



COMMUNICATIONS KIT

FOR HOUSING OPTIONS



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INCLUDED IN THIS KIT	3
HOUSING SOLUTIONS LAB ARCHIVE SITE	3
Resource description	3
LEARN ABOUT HOUSING OPTIONS	4
Description	4
Sharable content.....	4
What are the housing options?.....	4
What are their benefits?.....	4
What are some considerations for these housing options?	5
SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT	6
Calls to action	6
Hashtags	7
Social media graphics.....	7
RESOURCES	7
Links	7

HOUSING OPTIONS GUIDE FOR ORGANIZATIONS

This document includes content to educate audiences about three housing options (home sharing, secondary suites and coach/laneway houses), as well as some content for a potential pilot program that matchmakes home providers (homeowners) with home seekers (renters).

For more information about the background of the Housing Solutions Lab, please see [SFU Renewable Cities' website](#) and the archive site of this project: [Seniors Housing Navigator](#).

The Housing Solutions Lab was geographically focused on the North Shore of Vancouver, B.C. Because of this, some of the content may have a B.C. focus, however most can be universally adapted to other contexts.

INCLUDED IN THIS KIT

The hope is this communications kit can support educating people about housing options, as well as share some materials that could be used in the recruitment or implementation of a pilot program that matchmakes home providers with home seekers.

It includes:

- [Archive site](#) of the Housing Solutions Lab, with reports, research and tools for implementation for organizations, as well as information for homeowners, government staff and elected officials and renters
- Descriptions of the three housing options explored in this lab
- Social media copy and images
- Additional resources

HOUSING SOLUTIONS LAB ARCHIVE SITE

The [Seniors Housing Navigator](#)¹ site can be accessed here: <https://www.seniorshousingnavigator.ca>

Resource description

The Seniors Housing Navigator website is designed to offer information to three audiences: homeowners and renters, organizations interested in creating a matchmaking program between home providers and home seekers, or integrating it into existing programming, and government staff and elected officials.

¹ Project information can also be found on [SFU Renewable Cities' website](#)

It offers resources and reports that explain the benefits and costs of the housing options, as well as several resources for designing and implementing a matchmaking program. For government officials the site includes a checklist of bylaws and regulations that can enable the uptake of these housing options.

Some of the content focuses on B.C. laws and regulations because of the geographic focus of the Housing Solutions Lab. Please refer to your local governments legislations for the applicable information for your context.

This site is intended as a resource for reference only – the data was collected and analyzed between 2022 and 2024, and may not reflect current conditions.

LEARN ABOUT HOUSING OPTIONS

Description

The following is sharable content to educate audiences about housing options like home sharing, secondary suites and coach houses. It covers key information about these options, their benefits and considerations for those interested in adopting them.

Sharable content

WHAT ARE THE HOUSING OPTIONS?

- **Home sharing** involves renting out a portion of one's primary residence, providing financial benefits for home providers and potentially affordable housing options for home seekers. It often involves sharing a kitchen and sometimes a bathroom. The home seeker would have a private, lockable room to live in and use.
- **Secondary suites** are found within single-family homes, and are self-contained units within a single-detached home, with separate entrances, kitchens and bathrooms. They are also called basement or garden suites.
- **Coach houses (laneway houses)** are small, detached dwellings on the same property as a single-detached home. Coach houses offer additional housing options, but the process involves considerations such as zoning regulations, building permits, design guidelines, utilities, parking, rental regulations, construction costs and environmental factors.

WHAT ARE THEIR BENEFITS?

Community benefits

- **Social connection:** More people in an area can potentially lead to more connected communities through social interaction.
- **Social stability:** Adding more housing units can allow people to stay in their communities for longer.
- **Government revenue:** New residents can be additional users (and revenue) for local transit systems or increase the local tax base.

Home provider benefits

- **Income:** Homeowners may gain additional income through renting space
- **Social connection:** Homeowners may increase social engagement with tenants and nearby friends and family. Supplemental income from rent can allow older adults to participate in more social activities like going out for dinner with friends.²
- **Aging in place:** The income and potential help with household tasks may enable homeowners to extend the time they live in their home. The additional income may also help offset future costs for older homeowners, such as purchasing home care services.
- **Health:** The additional social contact and physical help may increase homeowner mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Home seeker benefits

- Finding a potentially below market rate – or attainably costed - home.
- Finding a place to live within a community they are connected to.
- Potential for decreased rent in exchange for completed chores or if the homeowner only needs a low rent amount.

WHAT ARE SOME CONSIDERATIONS FOR THESE HOUSING OPTIONS?

Environmental options

- When renovating or building a new suite or coach house, home providers can look into options like retrofits to improve their house's [energy efficiency](#), which offers [many benefits](#).
- Increasing the number of people living on a single-detached home lot can decrease the average [embodied carbon emissions of the building](#).

² As reported in [Canada HomeShare's webinar](#).

Potential costs

- **Time costs:** The home provider needs to invest time to set up a space for a home seeker.
- **Financial costs:** Setting up new or additional spaces may involve financial investments.
- **Loss of control:** The home provider may temporarily lose the use of, and control over, some physical spaces of their home.
- **Loss of privacy:** The home provider may need to share some spaces with tenants (e.g., laundry, backyard).

Legal responsibilities

- When renting a space in their home, home providers must follow the regulations of tenancy laws like the [Residential Tenancy Act in B.C.](#)

Renovations and construction

- When creating a space, local government regulations may come into effect. These include zoning bylaws, permit applications, design guidelines and building code requirements.
- Financing support may be available through programs like the B.C. Secondary Suite Incentive Program.

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

Calls to action

The following could be used to encourage the uptake of these housing options.

- Did you know that home sharing options can foster community, contribute to more attainable housing options and help you earn more income? Whether you're a homeowner or renter, our organization can help you learn everything you need to know about home sharing options. Discover the benefits, learn about rental agreements, tenancy laws, safety tips and more!
- How can we simultaneously create new and attainable housing units, address older adults' health and help mitigate climate change? Home sharing, secondary suites and laneway houses are housing options with great potential of positively impacting all three! For more information visit seniorshousingnavigator.ca
- Did you know that 53% of Canada's housing stock consists of single-detached houses and that the majority of these are only occupied by one or two people? Visit seniorshousingnavigator.ca to explore different housing options like home sharing, secondary suites and laneway houses and learn how you can get involved.

- Home sharing, secondary suites and laneway houses are excellent options for creating new and more attainable housing units in existing homes. Visit seniorshousingnavigator.ca for more information and learn how you can get involved.

Hashtags

#SustainableLiving #BCHousingOptions #HomeSharing #AffordableLiving #CommunityBuilding
 #HousingSolutions #SeniorHousingOptions #OrganizationName #Livability #OlderAdults
 #SecondarySuites #CoachHouses #LanewayHouses #SocialConnection #BC #Housing #AgeinPlace

Social media graphics

[Click here to access graphic templates for Instagram](#) (Canva template)

[Click here to access graphic templates for Facebook/LinkedIn](#) (Canva template)

RESOURCES

Follow SFU Renewable Cities on [Facebook](#) or [LinkedIn](#) to like, comment and share our latest updates.

Links

- [Seniors Housing Navigator](#) website
- [B.C. secondary suites guide](#) and [funding program](#)
- [How to create a coach house](#) (from the District of North Vancouver)
- [The Housing Solutions Lab archive page](#)