

HOME + SELF-RESTORATION

A user-sensitive environment for homeless women in Winnipeg, Manitoba

by

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ABSTRACT

This project involves the renovation of the Maycock Block (586 Main Street / 201-205 Alexander Avenue), in downtown Winnipeg, into permanent congregate housing with support services for episodic and chronically homeless women. Traditional shelters and housing for homeless people are being reevaluated and new initiatives for managing and ending homelessness are emerging. This practicum investigates the negative effects of high-control living environments enforced in typical homeless shelters, and how they might be mitigated through interior design. Through a review of literature and case studies, design considerations were developed to reflect the elements of home, as well as enable control within the built environment to promote self-restoration and encourage an internal sense of control. This investigation informed the design process and proposal of a user-sensitive environment for homeless women.

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KEY TERMS

CLIENT and TENANT:

Client and tenant will be used interchangeably in this paper but both refer to the women living within the building.

CHRONICALLY HOMELESS:

As defined by the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council & United Way (2014), chronically homeless are "individuals, often with disabling conditions (e.g. chronic physical or mental illness, substance abuse problems), who are currently homeless and have been homeless for six months or more in the past year" (p. 12).

EPISODICALLY HOMELESS:

As defined by the Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council & United Way (2014), episodically homeless are "individuals, often with disabling conditions, who are currently homeless and have experienced three or more episodes of homelessness in the past year" (p. 12).

HOUSING FIRST:

Advanced by Dr. Sam Tsemberis in 1992 (Pathways to Housing, 2014), Housing First is guided by the belief that housing is a basic human right. The program provides immediate permanent housing and support services to individuals who are homeless. Unlike other programs, Housing First does not require a person to seek medical or psychological assessment prior to housing.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



1.1 PROJECT SCOPE

This practicum project involves the renovation of the Maycock Block (586 Main Street / 201 – 205 Alexander Avenue) in downtown Winnipeg into permanent congregate housing with support services for episodic and chronically homeless women. The building is 8,253 square feet, 3-storeys, and readily accessible to existing services and transit routes. Emulating current research on the benefits of Housing First¹ and cultural responsiveness, this shelter differentiates itself from traditional shelters as its focus is primarily on care and creating a home rather than focusing on treatment.

Figure 1.1.1 - The Maycock Block

¹ Housing First is a housing concept advanced by Dr. Sam Tsemberis, explained later in Section 2.2.

1.2 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

This practicum project intends to create a home environment for women in Winnipeg experiencing homelessness. The space will focus on their mental and physical health needs, along with their other special needs for control, privacy, and security. The primary user of the proposed shelter will be women who are episodic and chronically homeless. The practicum design project intends to ease their transition from living on the streets (without a home) to the private interior. The reevaluation of the conventional homeless shelter will further the interior design body of knowledge pertaining to (a) the accommodations of women with mental illness and (b) those experiencing episodic or chronic homelessness. Thus, the goals of this project are:

1. To understand the current structure of supports in present homeless shelters,
2. To explore what home means to the homeless; and
3. To discover how to incorporate homeless women's unique values and needs within the built environment in order to provide better service and care than those that exist today.

1.3 CONTEXTUAL ISSUES

1.3.1 HOMELESSNESS IN WINNIPEG

Homelessness negatively impacts a person's physical and mental health. It negatively affects social relationships, friendships, and families. The absence of a stable address also reduces a homeless person's chances of obtaining new employment. Homelessness is not caused by one issue alone, but rather a multitude of factors. It is the result of a mixture of structural, political, and individual factors including: (a) lack of affordable housing

and support services, (b) mental health, (c) addiction, (d) discrimination, and (e) violence and trauma within the home (Goering et al., 2014, p. 9). Homelessness is a multifaceted issue and its complexity is the reason cities and government still struggle with creating solutions for homeless people today. Goering et al. (2014) divides the factors previously stated into two categories: (a) individual factors and (b) locational factors. Thus, ending homelessness is not a "one-size-fits-all" solution because the

Ethnicity	Street Health Respondents		City of Winnipeg (%)
	Number	Valid (%)	
Caucasian/White	119	39.7	N/A
Aboriginal	170	56.7	10.0
Inuit	4	1.3	0.0
Metis	54	18.0	6.0
Non-Status Indian	7	2.3	4.0
Status Indian	105	35.0	
Black/Caribbean	4	1.3	2.3
Other Ethnicity	6	2.0	14.0
Total	299	99.6	
Missing	1		

Table 1.3.2.1 – Self-identified racial or cultural group. Excerpt from Gessler and Maes. (2011). *The Winnipeg Street Health Report 2011*.

context of the city (location factors) and the homeless population demographic (individual factors) must also be considered.

