The Next Step: A Guide to Framing and Designing Permanent Supportive Housing for Caritas Housing

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The Next Step

A Guide to Framing and Designing Permanent Supportive Housing for Caritas Housing
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Executive Summary

Caritas Housing of Oregon develops affordable housing for persons experiencing homelessness across the state of Oregon. In January 2020, staff reached out to students in the Master of Urban and Regional Planning Program for assistance planning for the needs of our future residents, while being sensitive to the concerns and needs of residents and neighbors alike. Upstream Planning worked with Caritas Housing to create resident-informed development criteria and design tools for public communication. The Upstream Planning team created two documents, Development Criteria Guide and Public Communication Guide, that work towards the singular goal of helping Caritas develop permanent supportive housing that equitably promotes the health and well-being of residents.

The Development Criteria Guide presents developers with knowledge and recommendations to make more equitable and informed decisions on the site selection and design of permanent supportive housing. The guide details the values, priorities, and needs of affordable housing residents, and centers them as the experts, especially those that have been systematically omitted from development decision-making processes. Interviews with professionals working in service provision or development and peer-reviewed literature are sourced to further explore and expand upon the findings related to the residents.

The Public Communication Guide presents developers with tools to effectively garner public support for permanent supportive housing development while mitigating community concerns. The guide outlines strategies for public outreach, communication, and event planning, and recommends framing techniques and talking points. The content is based on best practices, interviews with professionals, and conversations with members of the public that hold a spectrum of views on permanent supportive housing.
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Introduction

This Development Criteria Guide presents developers with knowledge and recommendations to make more equitable and informed decisions on the site selection and design of permanent supportive housing. The guide details the values, priorities, and needs of affordable housing residents, and centers them as the experts, especially those that have been systematically omitted from development decision-making processes. Interviews with professionals working in service provision or development and peer-reviewed literature are sourced to further explore and expand upon the findings related to the residents.

Caritas Housing is a non-profit affordable housing developer and a part of Catholic Charities of Oregon. Caritas Housing began working in 1998 to acquire, develop, rehabilitate, and manage permanent affordable housing across the state for those in need of a home. Caritas Housing, has created more than 800 units of affordable housing for over 1,900 individuals, including 140 units of permanent supportive housing (PSH). Although Caritas Housing serves all of Oregon, the majority of the properties are located within the City of Portland.

As a developer of affordable housing, Caritas Housing is responsible for establishing and communicating a clear vision for new projects. Developers identify potential sites for new housing, acquire funding, set guidelines for design, and assemble teams of architects, contractors, and other technical consultants. Furthermore, developers engage with neighbors of projects to encourage support, advance awareness, and mitigate opposition. While working within a system of local and federal regulations, the responsibility of Caritas Housing is to ensure their development decisions equitably promote the health and well-being of future residents.
In recent years, various local and state actions have provided increased financial support to build more PSH and have eliminated some legal barriers to certain types of housing development. Caritas Housing has seized on this opportunity to build new PSH in the City of Portland but feel that they are too often developing in a context in which development decisions are influenced more by those opposed to affordable housing than by those that eventually occupy it.

With the roles and responsibilities of Caritas Housing as well as the PSH development opportunities in mind, Upstream Planning developed two documents to inform Caritas’ work - the Development Criteria Guide and the Public Communication Guide. This document proposes strategies that Caritas Housing can use to effectively garner public support for permanent supportive housing development while mitigating community concerns. The companion document, Development Criteria Guide, addresses the dearth of research about the values, priorities, and needs of PSH residents related to the design and siting of affordable housing. Together, these two documents work towards the singular goal of helping Caritas develop PSH that equitably promotes the health and well-being of residents.
Need for Permanent Supportive Housing

Housing production in Oregon has failed to keep up with new household formation, driving up the cost of homes for purchase and rent\(^1\). While this has impacted people across the income spectrum, the lowest-income households - disproportionately households of color - are facing the brunt of the shortage and the most severe consequences. A 2018 Metro study found the Greater Portland Region lacked approximately 48,000 affordable homes\(^2\). This shortage means in 2019, at least 4,015 people were experiencing homelessness in Multnomah County, a number that many experts believe is far below the actual rate and does not reflect the full extent of housing insecurity in the city\(^3\). Furthermore, of the individuals experiencing homelessness, at least 44% were chronically homeless. A broad body of research shows that PSH, a model that pairs affordability with coordinated services - effectively helps residents maintain stable housing while also promoting their health and well-being\(^4\).

Upstream Planning used a combination of definitions from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development\(^5\) and the Multnomah County Joint Office of Homeless Services\(^6\) to define PSH and Chronic Homelessness for this guide.

**Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)**
Permanent supportive housing is permanent housing with indefinite leasing or rental assistance paired with coordinated services to assist persons experiencing homelessness and living with a disability, or families with an adult or child member living with a disability, to achieve housing stability.

**Chronic Homelessness**
A term used to describe someone that has a disabling condition and has been homeless for a year or more, either in a single episode or in four episodes over the past three years.
Opportunities for the Development of Permanent Supportive Housing

In 2019, Caritas Housing and CCO became a pilot agency for Catholic Charities USA’s Healthy Housing Initiative. This initiative seeks to integrate health and housing services to assist individuals experiencing homelessness. The initiative has three main goals: to reduce chronic homelessness by 20%, decrease hospital readmission rates for homeless persons by at least 25%, and to connect 35% of newly housed persons to primary care and behavioral health services. The initiative assumes the collaboration of local arch/dioceses, Catholic health systems and other partners such as financial institutions and governmental agencies. Internally, the initiative has increased the capacity of Caritas Housing to develop PSH.

External factors have also created new opportunities for Caritas Housing to build additional housing. For example, HB 2001/03, and the Residential Infill Project in the City of Portland are likely to present new opportunities to rethink how and where affordable housing is developed. Additionally, the 2018 Metro Affordable Housing Bond creates $652.8 million for affordable housing development in the Metro tri-county area. Furthermore, in May 2020, voters approved a Metro ballot measure that compliments the housing bond through developing a continued source of funding for housing services. Together, these changes make new supportive housing development possible by increasing the availability of developable land, funding for development, and funding for services.
Methodology

The intent of this guide is to provide Caritas Housing and other developers of PSH with resident-informed development criteria to ensure housing best reflects their values, priorities, and needs. Upstream Planning sought to answer three questions:

- What do residents value in housing and its location?
- How do residents prioritize these values?
- What do residents need to stay housed, happy, and healthy?

Upstream Planning conducted engagement and research between January and May 2020. Resident input is the foundation of this guide, with the goal of ensuring that equity is at the forefront of the development criteria. While this guide intends to primarily inform PSH-related development decisions, Upstream Planning also conducted engagement with non-PSH affordable households. This decision - made with Caritas Housing - allowed Upstream Planning to explore values, priorities, and needs unique to PSH residents, and for the criteria to capture a broader range of perspectives.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Resident Survey</td>
<td>48 residents of CC affordable housing properties located across Portland participated in an online survey. Through research and professional interviews, Upstream Planning identified various services and amenities that PSH residents need or value. These services and amenities were the basis of the survey questions, which asked respondents’ how they value and prioritize them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resident (Expert) Interviews</td>
<td>Upstream Planning asked interested survey respondents to participate in an hour-long phone interview. Seven residents participated. The questions expanded on themes explored in the survey and offered residents a more open-ended outlet to share how housing might better meet their values, priorities, and needs. The interviewees are kept anonymous in this guide, and CC compensated them for their time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Interviews</td>
<td>Upstream Planning conducted phone and video interviews with local affordable housing developers and service providers, as well as CC property managers and resident service coordinators (RSCs). These interviews provided unique perspectives on what residents might need to support their health and well-being that they might not necessarily value or prioritize themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer-Reviewed Literature</td>
<td>Upstream Planning incorporated peer-reviewed literature to expand upon and further explore the findings of the surveys and interviews.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What should I know before reading this guide?

What are findings, themes, and development criteria?

This guide regularly uses the terms findings, themes, and development criteria. The findings informed the themes which in turn informed the development criteria.

- **Findings**: Everything that Upstream Planning learned from literature research as well as engagement with residents, CC, Caritas Housing staff and other stakeholders.

- **Themes**: Findings grouped together that tell the story of how development decisions affect resident health and well being.

- **Development Criteria**: Recommendations for the PSH development decision making process based on themes and findings.
How is the guide organized?

The guide is organized into three main sections, Overarching Themes, Site Design, and Development Siting, and several subsections. There are also separate sections discussing the themes and outlining the development criteria.

**Section**

**Subsection**

- Discussion of Themes
- Development Criteria

What shapes the Values, Priorities, and Needs of residents?

**Identity**

A resident’s identity is what primarily shapes their values, priorities, and needs. An identity is composed of experiences, relationships, attitudes and beliefs, culture, socioeconomic class, age, and numerous other factors that create a sense of self⁷. The identities of residents are reflected in their surveys and expressed during interviews.
Context

The values, priorities, and needs of residents are also tied to their current housing situation, especially in regards to staffing, current residence, and time as a tenant with CC. As it is infeasible and disingenuous to try and disentangle findings from context, this guide instead provides background information where possible and relevant, but without the inclusion of identifying data to ensure respondents are kept anonymous.

When residents were broadly asked what they like and dislike about their apartment building, answers were shaped by numerous factors distinct from the scope of development, but tethered to a building’s livability nonetheless. To the residents, staff accessibility and cleanliness of communal areas is just as important to how much they like a building as the physical structure itself. The property management and resident services staff are an integral part of successful PSH development.

In addition to staff accessibility and cleanliness, the feedback from residents is framed by their current situation. Despite efforts to discover how the residents might design and locate a new development project, the results are interlinked to their current home - an amalgam of buildings that are different ages, sizes, and quality, located in very different areas. Similarly, the research for this project took place shortly after Oregon’s Governor Kate Brown issued a ‘stay home’ order due to COVID-19 - a context that undoubtedly shifted responses to some degree. Where relevant, such as when exploring transportation behaviors, residents were asked about their situation prior to the pandemic.

Lastly, Caritas Housing should keep in mind that residents may have different values when first transitioning to new housing than they do years later. A developer of housing for formerly chronically homeless individuals mentioned during an interview that certain residents had different priorities after a few years. However, no interviewed residents could think of specific examples as to how their values might have changed over time when asked.
Travel Behaviors

Residents have specific travel behaviors that inform their values, priorities, and needs. Outlined in the following paragraphs are the travel behaviors of Resident Survey respondents, including findings, disaggregated by specific populations.

Walking is the most common (54%) mode of travel that survey respondents do almost daily. Nearly three quarters (71%) walk at least a few times a week. Although respondents that identified as older adults and/or as living with a disability generally travel less than other respondents, half of them still walk on a near-daily basis. Furthermore, formerly chronic homeless respondents are more likely to walk as a primary mode of transportation.

The same number of respondents drive personal automobiles at least a few times per week for transportation (71%) as those that walk. Rates were highest among respondents living with children; 95% drive at least a few times a month, including 62% almost daily - 24% more than respondents not living with children. Similarly, respondents that identified as people of color were 16% more likely to drive almost daily than white respondents. While 30% of older adult respondents and 25% of respondents living with disabilities never drive, 50% of these respondents still drive at least a few times a week.

Respondents vary in their use of transit. 22% use the bus almost daily, and 39% use it at least a few times a week. Similarly, 14% use the light rail (MAX) almost daily, and 32% use it at least a few times a week. Of the nine respondents that were almost daily users of transit, all identified as a person of color. While near-daily transit use was lower among older adults, respondents with children, and respondents living with a disability, at least 60% of these respondents still use transit at least a few times a month.

Very few of the surveyed residents use a bicycle or carpool for transportation. Overall, 51% never use a bicycle and 46% of residents never carpool. Of the 12% of respondents that do carpool and/or use a bicycle, an analysis of survey results shows no apparent commonalities in their backgrounds and/or identities. However, in an interview conducted by Upstream Planning, a developer of housing for the chronically homeless stated that their residents ride bikes as a primary means of transportation.
Who’s values, priorities, and needs are represented in this guide?

Upstream Planning believes that the resident experts contributing to the development of this report equitably uplift the perspectives of specific populations, while also still reflecting the diversity of CC’s entire tenant population. Certain populations including residents that are older adults (individuals over the age of 64), female, people of color, living in a household with a child, living with a disability, living in PSH, and/or own a vehicle are overrepresented in comparison to the demographics of the tenant population housed by CC. Other populations, including refugees and veterans, are represented, but it is unknown how they compare to the entire CC tenant population. Furthermore, there were certain populations that Upstream Planning would have liked to interview, and it is unlikely that they were surveyed. Examples of these populations include youths, non-English speaking residents, and residents of non-heterosexual sexual identities.
Overarching Themes

In creating this report, several themes over-arch the discussions in the Site Design and Development Siting sections. Caritas Housing should be cognizant of these themes to better understand and apply the development criteria in the subsequent sections.

