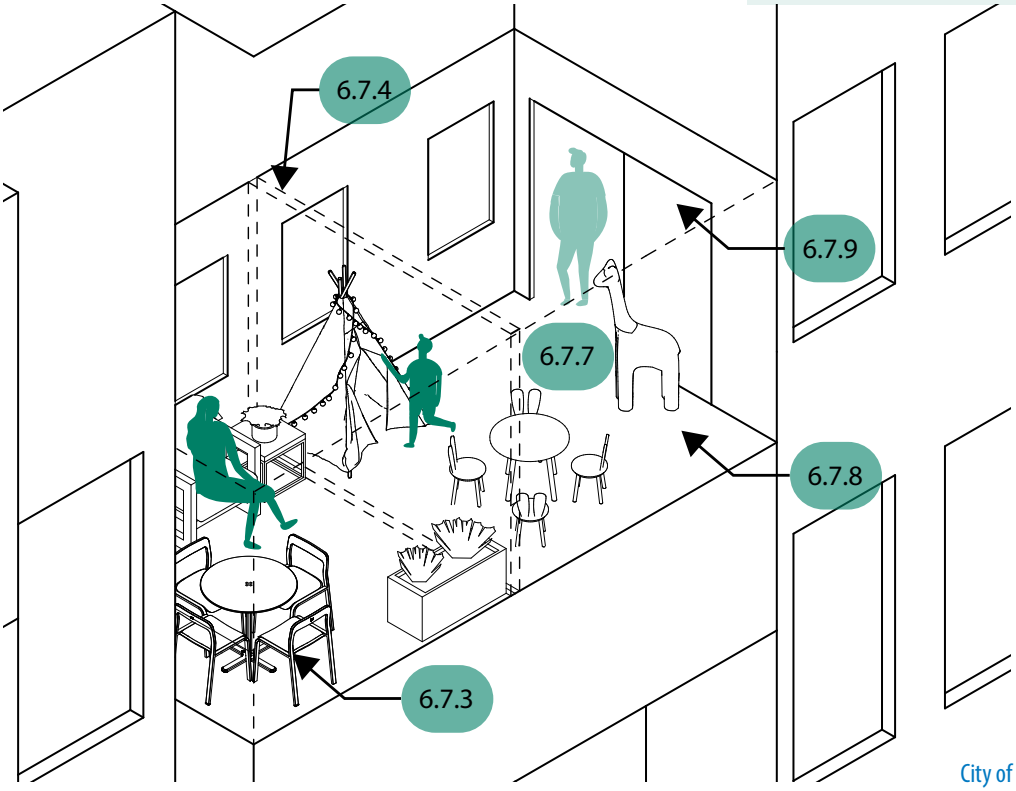
**6.7.5.** Where possible, provide sunlight access.

**6.7.6.** Where possible, provide power outlets.

**6.7.7.** Design balconies as flexible, year-round spaces that offer a strong connection to the outdoors but also feel like an extension of indoor living spaces.

**6.7.8.** Incorporate acoustic separation and thermal comfort measures to ensure use year round.

**6.7.9.** Use adaptable features to support varied household uses (e.g. operable glazing, sliding panels, multipurpose layouts).




Enclosed balcony example

# 7. Best practices in programming and policy

## Importance for well-being:

The City recognizes that good design has to be accompanied by the right programming and policy to activate building spaces to their full potential. Although outside the scope of architectural and landscape design, applicants can consider these suggestions to enable social connectedness and well-being after buildings are occupied. The suggestions on this page may be implemented by stratas, housing operators, and building managers.



### Suggestions

- Provide flexible elements and furniture in shared amenity spaces to allow residents to take ownership of a space's function and purpose.
- Incorporate artwork in lobbies, corridors, and outdoor spaces (created by residents or depicting a theme that reflects local experiences).
- Encourage residents to activate and beautify corridors by allowing occupants to customize their home entrances with plants, artwork, and temporary storage.
- Partner with organizations, community members, or residents to offer regular activities, programming, and special events (such as indoor classes, outdoor events, collaborative art activities, emergency preparedness workshops, and more).
- Ensure building policy encourages regular use of spaces for residents and their visitors (through reasonable hours of operation and non-restrictive processes around booking spaces or otherwise.