Winnipeg, like many cities, struggles with homelessness. Gessler and Maes (2011) state there is a significant lack of information on the needs of the homeless in Winnipeg due to a lack of local research data (p. 9). Their report brings attention to the needs and values of the homeless population in Winnipeg, as well as current issues and approaches to manage and/or end homelessness. In order to design for the homeless population, the psychological and physical needs, as well as values of the population need to be addressed.

1.3.2 HOMELESS DEMOGRAPHIC IN

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA. Winnipeg's homeless population is unique as the majority of the demographic is Aboriginal (Table 1.3.2.1).

Although these statistics only account for the visibly homeless demographic, Gordon Laird (2007) states that 75% of individuals in Winnipeg emergency shelters are Aboriginal (p. 46). In *The Winnipeg Street Health Report 2011*, Gessler and Maes (2011) reported the average age as 41 years old with a majority (66.1%) being 25-49 years of age. In Winnipeg, the visibly homeless population is Canadian citizens (99%) that have been living in Winnipeg for more than ten years or their entire life (Gessler & Maes, 2011, p. 10). Thus, homelessness in Winnipeg is not related to an immigration problem, but rather a social and economic issue.

	Winnipeg		Canada	
	2013	2014	2013	2014
Vacancy Rate (%) – Bachelor	2.7	1.7	3.3	3.2
Vacancy Rate (%) – 2-bed Apt	2.5	2.2	2.9	2.9
Average Rent (\$) – Bachelor	578	559	659	663
Average Rent (\$) – 2-bed Apt	969	969	884	904

Table 1.3.3.1 – Vacancy rate (%) and average rent (\$) in Winnipeg and across Canada, data collected from CMHC-SCHL. (2014a). Primary rental market statistics. *Housing Market Information Portal*. Retrieved from: <https://www03.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/hmportal/en/#Profile/1/1/Canada>

1.3.3 CAUSES OF HOMELESSNESS IN WINNIPEG, MANITOBA. According to Gessler and Maes (2011), people become homeless for a number of reasons such as economics, eviction or landlord problems, substance abuse, recent break-ups, poor housing conditions, or unsafe home environments. Gessler and Maes (2011) reported the number one reason for homelessness in Winnipeg is economic due to a combination of high rent and lack of affordable housing in a low-vacancy market. These findings are consistent with the most recent vacancy rates and average rent in Winnipeg (see Table

1.3.3.1). In 2014, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation reported 2-bedroom apartment vacancy rates in Winnipeg at 2.2%, with little change from 2013. Additionally, in 2014 the average rent for a 2-bedroom apartment in Winnipeg is \$969 per month. In comparison, across Canada, the vacancy rate is 2.9%, while the average 2-bedroom apartment is \$904. Unfortunately, the demand is higher than the supply of affordable housing in Winnipeg, forcing people at risk at of being homeless, into homelessness.

CMHC define affordable housing as housing that "costs less than 30 per cent of before-tax household income" (CMHC-SCHL, 2014b).

For those with lower incomes, \$559 per month is more than 30% of their household income – forcing individuals and families further into poverty and at more risk of homelessness.

Rent assistance in Winnipeg provides up to \$230 per month to help low income individuals pay for their rent. Employment and Income Assistance (EIA) and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities (IAPD) program are two other means of income to aid those in need of financial assistance. EIA provides a single individual that is in need of general assistance with \$607 and a single individual with a disability \$824 (these amounts also includes benefits from Rent assistance). The income provided by EIA or IAPD is not enough to

guarantee stable housing and maintain good health and well-being.