Themes

- Some populations share values, priorities, and needs
- Benefits of development decisions can be negated if residents do not share values and priorities
- Development decisions affect the efficacy of on-site staff

Some populations share values, priorities, and needs

Designing housing that meets the needs of specific populations and reflects their values and priorities can reduce health disparities, improve resident well-being, and instill a natural sense of community. However, not designing housing to meet the values, priorities, and needs of a specific population, or, furthermore, housing populations with conflicting values and priorities, may be detrimental to the residents and undermine the effectiveness of supportive housing. Understanding that Caritas Housing cannot site and design housing to reflect all the facets of a resident’s culture and identity, Upstream Planning explored where there might be overlapping values, priorities, and needs based on shared characteristics.
In an analysis of Resident Survey results, themes clearly emerge along the lines of certain demographic factors. A majority of older adults (residents over the age of 64) were found to consistently share values, priorities, and needs in regards to site design and location. Similarly, households with children tended to share values, priorities, and needs, especially regarding topics relevant to youths. Furthermore, distinct themes on topics relevant to vehicle ownership also emerged among residents that regularly drive.

Interviews with residents elicited examples of how the values and priorities of non-white cultures are not reflected within current developments. However, respondents that identified as people of color did not generally share values and priorities, and when they did, it was more strongly associated with other parts of their identities, such as the fact that the resident lives with children, uses a car, or is an older adult. This in part may be due to who participated, what they were willing to share, the way questions were posed, and the level of analysis conducted. However, as a developer specializing in housing for a specific cultural group explained, cultures are not monolithic and developing housing should be a long process with the residents. They suggested that Caritas Housing hire experienced consultants and form focus groups when designing culturally-specific housing.

While residents with shared trauma and stress do not necessarily share values and priorities, they are likely to have shared needs in regards to development. Interviews with residents and stakeholders revealed how residents with shared trauma, such as veterans, domestic abuse survivors, refugees, and individuals transitioning out of chronic homelessness, have shared needs within their respective populations. Though trauma and stress are very individualized experiences, there are both broad and population-specific steps Caritas Housing can take to mitigate potential triggers. Furthermore, there are likely undiagnosed cases of trauma and stress-related disorders among the general tenant population that could benefit; for example, people of color are more likely to experience chronic life stressors\(^8\).
Benefits of development decisions can be negated if residents do not share values and priorities

Housing residents with contrasting values and priorities together can be detrimental to establishing community and a level of comfort with other residents, which affects resident health and well-being. For example, older adults’ general preference for quiet and peace is a stark difference to the prioritization of on-site playground equipment among households with children.

Similarly, generally having disabilities and/or needing PSH is not a shared experience strong enough to create shared values and priorities. In a development site for chronically homeless individuals, community space was eventually repurposed into additional service provision space due to a lack of use. In another case, a resident with physical disabilities experiences discomfort due to the stark difference in values and priorities of her neighbors that experience disabilities related to drug use. As an RSC explained, while interactions between residents of different backgrounds can be beneficial for their growth, certain populations living together can do more harm than good.

Development decisions affect the efficacy of on-site staff

As will be discussed in this report, thoughtfully designing space to meet the staff’s professional needs can improve their ability to assist residents. However, Caritas Housing must also consider how issues created by development decisions may become the responsibilities of staff. Noise disturbances due to thin walls are a common issue that is frequently addressed by staff, just as the use of cheaper materials upfront becomes the responsibility of maintenance staff as the building ages. Having to address tenant issues caused by the structure of the building takes time away from their responsibilities and initiatives to deliver services to the building’s residents. Furthermore, it puts stress on both intra-resident relationships and staff-resident relationships.
## Overarching Themes Development Criteria

### Develop housing to accommodate residents with trauma

**Examples**
- Veterans, domestic abuse survivors, refugees

**Actions**
- Consult with professionals experienced in developing housing for populations with shared trauma
- Consult literature on developing housing for populations with shared trauma
- Assume all residents have some level of trauma or stress that can be triggered or exacerbated

### Develop housing for residents of non-white cultural backgrounds

**Actions**
- Make decision-making a shared effort
- Consult with professionals that design culturally-specific housing, such as Hacienda CDC and NAYA
- Form resident design committees with residents of specific populations and compensate them for their time
- Be patient and plan for a longer development process

### Prioritize housing residents together that share values, priorities, and needs

**Examples**
- Residents with shared trauma, older adults, households with children, populations with high private vehicle usage
Avoid housing populations together with conflicting values, priorities, and needs

Examples
- Older adults and children

Develop housing that promotes the efficacy of on-site staff

Actions
- Design and construct housing to reduce potential tensions between on-site staff and residents
- Develop property evaluations for on-site staff to fill out
- Consult with resident service coordinators in designing offices and service provision space
- Conduct walkthroughs with property managers to identify

Prioritize meeting the needs of residents over their preferences if the two conflict
Site Design

Introduction

On average, Americans spend roughly 60% of our time in the home, making it one of the most important environments to an individual’s health and well-being. The home should not just be a safe and secure shelter. It should be a place designed intentionally to reflect the values, priorities, and needs of its tenants, especially those disproportionately affected by traditional design standards.

In our survey and interviews with Catholic Charities (CC) residents and staff, Upstream Planning asked how space in one’s apartment and how communal space was valued and utilized. Upstream Planning discussed with residents and stakeholders what was working, what was not, and how Caritas Housing development staff might think differently about apartment design and the amount and types of shared space offered. Through this engagement, common challenges and opportunities emerged. The following sections walk through findings and themes related to this part of the engagement process and recommend development criteria to inform site design decisions.

Sections

- Apartment Design
- Indoor Shared Space
- Outdoor Shared Space
- Building Security
Apartment Design

Themes

- Apartment space is the top priority of residents
- It is important to understand a resident’s current apartment to understand their suggestions for future apartments
- Design of apartment space can disproportionately harm the health and well-being of certain residents
- Space allocation in apartment layouts is prioritized differently by specific populations
The apartment space is the top priority of residents

When residents were asked what they would prioritize if they had limited space in an apartment building, 75% of the Resident Survey respondents said that they would prioritize extra space inside their individual units over communal space. This reflects the feedback from interviews, as residents spent more time answering questions about the inside of their home than any other question. While this project was not scoped to explore the nuances of apartment design, residents were eager to discuss the specifics of their individual units.

It is important to understand a resident’s current apartment to understand their suggestions for future apartments

More than any other topic discussed with the residents, context—or in this case a resident’s current unit—framed nearly all their feedback on apartment design. This is largely due to how much a resident’s apartment frames their perspective. That is, bathroom space being a low priority may have more to do with a resident currently having adequate bathroom space than it does with the resident not valuing bathroom space.

Design of apartment space can disproportionately harm the health and well-being of certain residents

Decisions regarding the layout of an apartment and construction materials used can unintentionally be detrimental to the health of certain residents. Caritas Housing serves a relatively high number of individuals that have experienced traumatic events that can be re-triggered due in part to the materials used to construct their unit. For example, loud noises due to thin walls can be traumatic for individuals that have experienced violence, such as refugees from war-torn countries and veterans. Similarly, over-hearing domestic arguments may be traumatic for survivors of domestic violence or child abuse.
When residents were asked what they would prioritize if they had limited space in an apartment building, 75% of the Resident Survey respondents said that they would prioritize extra space inside their individual units over communal space. This reflects the feedback from interviews, as residents spent more time answering questions about the inside of their home than any other question. While this project was not scoped to explore the nuances of apartment design, residents were eager to discuss the specifics of their individual units.

Similar to trauma, features of the units can exacerbate chronic health issues among some residents. For example, residents cooking fragrant foods for long periods of time can lead to a buildup of strong food fumes due to a lack of ventilation that can spread to other units. Although highlighted as a nuisance by one resident, strong smells can also be a trigger for migraines. Similarly, a resident working on their feet all day with knee pain found that the thin layer of carpet on the cement floor has caused their knees to continue to deteriorate.

Development decisions regarding apartment space can put residents in the difficult position of having to make choices that affect their well-being. For example, a resident mentioned how the exclusion of a ceiling light led to valuable space in a tiny unit being used for a floor lamp, while another resident brings their bicycle up because the bicycle room is not secure.

Similarly, while baseboard heaters are cheap to install, interviews revealed how they could put an undue financial burden on residents as they are expensive to run. This need to balance money with personal comfort was also discussed when Upstream Planning asked residents how they felt about their feelings toward in-unit washers and dryers - they liked the idea, but were concerned by potentially higher utility bills.
Buildings that are designed without consideration for non-white cultures may neglect their values and needs, and, subsequently, their health and well-being. For example, structurally weak walls were found unable to support rugs as wall-hangings, a practice of multiple cultures that CC serves. Similarly, some residents prepare traditional meals which require cooking in large, heavy pots over fires for extended periods of time. They do not believe that the electric burners are working unless they are red hot, which has led to the plastic connectors on the electric burners melting.

Similarly, housing has shown not to meet the needs and values of some residents of different ages and abilities. One interviewee mentioned how their home was not designed for someone with kids, as the towel racks and anything loose in the apartment were pulled down almost immediately. When maintenance was called, it evolved into an issue of needing to educate kids rather than addressing the construction needs of the residents. Multiple older adult survey respondents and interviewees specifically expressed a preference for in-unit washers and dryers, as shared laundry facilities can be a source of embarrassing experiences for some older adults. Similarly, kitchens with new appliances, such as silent exhausts that recirculate air, have shown to be a source of suspicion and confusion for some residents not acquainted with the more modern technology.

**Space allocation in apartment layouts is prioritized differently by specific populations**

As aforementioned, resident feedback on priorities in apartment layout is largely framed by their current unit. That is, prioritizing a bedroom over a living room does not mean that they necessarily value it more, but rather that their current apartment might provide adequate bedroom space. As such, Caritas Housing should use the feedback in this section to build upon past decisions rather than starting with a blank slate.

Residents value and prioritize kitchen space the most within their home. When given the option to add additional space to their units, two out of three surveyed residents chose the kitchen as one of their top two choices. The rate was slightly higher among survey residents that have a disability (70%), live with a child (71%), or are female or non-binary (73%).
Interviewees with families mentioned that they had the same kitchen layouts as one-bedroom apartments, despite having larger households. Residents’ expressed preference for extra kitchen space might be indicative of poor layout in their current apartment. A couple of interviewees mentioned space as unusable in their kitchen due to the odd angles of counters and the unnecessarily deep cabinets where items cannot be reached.

Following the kitchen, bedrooms and living rooms are the second and third priorities of residents, respectively, but with substantial nuance. Respondents that identified as people of color prioritized living rooms as one of their top two choices, 32 percentage points more than white respondents. Additionally, households with children prioritize bedrooms and living rooms as one of their top two choices 21 and 18 percentage points more, respectively, than households without children. Similar to kitchens, prioritization of this space may be in part shaped by the inefficiencies of their current units. One interviewee values the bedroom as a place of privacy, but because the bedroom door does not lock, their children can enter uninterrupted. Another interviewee sleeps in the living room so that their eldest child could have a bedroom to themselves.

Storage space and bathrooms are the lowest priorities for residents when asked where they would like extra space. Older adults were the exception to this, with 44% of respondents listing storage as their second priority. Overall, storage space may still rank as a lower priority in part because of the inefficiency of their current apartment layouts. One interviewee who seems to live in a unit with an ADA bathroom, despite not having a physical disability, thought that the bathroom wasted space that could have been used elsewhere in the apartment. Similarly, another resident mentioned how their closet space was poorly constructed, as the shelves had holes and could easily tip over, making it useless for storing certain items.

Survey respondents and interviewees also expressed interest in specific spaces that were not listed as survey options. Five survey respondents added the dining room as a prioritized space, albeit lower than the kitchen, bedroom, and living room. Similarly, four respondents wrote in patios and balconies as prioritized space. Interviews highlighted that balconies provide an escape from smaller units, which can be especially useful when living on a higher floor and trips out of the building might take more time. Furthermore, four respondents also wrote in wanting additional flexible quiet space for activities such as studying, homework, and hobbies.
Apartment Design Development Criteria

Consider how to make kitchen space more functional for residents

Examples
- Minimize unusable counter space in corners
- Appliances that are technologically accessible
- Shelves that are not too deep

Explore how to integrate kitchen appliances that accommodate a variety of cultural cooking traditions while balancing resident safety

Examples
- Long cooking times on high heat can melt the top of electric stoves
- Pressure sensors (sensi-temp) inhibits the cooking of lighter items on stoves

Design apartment space to accommodate residents with trauma and pre-existing health conditions

Examples
- Sound insulation in common/shared walls
- Soft flooring
- Alarms that are not triggered easily
Design apartment space to be customizable

Examples
- Chalkboards residents can write on
- Allow for residents to decide what color to paint a certain wall
- Install lights with dimmers
- Recessed entryways for decorating

Design apartment space to accommodate families

Examples
- Sliding doors to easily convert a room if they need a space for privacy, homework, or an additional bedroom
- Locks on bedroom doors
- Sturdy shelves and towel racks that can be climbed on or are easily replaceable

Explore apartment space preferences further with residents

Actions
- Schedule tours of apartments with residents
- Consider a Photovoice study with residents that includes compensation residents (https://photovoice.org/)

Consider creating communal space to accommodate needs of residents not being met within their apartment space

Examples
- Quiet, private space
- Study room for youths
Indoor Shared Space

Shared indoor spaces, such as libraries, computer labs, and community rooms, can help meet individual tenant’s needs and foster better relationships between residents.

Themes

- Community rooms are highly valued, but versatility is key
- Aside from community rooms, other uses of indoor communal space are prioritized differently by specific populations
- Co-locating on-site staff offices engenders collaboration but also raises the question of trust
- Residents are frustrated with laundry facilities
- Design of interior communal space can disproportionately harm the health and well-being of certain residents
Discussion of Indoor Shared Space

Space allocation in apartment layouts is prioritized differently by specific populations

When asked to prioritize communal spaces, 70% of Resident Survey respondents listed a community room as their first or second priority. A similar share indicated they either valued or highly valued having such a space in their apartment building. Communal space was especially important to older adult respondents. When asked to prioritize various communal spaces, all ten older adult respondents ranked having a community room on-site as either their first or second priority.

However, function does not simply follow form in regards to community rooms. That is, just because community space is available does not mean residents will want to form a community or even use the space. Residents might find community elsewhere, prefer more privacy, or simply just not want to get to know their neighbors. As one RSC reminded us, people do not necessarily live in affordable housing because they want to live together; they live there because it is cheaper. One outside developer discussed a project serving former chronically homeless residents where community space was never used, and was eventually converted into office space to deliver additional social services. As the developer pointed out, poverty is not a shared value. Populations are more likely to use community space when they have a foundation of shared values or experiences, such as older adults and veterans.
In addition to residents’ shared - or lack of shared - values and experiences, the actual location of community space influences how frequently the room is used and who uses it. When a community room is separate (i.e. in another part of the building) from the RSC office, it must remain locked to ensure that non-residents do not access the space and that the room will not be misused. However, RSCs on-site at properties with community spaces far from their offices, such as at McCoy Village and St. Francis Park, feel that the space is not as widely used due to the extra step of having to ask an RSC to come and unlock the door.

Designing limited community spaces to be multifunctional can leverage resources to meet the preferences and needs - both individual and communal - of a broad range of residents. For example, one resident requested a sink in their community room, which could increase the versatility of the space and encourage more residents to utilize the room. However, designing with flexibility in mind can also create unique challenges and inadvertently lead to design decisions that discourage community gathering. For example, Upstream Planning heard from residents, property managers, and RSCs that the furniture in communal spaces is uncomfortable. One older resident mentioned that they wanted to use the community room to host a game night for fellow residents, but hesitated because they did not think anyone would voluntarily sit on folding chairs for extended periods.

**Aside from community rooms, other uses of indoor communal space are prioritized differently by specific populations**

Although community space is a top priority for the majority of residents, computer rooms are similarly valued by respondents, as 69% said they are important or very important. Staff and residents explained during interviews that personal computers are unaffordable for many residents but a valuable resource. Interviewees indicated that computers may be more heavily used by youths, older adults, and single-person households.

Surveyed residents indicated that library rooms are not as valued as community or computer rooms, but are as high a priority as computer rooms. Libraries are important or very important to over half (54%) of respondents. However, it is unknown if they are valued for being a quiet relaxing space - as some residents alluded to wanting them within their apartments - or for providing books.
Although kitchen space inside the apartments is a priority for residents, shared kitchen space is not. Roughly a quarter of respondents said that they did not want a shared kitchen, while over a third had it listed as their last priority.

Space for teenagers was highlighted more as a need than value of the residents. During interviews, residents and RSCs commented on the lack of communal space for young people to gather. One RSC pointed out that without this designated space, teenagers might gather in hallways and be viewed as a nuisance. However, fewer than half (42%) of residents responding to the survey expressed space for teens as something they valued and nearly one quarter (23%) of all respondents did not want this type of space at all. Households with children responded more favorably to having a teen room vis-a-vis households without children; however, support among this group was still tepid, with one-third (33%) of respondents saying that they did not want a teen room in the building. This discrepancy may in part be due to an absence of input from teenage residents, as well as children in surveyed households being of a younger age. Another explanation is that the residents are aware of how a teen room might further stretch resources. When asked during the interview if they considered teen space to be a priority, one resident expressed interest but also pointed out the need for staffing that type of space. Without teenage input, it is unknown how well these spaces currently do serve teenagers.

Residents were specifically asked about the aforementioned spaces in the survey, but they also provided several other types of indoor communal space that may promote the health and well-being of residents. Five residents referenced wanting a space to exercise, which may increase physical activity among residents. Similarly, four residents added in wanting a pool, and another mentioned an older adult accessible hot tub. Though providing these might be prohibitively expensive, the expressed desire for physical activity spaces may be addressed by locating development near a community center. Two residents mentioned wanting a bike room, and two others mentioned wanting work and storage space for tools related to hobbies, such as gardening and sewing. Lastly, one resident mentioned wanting an indoor gathering area for guests to come for a visit.

While the survey question framed the spaces as separate rooms, in reality, a multi-functional space could be inclusive of many of the preferences of residents. For example, Sacred Heart’s community room includes books, computers, television, and, with movable furniture, is still flexible enough to be rearranged if needed. Furthermore, when one RSC was asked about teen space, they responded that due to limited space, the community room could serve as the de facto teen room at times.
Co-locating on-site staff offices engenders collaboration but also raises the question of trust

For all their differences in roles and responsibilities, property managers and RSCs frequently work closely to improve residents’ experience and well-being. Both parties indicated during interviews that there were advantages to colocating property management and RSC offices to enable easier communication and establish an atmosphere of collaboration. This can have a positive impact on residents. For example, a property manager struggling with a particular tenant might be able to notify the RSC; the RSC, in turn, might be able to act as a mediator and quickly resolve the issue before more drastic interventions are needed. However, developers should also be cognizant that colocation might influence residents’ trust in RSCs. For example, one resident reported feeling nervous about raising their concerns about property management to their RSC because of the close proximity of the two offices.

Residents are frustrated with laundry facilities

Shared spaces such as laundry rooms tend to play a functional rather than social role in residents’ lives, but they are still critical to a resident’s health and well-being. Although Upstream Planning did not specifically ask about laundry space in the survey, four respondents used open-ended questions to raise their concerns about having too few machines. Many interviewees shared similar frustrations. This sentiment was consistent across properties, but might be a more common concern for larger households. For example, one resident from a larger household reported that their family would frequently occupy all machines in the building and suggested that larger industrial-style machines might be better able to accommodate larger households.

Dysfunctional space is not always the result of design choices; management policies can also produce challenges. For example, many developments disallow drying clothing outside, which, if allowed, could reduce machine use. Other issues might result from changes made to properties post-development. At Kateri Park, for example, overextended laundry facilities resulted from changes made to specific units after the building was constructed and operational.
One RSC explained that when the property was first built, units with three to four bedrooms included in-unit machines, while units with fewer bedrooms shared an on-site facility. After a few years of operation, however, machines were removed from the larger apartments due to concerns over high utility bills. Upon removal, no additional machines were added to the shared facility to accommodate additional users.

**Design of interior communal space can disproportionately harm the health and well-being of certain residents**

As mentioned previously, apartment design can unintentionally re-traumatize or exacerbate health conditions for specific populations. The same is true of the way that shared interior spaces are designed. As one RSC explained, the location of apartment unit entrances can both promote or detract from resident well-being. Entrances that open to interior hallways can provide an added layer of security for survivors of domestic violence, while apartment units with exterior entrances remove the number of barriers between one’s front door and a potential aggressor. Exterior entrances can be re-triggering and can legitimately put residents at risk.

However, design elements critical to the health and safety of some can be at odds with the needs and preferences of others. A developer of housing for veterans mentioned that they feel more comfortable in open-air walkways where they can see all their surroundings. Also in contrast to the interior hallways, residents interviewed at McCoy Village - a multi-building development with exterior entrances to apartment units - universally expressed appreciation for the lack of shared hallways; for these residents, private exterior entrances conferred a sense of independence and spaciousness. That said, while Upstream Planning did not knowingly interview any survivors of domestic violence, they heard some residents express that interior hallways with locking front doors made them feel more safe.

Operations and maintenance issues can also present serious challenges for specific populations. For example, residents, RSCs, and property managers raised the importance of functional elevators for older adults and those with disabilities. As one resident pointed out, an elevator in disrepair - even for a single day - might result in a missed doctor’s appointment. Some interviewees mentioned that elevators break down more frequently than one might expect and suggested that there was a need for a second elevator.
### Indoor Shared Space Development Criteria

#### Design laundry facilities that accommodate the needs of residents

**Actions**
- Consider developing a laundry machine to unit ratios that reflects the needs of the residents, may be higher dependent on population
- Budget to include on-site change machines when charging for laundry
- Explore opportunities for less expensive, traditional practices for drying clothes in a secure place (providing clothing lines, drying racks) to reduce use of dryers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Actions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prioritize collocating resident service coordinator offices with community rooms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prioritize collocating resident service coordinator offices with property management offices, but create barrier for confidentiality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Develop on-site service provision space, especially for residents that require higher levels of assistance and/or experience mobility issues</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Prioritize community space, especially for residents that share values, priorities, and needs

Actions
- Design space to be multi-functional (library, computers, playspace, etc.)
- Consider furniture that is durable, comfortable, and movable

Consider the different spaces youth will need as they age, but versatility is key

Actions
- Interview teenage residents and visit other organizations serving teens to understand components and staffing of a potential teen room

Design common spaces to accommodate residents with trauma and pre-existing health conditions

Examples
- Interior entrances to apartments for residents that have experienced domestic violence
- Open air walkways for Veteran residents

Explore alternative options to indoor spaces residents value but might not be feasible

Examples
- Shared weights and equipment that residents can borrow (Gym alternative)
- Locating near a community center with a pool
Building Security

Security was not a subject Upstream Planning initially sought to explore; however, interviews with residents and staff highlighted how vital safety is to a resident’s mental, physical, and material well-being. For the purposes of this section, security encompasses the technology, building design, and policies adopted to reduce crime perpetrated against residents. This section includes a discussion of the common themes voiced by residents and staff, along with development criteria Caritas Housing should consider when developing new and improving existing housing facilities.

Themes

- For residents, parcel security is a major concern
- Residents lack confidence in current security measures
Discussion of Building Security

For residents, parcel security is a major concern

Although not addressed in the Resident Survey, a recurring theme in interviews with residents was the lack of secure delivery space for parcels. The general anxiety this issue causes residents is evident. One resident reported problems with package theft and said even their groceries - delivered using a contactless delivery service because of concerns over COVID-19 - had been stolen. Although e-retailers like Amazon have introduced parcel lockers around the city, one resident pointed out that even if the locker was within walking distance, it might not be feasible for those without a car to pick up heavy packages.

Online shopping currently comprises approximately 11% of all retail purchases. That number, already projected to steadily grow over the next five years, will likely increase more quickly due to changes brought on by COVID-19. The share of online purchases is likely smaller for low-income households; the National Apartment Association reported in 2017 that affordable housing properties received on average 30% fewer packages than market rate buildings. Nevertheless, Upstream Planning’s engagement underscores that residents are making online purchases and inadequate parcel infrastructure is resulting in anxiety and financial loss. Moreover, in recent years retailers such as Amazon and Walmart have begun targeting low-income households as an area for growth. Government, too, is responding to a changing retail landscape. For example, future changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) might increase the percentage of grocery purchases low-income households make online. Oregon is currently participating in the U.S. Department of Agriculture pilot program that allows SNAP benefits, historically only redeemable in person, to be used for online purchases.

In recent years, property management companies have responded to accommodate changing behavior in the retail sector. Many market rate and luxury apartments now feature electronic package lockers that message residents’ phones, alerting them when their package has been delivered and providing them with a unique password that unlocks the locker with their order. While these systems represent one solution to the challenge of parcel security, the systems typically cost thousands of dollars and might be inaccessible to residents without personal technology, such as a cell phone. A more affordable option might be mailbox infrastructure that includes parcel drop boxes that unlock with a key.
Other security issues - resident confidence in security measures and resident well-being

Security concerns go beyond package theft. Interviews revealed that some residents do not believe security is being taken seriously by property management. For example, when asked to describe their comfort level with security cameras, residents unanimously supported the installation of additional cameras but lacked confidence in the efficacy of the technology. After describing a laundry room break-in in which the coin-boxes were removed from machines, one resident speculated that existing cameras were fake. Another described an incident in which their car was damaged in the parking lot; although the security camera captured video of the incident, the footage was too blurry to be helpful. Some expressed more confidence in property management but still experienced anxiety about security. One resident understood that property management was trying but thought some policies - such as limiting residents from installing doorbell cameras - were counterproductive.

Theft and damage to property add additional stress to constrained budgets. More than material losses, anxiety about building security worsens mental health and can even discourage desirable behaviors. For example, one resident said they were less likely to ride their bicycle due to inadequate secure bicycle parking on the ground floor.
Building Security Development Criteria

- Develop safe and secure mail parcel infrastructure
- Develop locked bicycle storage on the ground-floor with visible security cameras
- Prioritize security in new developments

**Actions**
- Install of high-quality security cameras when developing new housing
- Consider encouraging property management to host listening sessions to learn more about residents security concerns and to better communicate steps management is taking to address issues and resident concerns
Development Siting

Introduction

The social, physical, and economic characteristics of the neighborhood surrounding PSH significantly affect the ability of residents to make healthy decisions. The neighborhood can improve access to opportunities, such as education and employment; reduce exposure to environmental hazards, such as crime and pollution; or be a fundamental source of support during a resident’s transition to permanent housing. This section of the guide walks through findings and themes related to development siting and recommends relevant development criteria for Caritas Housing to consider.