Another critical factor contributing to homelessness is mental health. Gessler and Maes (2011) report 45% of the population surveyed had been diagnosed with a mental health condition. Of that percentage, women have a higher diagnosis rate on average than men. These mental illnesses include, but are not limited to: (a) addiction, (b) anxiety disorder, (c) borderline personality disorder, (d) depression, (e) manic depression/bipolar disorder, (f) post-traumatic stress disorder, and (g) schizophrenia (Gessler & Maes, 2011, p. 21). Individuals with physical and/or mental illnesses or a physical disability need adequate care and have needs that go beyond housing amenities (rent, heating, electricity, and water).

In fact, this holds true for all people - not just those who are homeless.

1.3.4 HOMELESS WOMEN. In Winnipeg, 70% of the known homeless population is men, while the remaining 30% are women (Gessler & Maes, 2011). However, it is possible that there are more women experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg. Women typically approach homelessness in a different manner than men. According to Novac et al. (1999), women may avoid the street by living in crowded living situations and/or rely on their "sexual and domestic roles" (p. 6) to obtain immediate shelter and protection.

Although a minority in the homeless population, it is unfair to merge women alongside men because both men and women have

considerably different needs and values. In *All Our Sisters*, Scott (2007) notes several ways in which programs for the homeless hinder women from obtaining the help they require. Scott states "[m]any mixed shelters were established mainly by men for men, so they do not serve women's needs as well as they might ... [m]ost (women) say they feel very threatened with men around" (p. 188). The sense of safety and security perceived by women within homeless shelters of mixed sexes is a significant issue that needs to be addressed. Forty per cent of women feel unsafe while in emergency shelters, while only 28% of men feel unsafe (Gessler & Maes, 2011, p. 24). In addition, Scott (2007) clarifies that some women may perceive the presence of men differently due to past experiences with violence perpetrated by

men. Whether the women are experiencing perceived or actual insecurity with men present is irrelevant – as Scott (2007) states: “[i]t is important to remember that unless a woman feels safe, she cannot begin to work on her issues” (p. 188). The cause of homelessness is a result of multiple reasons depending upon the individual but, in general, women are likely to state “familial/social reasons for their homelessness, such as conflicts in an overcrowded household, or abandonment by parents or a spouse” (Novac et al., 1996, p. 4). Abandonment by ones family or a spouse may be because characteristically chronically homeless women typically have a history of mental health problems (Novac et al., 1999, p. 43), while episodically and transitionally homeless people typically have a history of addictions (Novac et al., 1999,

p. 16). Unsafe housing and a lack of support networks have left women with no place to go, therefore shelter services need to provide and accommodate for the safety and security homeless women require in order to move forward and out of the cycle of homelessness.

The main Winnipeg homeless shelters include:

(a) Main Street Project, (b) Salvation Army Booth Centre, and (c) Siloam Mission – all of which are open to both men and women.

Consistent with research (Gessler & Maes, 2011; Bridgman, 2002; Khandor & Mason, 2007), these environments are intended to provide safety and protection for the homeless population but, unfortunately, have potential to become spaces for physical and sexual violence. Sexual harassment is a common occurrence for a person experiencing

homelessness. Gessler and Maes' (2011) survey results reported 21% of the population interviewed experienced sexual harassment in the past year, and 43% of women stated that they have been sexually harassed. Additionally, 1 in 5 homeless women in Winnipeg have been sexually assaulted in the past year, and 10% stated that they were sexually assaulted by another shelter resident (Gessler & Maes, 2011, p. 18). Research on the relationship between homelessness and physical and sexual assault against women has "prompted a recommendation that no further housing developments predicated on shared living with men should be built" (Bridgman, 2002, p. 60).

Understanding the needs and values of the intended primary user group is pertinent to my practicum project. There is a definite

need for homeless women to feel a sense of safety and security while also taking into consideration their vulnerability due to their individual circumstances. For some women, a shelter environment that accommodates both men and women is viewed as a threat to their safety. My practicum project provides a choice for the homeless women who feel they need an additional sense of security and feel threatened by the presence of men.