In our survey and interviews with Catholic Charities (CC) residents and staff, Upstream Planning asked what residents enjoyed and did not enjoy about their neighborhood. Upstream Planning discussed with residents and stakeholders what was working, what was not, and how Caritas Housing development staff might think differently about locating future developments. Through this engagement, common challenges and opportunities emerged. The following sections walk through findings and themes related to this part of the engagement process and recommend development criteria to inform development siting decisions.

Sections

- Neighborhood Fit
- Retail
- Neighborhood Services
- Safety and Environmental Health
Neighborhood Fit

Themes

- A more suburban location might fit the preferences of vehicle owners, but not their needs
- Specific populations prefer different types of neighborhoods
- Low-income and higher-income neighborhoods work differently for specific populations
- Siting developments can reduce inequities within an area
Discussion of Neighborhood Fit

A more suburban location might fit the preferences of vehicle owners, but not their needs

In general, residents that rely more on walking as a means of transportation prioritize living closer to off-site amenities, while residents that have access to an automobile prioritize having more space within their apartment. Of the survey respondents that preferred living closer to amenities, 94% walked for transportation at least a few times a week, 37 percentage points higher than respondents that preferred the larger apartment. In contrast, of the respondents that would prioritize additional apartment space over proximity to off-site amenities, 81% of them drove an automobile at least a few times a month, 31 percentage points higher than those that preferred living closer to amenities.

While apartment space is very important to residents, residing further away from neighborhood amenities may be a detriment to their health and well-being. As one resident shared, they previously lived in the suburbs in a larger unit with their family, but were essentially stranded and unable to care for themselves when their car broke down. Vehicles are valued and needed for some residents but are expensive to maintain and can quickly force residents into an unanticipated mode-shift that might not be compatible with where they live or work.
Specific populations prefer different types of neighborhoods

Older adults generally value quiet, historic neighborhoods, and easy access to services. Although older residents expressed enjoyment in sitting outside and watching traffic, they would prefer not to live in an area with high street activity at the expense of peace and quiet. Furthermore, the Resident Survey indicated that older adults generally valued proximity to retail less than younger residents. An older resident expressed interest in historic neighborhoods with Victorian architecture aesthetics and higher walkability, such as the Brooklyn neighborhood.

Families with children similarly value quiet neighborhoods with no nightlife, but they also value and prioritize amenities like schools, playgrounds and daycares that serve their family. Furthermore, some interviewed residents that are parents added that they value places of entertainment, such as theaters and bowling alleys.

According to a developer, residents exiting chronic homelessness value continuity and need areas with high service provision, at least in the short term. These residents prefer being close to the types of places they were regularly visiting before they were housed, such as fast-food restaurants, parks, libraries, and convenience stores. Furthermore, it is essential to ensure that services like mental and behavioral health clinics, and establishments that process money orders are accessible to meet the needs of these residents. The values should not be assumed to be omnipresent among this population and, furthermore, the developer thought it might be worth exploring if the preferences of these residents might change over time.

While race and ethnicity were not found to be associated with neighborhood preferences, residents of specific cultural backgrounds do share values and needs. A research article indicated that African American and Latinx populations search for housing based on their preferences, rather than solely looking to reside in a community largely composed of their own race and ethnicity\textsuperscript{16}. However, an RSC interviewee explained that for residents of specific cultures, certain neighborhood qualities are valued, such as ethnic grocery stores, and others are not, such as bars among Muslim residents.

In general, active residents that are not older adults and live one-person households value walkable neighborhoods with more businesses. As one interviewee stated, living in an area with a lot of activities and businesses encourages them to get outside and walk more.
Low-income and higher-income neighborhoods works differently for specific populations

If PSH intends to provide residents with a stable environment to improve their health and well-being in all aspects of their life, then higher-income areas have more opportunities, while lower-income areas may seem counterproductive to this goal. Higher-income areas typically provide better schools, better infrastructure, healthier food options, shorter commute times, and less pollution and crime. In contrast, residents in low-income areas are exposed to a multitude of harmful environmental health hazards, many of which were mentioned as concerns of staff and residents.

In addition to environmental hazards, residing in low-income areas can cause residents to regress or can create additional tension in the landlord-tenant relationship. As discussed in an interview with a developer, residents recovering from substance abuse disorders or receiving care for mental health conditions may experience relapses or episodes when they are exposed to triggers in their surrounding neighborhood, such as living near clinics where individuals with similar conditions may gather. Additionally, interviews revealed that when residents continue to live in close proximity to friends that are struggling with housing, they are empathetic and want to share their space. This, however, may be a breach of the lease and lead to tensions with staff that hurt all parties.

Residents living in more central, amenity-rich areas were generally happy with their site’s location. One resident shared that they strive to be a homeowner like their neighbors and have appreciated the gradual gentrification of the area, despite some of the new business being unaffordable. The resident also mentioned missing specific restaurants and wishing there were affordable food options. However, they also made it clear that they would not trade their current location for housing closer to affordable restaurants.

However, when the intent is to keep people housed, then placing residents where they simply feel most comfortable may be most appropriate. Housing in low-income areas is more likely to provide the same retail stores, public services, and community services that residents are accustomed to or need.
In contrast, moving to higher-income areas with different and financially inaccessible retailers can be a jarring and traumatic transition, especially for residents exiting chronic homelessness. Additionally, although none of the residents had negative things to say about their interactions with neighbors outside of their building, research does indicate that wealthy neighbors are strongly opposed to low-income developments, which could lead to abuse and mistreatment18,19.

Housing in low-income areas may also have the benefit of proximity to local organizations. The differences in service accessibility was brought up by an RSC who staffs two different apartment buildings - one in a lower-income neighborhood and the other in a higher-income neighborhood. Services such as the Boys and Girls Club and food pantries are more readily available in the lower-income neighborhood. In the higher-income area, the local schools and individual neighbors have stepped in to volunteer time and resources to meet the needs of residents. While the neighborhood richer with services did not have a bad relationship with educational institutions or with surrounding neighbors, the connections were not as strong. Nevertheless, while expressing gratitude for the contributions and commitments of non-traditional support, the RSC ultimately said schools and individuals were not a sufficient substitute and recommended siting new affordable housing in neighborhoods with easy access to social service organizations.

**Developments can reduce inequities within a neighborhood**

Although not a direct benefit to the health and well-being of residents, Caritas Housing and other PSH developers should consider how their work reduces inequities in both lower- and higher-income neighborhoods. Empirical research has demonstrated that the development of Low Income Housing Tax Credits-funded housing in low-income neighborhoods can decrease crime and segregation, and increase home values20. However, it is unclear how affordable housing development may affect other important aspects of livability in an area, such as schools and local retail options. Other research has shown that when integration in higher-income areas becomes widespread, incentives for wealthy white enclaves to self-segregate are reduced21. This, in turn, can lead to increased opportunities for not only the PSH residents, but also for all people of color.
## Neighborhood Fit Development Criteria

### Consider developing a local neighborhood typology for matching sites with population needs

**Actions**
- Explore how siting housing in local neighborhoods relate to the benefits and drawbacks associated with low-income neighborhoods and high-income neighborhoods
- Explore how siting housing in local neighborhoods meet the preferences of automobile (larger apartments owners in less dense areas) but still provide reliable transit services for unanticipated mode-shifts
- Explore literature on neighborhood typologies

### Consider the value of continuity and community when siting housing for chronically homeless residents

**Actions**
- Retailers they previously patroned
- Local service providers with pre-existing relationships
- Support current transportation preferences (e.g. walk, bicycle, transit)
- Provide guest rooms or lenient leases that allow for overnight guests

### Explore neighborhood preferences of residents with different cultural backgrounds
Prioritize community space, especially for residents that share values, priorities, and needs

Actions
- Design space to be multi-functional (library, computers, playspace, etc.)
- Consider furniture that is durable, comfortable, and movable

Develop housing for older adults in neighborhoods that reflect their values

Examples
- Quiet and safe
- Historic Neighborhoods
- Minimal nightlife
- Good transit

Action
- Explore purchasing shuttle buses for properties serving older adults

Develop housing for young, active, one-person households in walkable, amenity-rich neighborhoods

Develop housing for families near amenities for youths

Examples
- Quiet and safe
- Entertainment for children
- Minimal nightlife
- Parking
- Schools

Action
- Ensure that a new development is located entirely within the same school boundary, and if not, then contact the local school district to request a boundary change
Retail

This section explores how retailers may be beneficial or detrimental to the health and well-being of residents.

Themes

- Siting housing near a grocery store is the top value and priority of residents
- Siting housing near non-affordable grocery stores is harmful to the health and well-being of residents
- Siting housing near liquor stores, fast food restaurants, and tobacco retailers is harmful to the health and well-being of residents
- Siting housing near nightlife establishments is harmful to the health and well-being of residents, but there are nuances
- Aside from grocery stores and liquor stores, value and prioritization of retail is dependent on personal preference
Discussion of Retail

Grocery stores are the top priority of residents

When given the option of being close to transit, retail, or community services, retail was the first choice of roughly half of the Resident Survey respondents (51%). However, when asked about specific types of retail (i.e. grocery stores, liquor stores, convenience/corner stores, restaurants, gas stations, etc.), survey respondents did not value retail as highly as on-site amenities (previously discussed) or neighborhood services (still to be discussed). The one exception was grocery stores, which is the sole reason that a majority of survey respondents value retail over transit and neighborhood services.

Living near a grocery store was more valued than any other off-site or on-site amenity within the survey. Almost all (93%) respondents said it was important for their housing to be located within a mile of a grocery store, including 69% of respondents saying that it was very important. A similar share (93%) of respondents also prioritized being close to a grocery store over all other retail types.

Liquor stores, fast food restaurants, and tobacco retailers are harmful to the health and well-being of residents

Proximity to liquor stores, fast food restaurants, and tobacco retailers has been associated with an increased risk of chronic illnesses and death\textsuperscript{22}. The likelihood is even higher among individuals of lower socioeconomic status, such as residents of PSH and low-income housing. Although resident surveys and interviews did not reflect clear associations as described in the literature, they did allude to the possibility.
When surveyed, the majority of residents were in consensus that they did not value liquor stores. In total, 93% of residents either did not want to live near a liquor store (53%) or had a neutral stance (40%). The percentage of residents that do not want to live near a liquor store is highest among female respondents (71%) and residents living with children (62%). While interviewees did not discuss liquor stores, the surveyees preference for not wanting to live near such retailers may be indicative of poor experiences associated with drinking and/or the stores.

Residents did not specifically mention fast-food restaurants. However, they did provide examples of how proximity to these establishments might be affecting health behaviors. RSCs and residents of two separate properties mentioned how living within walking distance of McDonalds has encouraged tenants, including youths and older adults, to regularly eat there. Neither apartment is located within a reasonable walking distance of affordable grocery stores, which may promote the observed reliance on fast-food.

While tobacco retailers were not discussed, residents did reference heavy smoking on properties. As aforementioned, residents’ smoking habits is a reality that Caritas Housing must intentionally and strategically design for to protect the health of all residents. While it is unknown if these behaviors are associated with proximity to tobacco retailers, research does indicate that there is likely a relationship. Caritas Housing can potentially reduce smoking and tobacco initiation rates among future residents by intentionally siting housing a further from tobacco retailers.
Neighborhoods that lack affordable grocery stores are harmful to the health and well-being of residents

The major caveat to the prioritization of grocery stores is that they must be affordable. During interviews, stories were shared of multiple families packing into a van and driving for ten minutes rather than walking five minutes to the nearest store, and of older adult residents riding the bus past other grocery stores to reach one they can afford. Similarly, survey respondents wrote “affordable grocery” and “discount grocery store” into the Other category, despite Grocery Store already being a distinct retail category. Residents value being close to affordable grocery stores, and regardless of the distance seem willing to travel for them. However, residents indicated they would not necessarily prefer to live close to an affordable grocery store if that required the trade-off of living in a lower-income area.

However, having to travel longer distances for affordable options creates inequitable burdens and can lead to the adoption of poor health behaviors. Residents spend their time and resources traveling further distances for affordable groceries. Furthermore, residents that travel to distant, affordable grocery stores may be less able to adapt to any unforeseen mode-shifts; for example, if a resident’s car breaks down or they develop a disability that affects their mobility. Residents residing near non-affordable grocery stores also showed signs of adopting poor health behaviors associated with living in a food desert, such as eating at fast-food restaurants and purchasing groceries from convenience stores lacking healthy options.

While Upstream Planning did not gather information on what constitutes affordable for the residents, examples given by residents include Winco, Walmart, Costco, and Fred Meyer. Specific grocery options mentioned as non-affordable were Market of Choice, New Seasons, and Target.
Nightlife establishments are harmful to the health and well-being of residents, but there is nuance

Research and interviews indicate that siting housing near nightlife establishments exposes residents to an increased risk of violence. This effect especially impacts residences near dance clubs and strip clubs. Interviews provided similar evidence, as residents of Kateri Park and Esperanza Court explained that violence among patrons of the Safari Club (when it was operating on Southeast Powell Boulevard) would spill over onto surrounding streets on occasion.

Violence is certainly not ubiquitous with nightlife establishments, and residents appear to value them differently. Neighborhood bars are associated with lower rates of violence and are a source of community for some residents, especially those located in historic neighborhoods where the residents might have resided previously. In contrast, CC also houses a number of Muslim residents that do not drink alcohol and do not value bars. Additionally, residents in recovery, with mental health conditions, or trauma may need to be located away from potential triggers that some bars may present, such as drinking and loud noises.

Prioritization of retail is largely dependent on personal preference

Aside from grocery stores and liquor stores, there is mixed consensus on the value and prioritization of other retail. Convenience stores were the second most valued type of retail. Although not considered very important, convenience stores were still important to over half the residents and the second retail priority for 44% of them. As previously mentioned, convenience stores are actually preferred over grocery stores for residents exiting chronic homelessness. It is unclear if living near an affordable grocery store, rather than a convenience store, would be an acceptable supplement for these residents.
There was also feedback that living near convenience stores could be a detriment to the health and well-being of residents; for example, 9% of respondents indicated that they would not want to live near a convenience store, potentially due to their association with crime, as one interviewee stated about 7-11s and Plaid Pantrys. Convenience stores also provide few healthy options, and a significant majority sell and advertise tobacco products (100% of stores within Multnomah County in 2015)\textsuperscript{26}.

Living near a coffee shop or gas station was important to some residents, but not to others. Living within a mile of a coffee shop was regarded as very important to some residents (18%), but was unwanted by others (9%). When asked about gas stations, the same share of respondents said that it was very important to live near one as those that said they would not want to live near one (11% in both cases). While all of those that valued living near a gas station drive almost daily, so too did some of those that did not want to live near a gas station. Overall, the majority of residents fell between important and neutral in regards to coffee shops and gas stations. Coffee shops were valued slightly higher, but the two were switched in regards to prioritization.

Although valued and prioritized slightly less than coffee shops and gas stations, residents were rather neutral on living near restaurants, bicycle repair shops, and clothing stores. Over 40% of the survey respondents said that they were neutral on living within a mile of these retail services, and very few said that it was either very important or that they did not want to live near those types of retailers.

In addition to expressing mixed values and priorities on retail, residents provided a substantial number of retail suggestions that they would like to live near that are outside of the provided categories. Residents listed businesses known for affordability, including thrift stores (mentioned multiple times), Dollar Tree, and bargain outlets. Furthermore, residents listed stores that provide services and tools, including a veterinarian office (mentioned multiple times), pet store, hardware store, garden supply store, makerspace, and a gym. Lastly, residents listed entertainment and self-care retail establishments, including a movie theater, comedy club, hair salon, and a confectionery shop. Aside from food retailers, retail preferences are largely contingent on personal preferences, as exhibited by the mix in respondents’ values, priorities, and suggestions.
## Retail Development Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prioritize siting housing near affordable grocery stores</td>
<td>Winco, Walmart, Costco, Fred Meyer</td>
<td>Consider what retailers are affordable for residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid siting housing near fast food restaurants or convenience stores, especially when affordable grocery store options are a further distance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Avoid siting housing near liquor stores</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Avoid siting housing near clubs, and consider resident values and needs if siting near bars</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Avoid siting housing near tobacco retailers

Actions

- Connect with local county health department to determine locations of tobacco retail licenses
- Follow buffer distances of 500ft from properties in high-density areas and 1,000 ft from properties in low- to medium-density areas (distances currently utilized by local jurisdictions with tobacco retailer license regulations)
Neighborhood Services

This section explores how residents prioritize and value various neighborhood services.

Themes

- Parks are the top priority of residents
- Residents want to live in neighborhoods rich with services
- Transit rich neighborhoods are highly valued
Discussion of Neighborhood Services

Parks are the top priority of residents

Neighborhood parks were the most highly valued neighborhood amenities that Upstream Planning included in the Resident Survey. 84% of respondents considered it either important or very important, including 75% of respondents with disabilities, 90% of older adult respondents, and 95% of respondents living with children. Furthermore, parks were highlighted by stakeholders as a valued amenity among residents exiting homelessness.

Parks are also the highest priority for respondents; of the services listed, 64% of respondents ranked parks as the amenity they wanted closest to their home. This response was corroborated during interviews with residents, although some discussed avoiding specific parks due to a perception of crime, indicating that not all parks are valued equally.

Residents want to live in neighborhoods rich with services

Unlike retail, most respondents (50%+) valued living in close proximity to six of the eight community services presented in the survey. This was reflected in one resident’s comment; when asked to prioritize services, one resident declined and instead wrote, “I can’t rank the previous [services] because I believe they are all almost equally important.”

Places of worship and college and universities were the only two categories not valued by at least half of all respondents. Moreover, approximately 13% of respondents said they did not want to live within a mile of a college or university. Living near places of religious worship was considered very important to a higher share of respondents (29%). However, just over half (51%) had religious centers ranked as their sixth, seventh, or eighth priority (of eight total options). Although a relatively small percentage, 18% ranked religious institutions as their first priority. This suggests that for those who do value these institutions, it is very important to live nearby.
Public libraries were the second most valued neighborhood service, and it is similarly popular among all demographics. Compared to parks, fewer considered it very important (33%), but a significant majority (82%) responded that living close to a library was either important or very important. When asked to prioritize, 44% ranked public libraries as their first or second priority.

Pharmacies were the third most valued neighborhood service. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents said living within a mile of a pharmacy was important or very important. Compared to 40% of the total surveyed population, 60% of older adult respondents and 55% of residents with disabilities said that it was very important to live close to a pharmacy. Pharmacies ranked third in terms of prioritization, with 37% of respondents ranking it as their first or second priority. An RSC mentioned that having a pharmacy that delivers medicine is an added benefit.

Community centers were considered very important or important by 69% of respondents, and over one-quarter (26%) made it their first or second priority. Daycares were considered important or very important by 62% of respondents, and just under one-quarter (24%) made it their first or second priority, including 29% of households with children. Notably, however, 13% also said they did not want to live near a daycare. Just over half (51%) of respondents valued living close to job training centers, but almost nobody (5%) made it their first or second priority.
Transit services are highly valued

Transportation was not included in the neighborhood services section; instead, as mentioned above, residents were asked to describe their usual travel choices across a variety of modalities - bus, light rail, personal automobile, etc. The results of this query are included in the Interpreting Themes and Development Criteria Section.

Still, the value of living in a transit-friendly neighborhood was emphasized so frequently that it bears repeating. When asked how they would prioritize siting new housing development, two RSCs listed frequent and direct public transportation as the most important factor. They particularly highlighted the observed need to reduce the number of times residents must transfer between services to access frequently visited destinations, such as the grocery store. Furthermore, residents also described siting new housing near frequent transit as a priority. Even for those that drive, access to multiple modes of transportation can be critical. As mentioned previously, one resident discussed a history of car-issues and that - despite still owning a car - living in a transit rich neighborhood relieved that stress and reduced the negative consequences of missing appointments. Other residents also reported appreciating transportation options, mentioning, for example, frequent-service bus routes, Rose Quarter Transit Center, freeway access, and neighborhood greenways.

Among residents that do ride transit and walk more often, there are nuances to how siting development can support transportation behaviors. The survey shows that older adults do not travel as often as younger residents; however, they still do need direct and simple transportation to services and grocery stores. As previously mentioned, transit and Trimet LIFT services can be cumbersome and stressful experiences. Similarly, while siting in a more pedestrian-friendly neighborhood is important, there are features aside from sidewalks that make an area walkable. These are discussed further in the Environmental Health and Safety section.
Neighborhood Services Development Criteria

Prioritize siting housing near a neighborhood park

Action
- Consider that families and older adults are less likely to use parks with perceived crime and drug use

Develop in neighborhoods with frequent and accessible transportation options

Consider what services might compensate for poor transportation services

Explore motivations behind value and prioritization choices to help inform trade off analysis when siting new development

Examples
- Explore what makes public libraries so highly valued? Is it the opportunity to browse materials, access to computers, relationships with librarians?
Consider which services can and cannot be delivered through programming when thinking about siting

Examples
- If a pharmacy delivers, prioritizing other services might make more sense

Explore opportunities to introduce new services in underserved neighborhoods

Actions
- Conduct market studies to determine if there might be a missing neighborhood service that could be housed in a new development
Safety and Environmental Health

Themes

- Developing along arterials can be harmful to the health and well-being of residents
- Safety means good pedestrian infrastructure
Discussion of Safety and Environmental Services

Developing along busy arterials

As is common across the U.S., the City of Portland’s zoning code encourages multifamily development along high-traffic corridors. While this can mean better access to transportation, shops, and employment opportunities for tenants, it can also mean increased exposure to noise, pollution, and danger. Upstream Planning discussed both the advantages and disadvantages of developing along arterials with interviewees. When asked what they like about the location of their apartment building, many residents described the proximity to shops and commercial districts.

Residents currently living along busy corridors described noise and pollution from automobile traffic as a nuisance. One resident with underlying respiratory issues mentioned that emissions from large trucks can exacerbate their condition; another purchased a white-noise machine to drown out the noise from the street.

One anecdote in particular illuminates how siting new development along busy arterials might pose challenges and - if unlikely to discourage future development on busy streets - might inform the design of a building. When asked to describe what they currently disliked about their apartment unit, one resident described how the need to open windows during warmer months to allow for air circulation is incompatible with the location of the building, because doing so allows exhaust and soot from automobiles to enter their apartment. Although this might suggest design interventions for individual units - such as ceiling fans or air conditioning - it is also indicative of a siting issue.

Developing along busy arterials can also increase a resident’s risk of automobile-related injury and fatality. According to the Portland Bureau of Transportation, wide and fast-moving arterials with multiple lanes in each direction are the location of a disproportionate share of traffic fatalities. When asked about traffic speeds, almost two-thirds (64%) of residents said that living with slow traffic was important, with nearly one-quarter (24%) saying it was very important.
Safety means good pedestrian infrastructure

Residents also expressed concerns about pedestrian safety during interviews, as well as an appreciation for high-quality pedestrian infrastructure. For example, although the Resident Survey did not ask about crosswalks, the new-lighted crosswalk at Southeast Powell Boulevard and SE 26th Avenue was described as a “godsend” by one resident. Moreover, many survey respondents used an “other” text box on the survey to write in crosswalks and signage as important considerations for street-safety. Upstream Planning heard that high-quality pedestrian infrastructure is especially important for residents with disabilities; for example, one RSC described how derelict sidewalks caused issues for older people with ambulatory challenges, and another resident mentioned that vision challenges made walking their primary mode of transportation.

Although the Resident Survey did not ask specifically about crosswalks, it did ask residents how they valued and prioritize other safety-related characteristics of street design. Of the Safety topics residents were surveyed on, respondents most valued street lighting and sidewalks. The same share, 88%, said that well-lit streets and sidewalks are important or very important. Street lighting and sidewalks are also the highest priority of respondents, with 45% of respondents listing street lighting as their first priority, and 36% placing sidewalks at the top. The majority of respondents (55%) valued bicycle lanes, but few prioritized them (14%). However, a developer mentioned how formerly homeless residents might not openly value bicycle lanes, but use them consistently.

Beyond safety, the survey also asked respondents to consider street qualities that influenced the experience of walking, such as the slope of a street and the noise associated with traffic. Similarly to bicycle lanes, over half of all respondents (52%) said quiet and flat streets were important, but few prioritized these characteristics.
Safety and Environmental Health Development Criteria

Prioritize siting housing near a neighborhood park

Examples
- Incorporate protected green spaces
- Think about amenities that might reduce exposure to pollution, such as air filtration systems and air conditioning so residents do not need to open their windows. These amenities might also become necessary as the region experiences more days of extreme heat.

Prioritize developing in neighborhoods with existing high-quality pedestrian infrastructure when designing for people that are more likely to walk and might have ambulatory challenges

Examples
- Older adults
- People with very low incomes
- People living with a disability
Endnotes


3. City of Portland; Home Forward; A Home for Everyone; Multnomah County; City of Gresham; Conklin, Tiffany Renée; Mulder, Cameron; and Regional Research Institute, Portland State University. 2019. 2019 Point-In-Time: Count of Homelessness in Portland/Gresham/Multnomah County, Oregon. Report, Portland: Regional Research Institute.


Appendix
Welcome

Hello, and thank you for your interest in this survey!

We are students at Portland State University working on the final project of our Masters degree with Catholic Charities. Catholic Charities designed and operates the apartment building you live in. We are helping them with designing future apartment buildings like yours, and with determining what it should be located near.

Using this survey, we want to learn about what is important to you as residents of housing created by Catholic Charities. We want to know what you would like to have in an apartment building (garden, parking, dog area, etc.) and what you would like to have close to an apartment building (parks, buses, grocery stores, etc.). Your answers to this survey will be used to help locate and design apartment buildings for future residents of Catholic Charities housing.