CHAPTER 2

EMERGING INITIATIVES TO END HOMELESSNESS

Research pertaining to homelessness in Canada primarily focuses on the Aboriginal homeless population due to their overrepresentation within the demographic. As such, research on other ethnic/cultural groups within the population is missing. This practicum project will be designed for the chronically and episodically homeless female population, and will not be exclusive only to homeless Aboriginal women. However, it is important to recognize the Aboriginal homeless population's needs and values in order to provide proper services to this vulnerable group.

2.1 CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE APPROACHES TO ABORIGINAL HOMELESSNESS

Women, in Gessler and Maes' (2011) sample of participants, were more likely to identify themselves as Aboriginal (48%) than participants of any other ethnicity, thus making it extremely important to implement a culturally responsive approach to the proposed congregate housing for homeless women. Aboriginal individuals are overrepresented in Canada's homeless population and Winnipeg is no

exception. Additionally, "Aboriginal peoples experiencing homelessness face additional barriers including prejudice, racism and disenfranchisement of rights, along with the enduring effects of colonial legacies of forced acculturation and assimilation" (McCallum & Isaac, 2011, p. 7). Although Aboriginal persons are overrepresented in the homeless population, Aboriginals often feel discriminated against by service providers

due to their ethnicity in addition to their homelessness; in Gessler and Maes' (2011) survey, 47% of the participants experienced discrimination and inadequate treatment by a staff member or a shelter volunteer. Despite their efforts, Winnipeg service providers and shelters are not serving the bulk of the homeless population well, reducing homeless peoples' chances of moving forward.

Historical factors, such as the Indian Act, residential schools, and the "Sixties Scoop,"² contribute to the mistrust in faith-based agencies and government run services due to the unfair treatment of Aboriginal persons. Understanding the impact of these actions is crucial to understanding present Aboriginal people and their culture. McCallum and Isaac (2011) state that "...some Aboriginal

service providers openly discuss the mistrust many Aboriginal persons feel in accessing support from faith-based agencies" (p. 21).

This mistrust unfortunately creates a barrier between themselves and helpful services.

During the sixties, the Christian church played a major role in the colonization and assimilation of Aboriginal peoples and as of present Aboriginal people still "connote the church with abuse and disconnection from traditional beliefs" (McCallum & Isaac, 2011, p. 21).

These traumatic events not only affected the Aboriginal persons who experienced them, but the culture as a whole. McCallum and Isaac (2011) conclude that "lessons learnt from this experience emphasize the need for cultural awareness and culturally appropriate practice in providing services and supports with and to Aboriginal peoples" (p. 16).

² "Sixties Scoop" is a term coined by Patrick Johnston, it refers to practice that began in the 1960s (ending in the late 1980s) of separating Aboriginal children from their families without consent, into middle-class non-Aboriginal families.

Cultural responsiveness has been practiced in other fields such as education (Gay, 2002) and in psychotherapy (Kendall, 1996). Gay (2002) defines cultural responsiveness in teaching as: "...using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively" (p. 106) allowing students to relate and create meaningful connections to theories being taught. The educators must have a comprehensive understanding and respect of the culture in order for the program to be effective as the needs and values of the culture are highly regarded. The same concept can be used to better serve the Aboriginal homeless population in Winnipeg. Although the entire homeless population in Winnipeg is not Aboriginal, a culturally responsive program is truly about respect and support, which is

essential for all people to move forward and out of homelessness.

To provide culturally responsive services to Winnipeg's homeless, service providers need to understand the culture and local detailed factual information about the cultures idiosyncrasies (Gay, 2002). There needs to be an "understanding of cultural values, traditions, communication, learning styles, history, and relational patterns" (McCallum & Isaac, 2011). A culturally responsive approach to services has the potential to be an effective strategy to change the way the Aboriginal homeless population perceives service providers, allowing them to get the best out of the services.

McCallum and Isaac (2011) state: "[t]he best support for Aboriginal people at risk of homelessness comes from Aboriginal people.