Your answers to this survey will be 100% anonymous. Participating in this survey will not impact your current housing status or ability to access services.

You will be given a $10 VISA gift card (while supplies last). You may only take the survey once, and you can take as much time as you need to complete the survey, but all survey responses must be received by May 8, 2020.

At the end of this survey, you will have the opportunity to volunteer for a separate hour long interview. Participants would be given an additional $25 gift card and details are provided at the end of the survey.

If you have any questions about how your answers will be used or about the survey generally, please contact us (Joshua and Ryan) at jolling2@pdx.edu or dyar@pdx.edu.

Click the arrow to begin!

Transition to On-Site Questions

These first few questions ask you about how you would design an apartment building.

Click the arrow for the first question!

Extra space inside apartments

If you could make a space in your apartment bigger, which space would you choose?

You can rank the options by typing 1-6 into the boxes (1 = first choice, 6 = last choice).

☐ Bathroom
☐ Living room
☐ Kitchen
☐ Storage (Closets)
☐ Other room / item you would use extra space for
☐ Bedroom

Would you rather have...?

☐ A smaller apartment that is closer to stores, retail, and other businesses

Apartment

Stores and Businesses
**Qualtrics Survey Software**

https://portlandstate.ca1.qualtrics.com/Q/EditSection/Blocks/Ajax/GetSurveyPrintPreview?ContextSurveyID=SV_3gwomCpwH65GR8x&ContextLibrary...

2/8

A larger apartment that is farther away from stores, retail, and other businesses

Neutral / not important either way

Extra space inside the building

How important is it to you for an apartment building to have indoor common space for a...

Please select an answer for all options.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I do not want this</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Slightly important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Child care (play)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playground (plays and space for)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dog area (area for dog to play)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden (space to plant vegetables)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General outdoor area (beach, park)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car parking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please select an answer for all options.

How important is it to you for an apartment building to have outdoor space for a...

Extra space around the building

You can rank the options by typing 1-5 into the boxes (1 = first choice, 5 = last choice).

Please list any other indoor common spaces not included above that you would want to have in an apartment building.

**Teen room (community space for teenagers)**

Large shared kitchen (in addition to your apartment’s kitchen)

Computer room (shared computers to use)

Library room (shared books, sofas, etc.)

Community room (games, TV, etc.)

Teen room (community space for teenagers)

Shared kitchen (in addition to your apartment’s kitchen)

Computer room (shared computers to use)

Library room (shared books, sofas, etc.)

Community room (games, TV, etc.)

Community room (games, TV, etc.)

Please select an answer for all options.

How important is it to you for an apartment building to have indoor common space for a...

Extra space inside the building

Neutral / not important either way

A larger apartment that is farther away from stores, retail, and other businesses

Neutral
If an apartment building had limited outdoor space, what would you use it for?

You can rank the options by typing 1-6 into the boxes (1 = first choice, 6 = last choice).

- Car parking
- General outdoor area (benches, tables, lawn)
- Garden (space to plant vegetables and fruits)
- Dog area (area for dog to play)
- Playground (swings and slides for children)
- Smoking area (shelter and sitting area for smoking)

Please list any other outdoor spaces not included above that you would want to have at an apartment building.

On-site Services

How important is it to you for the following services to be provided on-site (inside the apartment building) instead of off-site (not in the apartment building)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>I do not want this</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Slightly Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical Services (doctor visits, therapy, mental healthcare, etc.)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Services (job training, legal assistance, family support, etc.)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daycare Services (childcare while parents / guardians are at work)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apartment Building Space

If you had limited space in an apartment building, what would you use it for?

You can rank the options by typing 1-3 into the boxes (1 = first choice, 3 = last choice).

- Extra space inside homes / apartments
- Indoor common space (computer room, library room, teen room)
- Outdoor common space (smoking area, playground, garden, etc.)

Transition to Off-Site Questions

For the next few questions, we will be asking you about what qualities, services, and stores are important to you to have within a mile (1.6 kilometers) of your home.
4/8 Retail Stores
How important is it to you that your apartment is within a mile of the following stores...

I do not want to live near this store. Neutral Slightly Important Important Very Important

Grocery store
Liquor store
Convenience / Corner store
Restaurant
Gas Station
Bicycle Repair Shop
Coffee Shop
Clothing Store

Which would you like closest to your apartment? You can rank the options by typing 1-8 in the boxes (1 = closest, 8 = farthest).

Grocery store
Liquor store
Convenience / Corner store
Restaurant
Gas Station
Bicycle Repair Shop
Coffee Shop
Clothing Store

Please list any other stores not included above that are important to you to live close to.

How important is it to you that your apartment is within a mile of the following stores?...

Retail Stores

Click the arrow to continue!
### Community Services

How important is it to you that the area within a mile of your apartment has a...?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>I do not want to live near this</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Slightly Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood park</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daycare center (childcare while parents / guardians are at work)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public library</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public community center (East Portland Community Center, Matt Dishman Community Center, etc.)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of religious worship (church, mosque, synagogue, etc.)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job training center (Goodwill, WorkSource, employment office, etc.)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>○</td>
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<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College or university (Portland Community College, Portland State University, etc.)</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
<td>○</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which would you like closest to your home?

You can rank the options by typing 1-8 in the boxes (1 = closest, 8 = farthest).

- Neighborhood park
- Childcare center
- Public library
- Public community center
- Place of religious worship
- Job training center
- Pharmacy
- College or university

Please list any other community services not included above that are important for you to live close to.

All neighborhood amenities

Of the services below, which are most important to you?

You can rank the options by typing 1-3 in the boxes (1 = first choice, 3 = last choice).

- Transit (Buses, MAX light rail, etc.)
- Stores (Grocery stores, restaurants, gas station, etc.)
- Community Services (Parks, libraries, job training center, etc.)

Qualities

When you travel somewhere that is important to you (grocery store, park, etc.), what street qualities make you feel more comfortable while traveling?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I do not want this</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Slightly Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
I do not want this Neutral Slightly Important Important Very Important

Well-lit streets (streetlights) Flat streets (no hills) No loud noises (quiet) Slow traffic (no speeding cars) Sidewalks Bicycle lanes

Please list any other street qualities not included above that are important to you.

You can rank the options by entering 1-6 into the boxes (1 = first choice, 6 = last choice).

Transportation

Please select an answer for all options.

Almost Daily Few times per week Few times per month Once per month Few times per year Never

Almost Daily Few times per week Few times per month Once per month Few times per year Never

Please tell us about your usual travel choices before the coronavirus lockdown. How often did you travel using?

TriMet MAX Light Rail TriMet LIFT or a Paratransit Service (on-demand door-to-door) Car / Truck / Motorcycle Walking Carpooling Bicycling Public Transportation

Almost Daily Few times per week Few times per month Once per month Few times per year Never

Transition to Demographic Questions

You are almost done!

We just want to ask you a few questions about you and your household.

Your answers are 100% anonymous and confidential.

These questions are entirely voluntary, but your answers will help Catholic Charities design better housing!

Please click the arrow to continue.

Your answers are 100% anonymous and confidential.

These questions are entirely voluntary, but your answers will help Catholic Charities design better housing!

We just want to ask you a few questions about you and your household.

You are almost done!

Please list any other street qualities not included above that are important to you.

Which is most important to you?
Demographics

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary/third gender
- Prefer not to say
- Prefer to self describe

What is your race and/or ethnicity?

Check all that apply.

- White
- Hispanic/Latino
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- Other
- Prefer not to say

What is your age?

Are you a Veteran?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Do you consider yourself to have/experience a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

If you are comfortable sharing, please briefly describe your disability (i.e. mobility, hearing, mental health, etc.)

Including yourself, how many people live in your household?

- 1 (Just you)
- 2
- 3

https://portlandstate.ca1.qualtrics.com/Q/EditSection/Blocks/Ajax/GetSurveyPrintPreview?ContextSurveyID=SV_3gwomCpwH65GR8x&ContextLibrary...
Thank you for completing the survey!

If you would like to participate, please enter your name and phone number or name and email below.

Would you be willing to participate in an interview for an additional $25 VISA gift card?

You should receive the gift card in 3-4 weeks.

We will only use this information to get the gift card to you. All this information is 100% confidential.

If you would like to receive a $10 VISA gift card, please provide your name and address below.

Thank you for completing the survey!

Click to write the question text

Pretend not to say

No

Yes

Are you or is anyone else in your home over the age of 64?

Pretend not to say

No

Yes

Do you live with children (anyone under the age of 18)?

Pretend not to say

4 or more

Yes

No
The Next Step
A Guide to Framing and Designing Permanent Supportive Housing for Caritas Housing

The Public Communication Guide
Table of Contents

1 Introduction
   Need for Permanent Supportive Housing
   Opportunities for the Development of Permanent Supportive Housing

5 Methodology

7 Public Outreach Strategies
   Communication Strategies
   Public Event Planning Strategies

15 Framing
   Framing Considerations
   Community Concerns and Talking Points

ii Endnotes

v Appendix
This Public Communication Guide presents developers with tools to effectively garner public support for permanent supportive housing development while mitigating community concerns. The guide outlines strategies for public outreach, communication, and event planning, and recommends framing techniques and talking points. The content is based on best practices, interviews with professionals, and conversations with members of the public that hold a spectrum of views on permanent supportive housing.

Caritas Housing is a non-profit affordable housing developer and a part of Catholic Charities of Oregon. Caritas Housing began working in 1998 to acquire, develop, rehabilitate, and manage permanent affordable housing across the state for those in need of a home. Caritas Housing, has created more than 800 units of affordable housing for over 1,900 individuals, including 140 units of permanent supportive housing (PSH). Although Caritas Housing serves all of Oregon, the majority of the properties are located within the City of Portland.

As a developer of affordable housing, Caritas Housing is responsible for establishing and communicating a clear vision for new projects. Developers identify potential sites for new housing, acquire funding, set guidelines for design, and assemble teams of architects, contractors, and other technical consultants. Furthermore, developers engage with neighbors of projects to encourage support, advance awareness, and mitigate opposition. While working within a system of local and federal regulations, the responsibility of Caritas Housing is to ensure their development decisions equitably promote the health and well-being of future residents.
In recent years, various local and state actions have provided increased financial support to build more PSH and have eliminated some legal barriers to certain types of housing development. Caritas Housing has seized on this opportunity to build new PSH in the City of Portland but feel that they are too often developing in a context in which development decisions are influenced more by those opposed to affordable housing than by those that eventually occupy it.

With the roles and responsibilities of Caritas Housing as well as the PSH development opportunities in mind, Upstream Planning developed two documents to inform Caritas’ work - the Development Criteria Guide and the Public Communication Guide. This document proposes strategies that Caritas Housing can use to effectively garner public support for permanent supportive housing development while mitigating community concerns. The companion document, the Development Criteria Guide, addresses the dearth of research about the values, priorities, and needs of PSH residents related to the design and siting of affordable housing. Together, these two documents work towards the singular goal of helping Caritas develop PSH that equitably promotes the health and well-being of residents.
Need for Permanent Supportive Housing

Housing production in Oregon has failed to keep up with new household formation, driving up the cost of homes for purchase and rent\(^1\). While this has impacted people across the income spectrum, the lowest-income households - disproportionately households of color - are facing the brunt of the shortage and the most severe consequences. A 2018 Metro study found the Greater Portland Region lacked approximately 48,000 affordable homes\(^2\). This shortage means in 2019, at least 4,015 people were experiencing homelessness in Multnomah County, a number that many experts believe is far below the actual rate and does not reflect the full extent of housing insecurity in the city\(^3\). Furthermore, of the individuals experiencing homelessness, at least 44\% were chronically homeless. A broad body of research shows that PSH - a model that pairs affordability with coordinated services - effectively helps residents maintain stable housing while also promoting their health and well-being\(^4\).

Upstream Planning used a combination of definitions from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development\(^5\) and the Multnomah County Joint Office of Homeless Services\(^6\) to define PSH and Chronic Homelessness for this guide.

**Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)**
Permanent supportive housing is permanent housing with indefinite leasing or rental assistance paired with coordinated services to assist persons experiencing homelessness and living with a disability, or families with an adult or child member living with a disability, to achieve housing stability.

**Chronic Homelessness**
A term used to describe someone that has a disabling condition and has been homeless for a year or more, either in a single episode or in four episodes over the past three years.
Opportunities for the Development of Permanent Supportive Housing

In 2019, Caritas Housing and CCO became a pilot agency for Catholic Charities USA’s Healthy Housing Initiative. This initiative seeks to integrate health and housing services to assist individuals experiencing homelessness. The initiative has three main goals: to reduce chronic homelessness by 20%, decrease hospital readmission rates for homeless persons by at least 25%, and to connect 35% of newly housed persons to primary care and behavioral health services. The initiative assumes the collaboration of local arch/dioceses, Catholic health systems and other partners such as financial institutions and governmental agencies. Internally, the initiative has increased the capacity of Caritas Housing to develop PSH.

External factors have also created new opportunities for Caritas Housing to build additional housing. For example, HB 2001/03, and the Residential Infill Project in the City of Portland are likely to present new opportunities to rethink how and where affordable housing is developed. Additionally, the 2018 Metro Affordable Housing Bond creates $652.8 million for affordable housing development in the Metro tri-county area. Furthermore, in May 2020, voters approved a Metro ballot measure that compliments the housing bond through developing a continued source of funding for housing services. Together, these changes make new supportive housing development possible by increasing the availability of developable land, funding for development, and funding for services.
Methodology

The intent of the Public Communication Guide is to provide Caritas Housing, and other developers of permanent supportive housing (PSH), with recommendations that can strategically inform public engagement activities. To develop the recommendations, Upstream Planning sought to answer three questions:

- *How should PSH developers engage and communicate with the public?*
- *How should PSH developers frame PSH?*
- *What are the best ways to address common fears and concerns regarding PSH?*

Upstream Planning conducted engagement and research between January and May 2020. Interviews with professionals and neighbors are the foundation of this guide. Upstream Planning sought out a variety of voices and experiences to help inform the recommendations in this guide with a goal of equitable engagement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional Interviews</th>
<th>Upstream Planning conducted phone and video interviews with several professionals that communicate and engage with the public on topics related to PSH and homelessness. The interviews provided information on public outreach best-practices as well as examples for how to address the common forms of opposition to a PSH development.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Neighbor Interviews</td>
<td>Upstream Planning conducted phone and video interviews with a variety of Portland residents that are active in local politics, government, or organizations, such as neighborhood associations. The interviews provided information on resident values, fears, and concerns regarding PSH, as well as recommendations for actions that developers can take to improve their engagement with the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer-Reviewed Literature</td>
<td>Upstream Planning incorporated peer-reviewed literature to expand upon and further explore the findings of the interviews. Furthermore, peer-reviewed literature was used to structure the sections presented in this guide to ensure their utility.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note: The development of this guide began before the ‘Stay Home’ order being issued by Governor Kate Brown following the COVID-19 pandemic. This event greatly shifted the methodological approach of this guide. Interviews that were intended to be conducted in person were shifted to video calls or phone interviews to adhere to social distancing guidelines.
Public Outreach Strategies

Public outreach is one of the most important phases when considering new developments, especially within jurisdictions with highly engaged residents such as Portland. Throughout the interviews, Upstream Planning repeatedly heard members of the public share that they would like to be part of the planning process, informed about the project details, and/or want to assist PSH residents. Public outreach efforts serve not only to mitigate potentially hostile feelings towards PSH development, but also to proactively create a welcoming environment for the incoming residents. This section explores some of the communication and event planning strategies that can be utilized to ensure an effective public outreach process.

Communication Strategies

Caritas Housing has limited resources and time to promote community buy-in and mitigate barriers to implementation. A well-defined and consistent communication strategy ensures that Caritas Housing is being strategic in reaching neighbors and organizations that can be supporting voices or in mitigating voices that might present barriers. Aside from identifying these voices, Caritas Housing must consider how every community is different in regards to context, culture, political efficacy, and history.
Interacting with Neighborhood Associations

Within Portland and other local jurisdictions, neighborhood associations (NAs) and other community boards are regarded as a platform for community participation. While this system is problematic as they may be “dominated by white, home-owning, middle-class residents”\textsuperscript{7}, the NAs still hold a political weight that Caritas Housing must maneuver. Engaging NAs early in the process can help provide information straight from the source before rumors begin to breed and allow for an open dialogue to begin. Often, NAs feel that they are the last to know about new developments and therefore feel excluded from the process. If contacted early during the planning process, they are more likely to be supportive and welcoming to their new neighbors. Furthermore, contacting NAs early can help control the project narrative and establish a relationship with NAs built on transparency, an outcome that can ease the presentation of future developments.

• Outside of approaching NAs with specific projects, consider attending meetings to introduce the mission of Caritas Housing and learn about the neighborhood as well the values, fears, and concerns of the association’s members.
  • Being a familiar face and informed can have an endearing effect.
• Contact and try to meet with the NAs during the pre-development process before any public outreach event is held.
• Use meetings with NAs as an opportunity to let NA know what you are generally thinking of developing to ensure that they do not feel surprised during outreach events.
  • This creates transparency and gives the neighborhood associations an understanding how and when they can be involved in the project.
  • Ask for and consider the opinions of NA members, implement some of their ideas if possible, and let them know not feasible.
• Regularly send updates to the NA about the progress of the development.
• Consider sharing the contact information of the sectors who are bringing the project to fruition (constructors, developers, architects, etc.) which is something other local developers have done with projects serving houseless individuals.
  • Share emails, phone numbers, and ask these individuals to attend NA and community meetings when possible.
Identify and Support Potential Project Advocates

While Caritas Housing can assume that individuals and organizations will show up to voice their opposition, they cannot assume the same for voices of support. Caritas Housing must be proactive in identifying, contacting, and mobilizing proponents of PSH, especially those that are local to the area where the housing is being developed. Project allies can be fundamental voices of support to balance opposition and exemplify the support for PSH in a community.

- Proactively identify potential advocates through finding organizations and individuals that have similar values as the development, such promoting health and affordable housing.
  - Community members working with PSH and general affordable housing tenants such as teachers and healthcare workers
- Engage the nearby schools to explain PSH and the importance of having the development in the area.
  - This could be a healthy collaboration between the schools and site. Oftentimes, schools are serving students and their families, who are in need of additional resources. Sometimes those resources include food, rental assistance, and connecting them to community organization. By explaining the benefits of PSH, Caritas Housing may win over new proponents.
- Explore if there are graduates of PSH or CC staff that are interested in sharing their experiences with the benefits of CC’s PSH and services.
  - This has the powerful ability to help others understand why PSH is needed, how it differs from “affordable housing”. Unfortunately, some individuals and organizations need to hear a story to get onboard.
- Consider the time and resources needed to gain support from non-allies, who could be potential champions of new developments.
  - These individuals are on the fence and may need more information about PSH or an understanding of the difference between affordable housing and PSH.
  - Most individuals Upstream Planning interviewed were not aware of the differences between affordable housing and PSH and were interested in housing that provided services.
- Meet potential advocates where they are and consider hosting events in spaces that they frequent, especially those who are on a fixed income, asked to share their stories, and/or Black, Brown, and Indigenous. This might include restaurants, community spaces, or churches.
• Consider compensating allies for their time and assisting them with transportation to events, especially those who are on a fixed income, asked to share their stories, and/or Black, Brown, and Indigenous.

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### Identify and Mitigate Potential Project Opposition

Caritas Housing can assume that there will be opposition to PSH developments during the public outreach process. As further discussed in the Community Concerns and Talking Points section, community members, businesses, and organizations will oppose PSH for a multitude of reasons. If Caritas Housing needs to pick their battles strategically, it is possible to mitigate the power of opposition and even win some new PSH proponents in the process.

• Explore and acknowledge the unjust power dynamics in the development process and work to facilitate conversations that drive meaningful change.

• Identify potential parties that might come out in opposition to PSH prior to the public outreach process.
  • Examples might include local business advocates, NAs, and wealthy homeowners.

• Explore the concerns and fears of the opposition.
  • Follow facebook groups and other outlets where displeasure with PSH might be expressed.

• Consider which opinions might be worth the energy to try and change, and which might be worth the energy to try and mitigate or take power away from.
  • Use talking points that dispel their concerns and fears while connecting with their values.
• Be transparent and share the development process for start to finish.
  • Regularly send updates to the community about the progress of the development.
  • Let the community know the dates will likely change and give a reason.
• Consider alternative methods to take away power from the opposition’s argument.
  • Examples might include controlling the narrative, using evidence-based arguments that contradict the
    opposition’s opinions, and finding advocates that can balance out the voices in a room.
• Consider which opinions can be changed and which Try to change the opinions of the opposition. For example...
  • Their concerns are important and should be addressed if possible.
  • This does not mean that Caritas Housing will be able to resolve all of them. However, this lets them know that
    they were heard and every interviewee mentioned they wanted to be heard and included.
• When meeting with opponents of a development, consider bringing staff, advocates, and professionals that can help
  disarm potential hostile situations.
  • Supportive neighbors can help balance out hostile neighbors and take away their power to “speak” for a
    community.
  • It may be helpful to bring a graduate of PSH programming if this can be done without exposing them to hostility.
  • Consider hiring an outside facilitator who can assist with effectively communicating the goals and ideas of the
    project, and keep the discussion moving in a positive direction.

The Good Neighbor Guide

As part of this guide, Upstream Planning created a Good Neighbor Guide (Located in the Appendix). It is a pamphlet for Caritas Housing to distribute to neighbors interested in assisting the residents of a new PSH development. The guide includes past examples of how neighbors have contributed their time and resources. Proactive neighbors can not only provide residents with access to services and trainings they might not have otherwise received, but also can make them feel welcomed in the neighborhood.
Control the narrative within the media and among the general public

Controlling the public message around a PSH development ensures that false narratives are negated. Framing and communications strategies are only effective if someone is listening. False narratives are likely to be already present in communities, and not making concerted efforts to get out ahead of them can lead to a greater opposition forming. Through controlling the narrative, Caritas Housing can mitigate public opposition and promote its framing of PSH.

- Regularly inform allies and other groups about the process and all updates, which will allow Caritas Housing to frame the conversation.
  - Provide updates on a regular schedule, even when there is no new information to share.
- Share information through a consistent medium.
  - For example a website, newsletter, postcard, or email chain.
- Make sure that messaging is accessible to a broad range of community members.
  - Make the message concise and simple so the average reader can easily understand the content.
  - Translate the documents in the various languages of the current and future residents of the community. This means Caritas Housing needs to take inventory of the various languages spoken in the neighborhood. This can be done by contacting the various organizations and residents in the area.
- Provide a way for the public to contact Caritas Housing and respond in a timely fashion.
- Meet with local media outlets to assist with sharing accurate information.
- Talk with organizations and neighbors to see if there is a neighborhood newsletter and if so, write about the project, share the site’s web page, and the project manager’s contact information.
  - Try to send literature to a minimum of a half mile radius around the proposed development site.
  - Literature can be postcards or letters with content that is quick to read.
  - Sending your literature early allows you to control the framing of the project and provide clear and accurate information before rumors spread.
  - Neighbors speak with other neighbors, so even if some miss the original mailing they will likely hear information shared in it from their other neighbors.
Public Event Planning Strategies

Event Facilitation

- Consider the benefits of having a facilitator or moderator that steers the conversation with the public.
  - A facilitator is a neutral, third-party member and can keep conversation to remain on task while Caritas Housing remains impartial.
  - Facilitators can quickly shift an unproductive conversation can prevent unwanted negativity from taking over.
- Set the ground rules at the beginning of each session and ask audience members to agree to follow them.
  - Example ground rules:
    - “Allow everyone time to participate”
    - “Use engaged listening before asking questions”
    - “Stay solution oriented and contribute to meeting goals”
    - “Attack the problem, not the person: Respectfully challenge ideas, not the people vocalizing them”
    - “Be present in the conversation”
  - Other ground rules that can be established can include things like how questions can be asked (raising hands, writing questions to be asked by a table representative, Q&A to follow presentation, etc.).
- Consider a panel style event which allows or different aspects of PSH and Caritas Housing work to naturally be shared with the public.
  - Caritas Housing staff, partner organizations, architects, etc.
  - Neighborhood allies or stakeholder groups
  - Graduates of PSH housing program services that are comfortable with sharing their experience.
- Upstream Planning repeatedly heard from professionals, “Don’t go to get shouted at.”
  - Consider how to strategically mitigate PSH opposition, such as yelling, before it occurs.
  - Keep topics residents are likely to be frustrated over, such as parking, until the end of the meeting so it does not dominate all the time.
- Always speak as if everyone in the room is a supporter of the project.
Presentation

- Lead with data and information before taking questions, some questions may be answered during the presentation without taking time away from discussion.
- Provide contact information at the beginning and end of the presentation.
- Include information on how neighbors can become more involved or volunteer in the development or in Caritas Housing.
- Be selective in what you share, you do not necessarily need to share everything.
- Bringing renderings, drawings, floor plans or any visuals of the proposed development works well for communication and allows community members to view the project as it is proposed.
  - Pictures and videos of past projects are also helpful to bring.
  - Consider providing something that community members can take home with them and show to family or friends who could not attend a physical meeting.

The “Eat and Greet”

One idea that Upstream Planning heard in our engagement process with community partners was the idea of the “eat and greet”. This style of event is casual and allows for mingling and small group conversation. It will be best for when a development is close to completion and allow for community members to engage with the project.

- Invite neighbors, community members, partner organizations, and future development residents.
- Have food and drink available, consider cultural and dietary restrictions.
- Keep Caritas Housing staff in the spotlight and allow future PSH residents to remain in a casual and comfortable role.
- This is a great opportunity to learn more about community members who desire to volunteer time or skills towards projects like a community garden, lending library, or other ideas.
Framing

Framing - or choosing what to say, how to say it, and what to leave unsaid - should be strategic and intentional. “Frames” are powerful, as they can shape public opinions, assumptions, attitudes, and ultimately policy preferences. With the right framing, an issue can resonate with the public in a way that attracts new supporters, lifts new voices, and quells oppositional stances.

Caritas Housing can frame conversations with the public to positively affect public perception of permanent supportive housing (PSH). If framed strategically, discussions around PSH can be a powerful tool to educate the public and dispel myths about chronic homelessness, substance abuse, affordability, stability, and community needs. Since it can be difficult to build public support for PSH - especially from its new neighbors - PSH developers must be intentional about how they frame messaging so that they connect with the public’s values and address their fears and concerns.

Framing Considerations

Event Facilitation

Consider framing conversations around the ways that PSH can improve the lives of its residents, rather than discussing the costs of not providing PSH. Housing availability is a contentious issue, and it can elicit fatalistic responses from the public. Research has shown that community members understand the negative impacts of homelessness much more clearly than they understand the benefits of housing with supportive housing. Emphasizing the opportunities for wide-scale improvements, not wide-scale disasters, engenders a sense that community-wide changes are possible and there is reason to be hopeful for solutions.
Use value statements to emphasize why the public should care about PSH

Consider framing that connects PSH outcomes to values of residents. For example, PSH can be framed as an evidence-based response to assisting those experiencing chronic homelessness or living with substance abuse, mental health, or behavioral health disorders. Or it can be framed as an initiative to promote resident independence and resiliency. Connecting the benefits of PSH with the values of residents can immediately exemplify the importance of the service that Caritas Housing and Catholic Charities is providing.

Frame conversations using research, stories, and local narratives

The need and benefits of PSH should be framed in conversations using research, stories, and local narratives. However, the choice of what frame to use depends on the audience. It may resonate more with neighbors that are direct in their conversation style to stick with facts and minimize ambiguity. In contrast, allies of PSH may feel inspired to share and spread a conversation framed using a story of success. Considering the audience should determine the frame.
Provide the opportunity for the public to participate in the development of PSH, but not the option to dismiss it

As stated during an interview with a professional working in the development of shelters, community members often desire only the ability to say “no” to a development. In their minds, the development of PSH is a public service similar to the development of a new park or bike lane, and that the community has a right to decide if it should be implemented. However, PSH is not a government-led initiative and no one gets to decide who their neighbors are.

Conversations around public involvement in the development process should be framed to indicate clear boundaries. Rather than presenting PSH as solutions that need to be ‘sold’ to the public, allow community members to feel that they are being listened to and that they have a say in the development. This can include framing the development as a non-profit led endeavor on private land and that Caritas Housing came to the neighbors to discuss how the building can be best integrated into the community.

Use language that is concise and simple

Conversations with the public should be short and accessible. Developers are used to communicating within their field but must be flexible enough to code switch when talking with members of the public. Furthermore, developers need to be efficient with their time as well as the time they have talking with neighbors. Conversations should be framed to include the most important points in a few, easy to understand sentences.
Community Concerns and Talking Points

While we know that not everyone at a community meeting is there to oppose a proposed project, PSH developers should be aware of commonly-voiced concerns. PSH developers can be prepared with “talking points” that can turn public concerns into positive conversations.

While being prepared is important, the discussion of homelessness, substance abuse and supportive services can be an emotional conversation for many. Upstream Planning heard from PSH developers that they sometimes need to be thoughtful about where to expend their energy, since not every conversation can end in a positive or constructive way.

The concerns and talking points listed below reflect real issues that those who work in the field have encountered from the public. While the list is not inclusive, developers can use these examples as a starting point and consider what additional, unique concerns they may have to address in discussions of PSH within their service area.
"PSH developments will increase crime in my neighborhood"

It is important to understand that the perception of crime is separate from the documented crime rates, meaning that this fear is not related to actual increases in crime. Studies have shown that rather than contributing to neighborhood crime, many supportive housing programs can help promote public safety and other positive social outcomes. In these instances, supportive housing became a neighborhood asset and actually mobilized a new resident base to combat crime.

Talking Points:
- Explain the role that Catholic Charities and other groups will play in ongoing management after the property is constructed.
- Emphasize that residents of PSH are just like any other community member, and they want a neighborhood that is safe and secure.
- Highlight that PSH will bring in more community members who put “eyes on the street,” increase pedestrian activity, and add through-traffic that can help reduce crime.
- Point out that residents moving into PSH may already be living and working in the community.
“PSH developments in my neighborhood will decrease the value of my property”

Homeowners may be concerned with the impact of PSH on their property values. Framing PSH as a type of housing that fills a gap in the market and assists individuals in finding stability - rather than housing that competes with the existing market - can help neighbors find positive, value-based connections with the proposed development.

While research on PSH is limited, a study released by NYU’s Furman Center in 2008 found that supportive housing in New York City does not have a negative impact on nearby property values. In fact, the authors found that, five years after a supportive development opens, nearby property values have tended to rise more than in similar areas with no such facilities10.

This concern may also be covering for fears around changes in “neighborhood character” related to the development of multifamily housing. The public may be concerned that allowing a PSH development will encourage the demolition of existing homes and dramatically change neighborhood aesthetics.

Talking Points:
- Explain that PSH fills a gap in the housing market and provides housing to those that currently may not have it.
- Mention that PSH may be taking over a previously empty lot and transforming it into something that adds value to the neighborhood.
- Describe how PSH can improve walkability and livability of a neighborhood, which has shown to increase property values. Some PSH may bring in amenities like community spaces, playgrounds, or ground floor commercial units that can increase the perceived value of a neighborhood.
- If available, show drawings or renderings of the proposed development. Visuals can be a useful tool for community members to understand how a development will integrate into their neighborhood.
During the community conversations on homelessness hosted by Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler in Spring 2020, presenters lead with facts, statistics and other bits about their programs before taking questions from the public. This often helped set a calm tone from the start of the conversation, preventing them from beginning in a hostile or emotionally-charged manner.

“PSH residents will damage the properties immediately surrounding it”

Neighbors may perceive PSH residents as safety liability in their neighborhood, under the false assumption that PSU residents will engage in destructive behavior. Opponents may be able to cite examples of other housing communities that have negatively affected their neighbors.

Talking Points:
- Explain how PSH has shown to reduce crime rates in areas surrounding properties\(^\text{11}\).
- Share facts about the successes of the program before taking questions or allowing comments. Information like this can provide clarity on how PSH developments work, and help quell community tensions and concerns.
- Tell neighbors that they can contact Catholic Charities directly to discuss any problematic behaviors of the residents.
“PSH developments will bring in renters that don’t care about taking care of their housing or being part of the community”

- This attitude is based in stereotypes of people who utilize supportive services and programs in order to get by in day to day life. Breaking the cycle of stigmatization is difficult, but it is important to remember that public misconceptions and stereotypes are often based in stories and hearsay rather than actual fact.
- Many neighbors of PSH developments that voice these concerns are likely actually worried about absentee landlords and irresponsible renters. Developers may find success in framing potential renters as valued community members that residents likely already know and interact with.
- Talking Points:
  - This is another opportunity to explain the role that Catholic Charities or other entities will play in the general upkeep and maintenance of the property.
  - Show images of other Catholic Charities properties to highlight that established PSH developments are well taken care of.
  - Explain that housing stability promotes increased social connectedness of tenants within their community.

Many Catholic Charities residents Upstream Planning spoke to in the survey process stated feeling responsible for their unit and doing things like keeping a container garden, decorating their front porch, and keeping an eye out for neighbors and helping them during tough situations.
“PSH developments will increase rates of drinking, drug activity, and/or mental health episodes in my neighborhood”

- Similar to crime rates, public perception of drinking, drug use, and mental health behaviors do not necessarily reflect reality. Neighbors are making an informed jump that since they see a select few people engaging in this behavior on the street, then this must reflect the entire PSH population. However, drinking, drug use, and mental health episodes also occur among residents that do not live in PSH; it just happens in privacy of their own home.

- It is true though that some residents may be living with an addiction and/or mental health condition. Taking the time to explain the nuanced and traumatic experiences contributing to why an individual uses drugs, alcohol, or experiences mental health episodes is likely to be time consuming, and it may well be a losing battle with neighbors. However, this community concern may provide an opportunity to explain the fundamental importance of PSH in providing the services and stability needed to address substance use disorders and assist individuals with mental health conditions.

Talking Points:

- Explain the services that Catholic Charities, or another service provider, will provide on-site after construction is finished.
- Explain the role that PSH plays in assisting those that struggle with substance abuse obtain sobriety. This will help neighbors see your program as an ally.
- Have facts and statistics available on-hand to lead the conversation and combat perceptions that may be based on hearsay rather than documented fact.
- Share a personal story of a resident's success to powerfully connect the results with the PSH programing.
“There is not enough parking to support all the new residents for the PSH development.”

- As neighborhoods densify, parking has become a popular issue. Residents of single-family zoned neighborhoods may rely heavily on private automobiles, making any reduction in parking a concern. Developers may find success in demystifying the assumption that all parking would rapidly disappear.
- Talking Points:
  - Explain that PSH residents have different travel behaviors and developments should generally be built in areas with community amenities and infrastructure supporting transit, walking, and bicycling.
  - Share rates of vehicle ownership at comparable properties and explain the impact on parking in a 1-block radius (i.e. the projected 5-6 new vehicles in the area will take up 5% of all parking space in the area).
  - Provide renderings to show the number of new parking spaces being developed on-site, if applicable.
Cost Effectiveness of PSH

Numerous studies have shown that PSH developments actually reduce public costs overall\textsuperscript{13}. Children living in PSH have greater access to health care and improved educational outcomes that can improve their health and well-being throughout their lives\textsuperscript{14}. Furthermore, providing services for the residents reduces their use of crisis services such as shelters, hospitals, jails and prisons. According to the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) President, a stay in an Oregon State Hospital costs $1,324 per patient, per day. A stay in the emergency room can cost $500 per patient, per day and staying in the county jail can be $125 per night. Compare these costs to the average cost of PSH at $64--$84 per person, per day\textsuperscript{15}.

“PSH and other supportive services are a drain on our public resources.”

The public may be concerned that new housing and subsequently new residents will strain public services (i.e. schools, transit, hospitals, emergency services) and infrastructure (i.e. sewage, utilities). Developers should demystify the fear that the population will rapidly grow overnight and become a significant burden that the local community must carry.

Talking Points:

- Explain how is a more efficient way to better utilize existing resources, and is not creating a new
- Explain that PSH is largely funded by the federal government with minimal dependence on local resources.
- Share stories, when appropriate, of how a PSH resident benefited from PSH services compared to how they were previously receiving services and care.
“PSH developments give people something they haven’t earned.”

Colloquially known as bootstrapping, neighbors may adhere to an individualist doctrine touted in western culture\textsuperscript{16}. That is, neighbors may insinuate that it should be left up to the individual to care for themselves, rather than rely on the support of others. An individualist sees themselves as separate and minimizes the influence of factors “outside” of the self. They prefer direct and clear communication which includes facts, while indirect or ambiguous communication may seem evasive or suspicious\textsuperscript{17}. However, these individuals may be argumentative and it is up to Caritas Housing staff to decide whether a discussion is productive.

Talking Points:

- Explain how is a more efficient way to better utilize existing resources, and is not creating a new
- Explain that PSH is largely funded by the federal government with minimal dependence on local resources.
- Share stories, when appropriate, of how a PSH resident benefited from PSH services compared to how they were previously receiving services and care.
Endnotes


3. City of Portland; Home Forward; A Home for Everyone; Multnomah County; City of Gresham; Conklin, Tiffany Renée; Mulder, Cameron; and Regional Research Institute, Portland State University. 2019. 2019 Point-In-Time: Count of Homelessness in Portland/Gresham/Multnomah County, Oregon. Report, Portland: Regional Research Institute.


Appendix
Shelter is a basic human need, deserved by all. To date, Catholic Charities’ dedicated housing entity, Caritas Housing, has created more than 800 units of affordable housing for over 1,900 individuals.

Caritas Housing began working in 1998 to acquire, develop, rehabilitate, and manage permanent affordable housing across the state for those in need of a home.

- 1,900 individuals currently housed
- 60% are female-headed households
- 40% are children
- 15% have a disability
- 10% are older adults
How can you be a good neighbor?

Make connections

- Introduce yourself to your neighbors!
- Get to know your neighbors and communicate regularly.
- Reach out to neighbors for advice or to lend a hand.

“I love talking to folks in my neighborhood who are sitting on their porches and have increased my walking distance to see more people.”
- Caritas Housing Resident

- Let your neighbors know about upcoming community events that may be happening or organize a welcome event for new neighbors.
- Create or join the local neighborhood association, keep your neighbors informed!
- Share your skills with your neighbors. Help out with tech support, gardening advice, etc.

“Alone, we can do so little. Together, we can do so much.”
- Helen Keller

Build and maintain community

Invest in your community by holding a community block party, annual trash cleanup, a community garage sale, or other community events.

Start a community garden or a walking group! Please think about your neighbor’s schedules, which may be different from yours, and be considerate.

“A neighbor helped me out of a tight situation during my first week in my new home. As an older woman, it was nice to have my neighbors lend a hand.”
- Caritas Housing Resident

Go the extra step

Sometimes the smallest gestures can make the biggest impact on someone’s life. New residents transitioning from homelessness may appreciate a helpful donation.

Connect with Catholic Charities on what and how to donate.