Cultural responsiveness is an embodied phenomenon that exists within Aboriginal organizations. Aboriginal people are creators of their own solutions. This opinion was held by both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents" (p. 30). An Aboriginal-led organization with Aboriginal staff provides a safe haven for Aboriginal persons experiencing homelessness due to a shared sense of "lived experience." Aboriginal staff (who may have also suffered similar traumas and discrimination) can provide a level of immediate trust and understanding that non-Aboriginal service providers may lack. Not all staff needs to be of Aboriginal descent, but providing an organization with both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal staff can potentially establish trust between staff and Aboriginal people experiencing homelessness.

Participants in McCallum and Isaac's (2011) study reported flexibility as being the most noteworthy quality in a staff member (p. 32). From the participants' perspective, "flexibility" refers to staff members giving individuals freedom to make their own decisions; if individuals were not interested in spiritual activities, then they were not forced to participate in such activities. Providing freedom of choice is as culturally responsive as providing opportunities to participate in traditional cultural rituals (McCallum & Isaac, 2011, p. 32). Culturally responsiveness is about creating family support by providing culture as a means of therapy.

In this practicum project, culture will be interpreted as a social group, rather than associated with ethnicity or race. The concept

of culture as therapy views "culture as key to helping increase stability, continuity and a sense of belonging" (McCallum & Isaac, 2011, p. 33). Living with others, rather than isolated, may reduce feelings of loneliness and increase one's sense of safety and security (see Section 3.2.2 & 3.3.2). The benefits of culture as a means of therapy provide rationale for the use of congregate housing to house women experiencing homelessness.

2.2 HOUSING FIRST

Housing First is an effective solution for homelessness and is currently being implemented in Canada, including Winnipeg. The technique was advanced by Sam Tsemberis in New York City with Pathways to Housing. The Pathways to Housing project

provided homeless individuals with severe mental illness with permanent and immediate housing along with supports for "mental and physical health, substance abuse, education, and employment" (Pathways to Housing, 2014). The Housing First concept is simple, yet it is the opposite of what typical services provide. Housing First offers people experiencing homelessness with housing first, rather than trying to "cure" first, then provide housing. According to Goering et al. (2014), Housing First has five core principles:

1. Immediate access to permanent housing with no housing readiness requirements
2. Consumer choice and self-determination
3. Recovery orientation
4. Individualized and client-driven supports
5. Social and community integration (p. 30).

In *A Framework for Housing First*, Gaetz et al. (2013) elaborates on each core principle. Unlike other strategies, Housing First provides immediate housing to people experiencing homelessness, without the individual or families needing to demonstrate their "readiness" for housing. This strategy is based on a client-centered approach allowing individuals the choice regarding housing type and location, as well as supports services they receive. Individuals are provided with a variety of supports ranging from "social, recreational, educational, occupational, and vocational activities" (Gaetz et al., 2013, p. 6) to provide a positive and supportive social network. The "central philosophy of Housing First is that people have access to the supports they need, if they choose" (Gaetz et al., 2013, p. 12). Housing First firmly believes that housing is

a human right and seeking help from support services should be a choice, rather than a prerequisite for housing. Community integration is integral to Housing First, it seeks to reconnect and integrate people back into their own or new communities through socially supportive events and activities. Creating opportunities for social relationships to naturally flourish allows for clients to remain active in the community.

Housing First is targeted towards individuals who are experiencing chronic or episodic homelessness. The needs of an episodically and chronically homeless persons are considerably more complex "because their life on the street is more entrenched, their needs are more complex (mental health, health, addictions, disabilities), and the level of service is much more intensive" (Gaetz

et al., 2013, p. 10). Novac et al. (1999) states that chronically homeless women are typically an older population and, while only representing 10% of the homeless population, they use 50% of shelter system days (p. 16). Her research indicates that many of these women have severe mental and physical health problems that may have worsened as a result of homelessness and limited medical treatment. Thus, due to their complexity in needs, careful consideration must be implemented when developing their living environments and supports.

There are various housing types that have implemented a Housing First model: (a) scattered-site housing, (b) congregate models of housing, and (c) permanent supportive housing (Gaetz et al., 2013,

p. 10-11). Scattered-site housing places residents in independent rental units with participating landlords. This approach directly integrates clients into a community setting. A congregate model of housing is a supportive housing setting with multiple units in one building. Clients are adjoined with others with similar life experiences, a starting point for a supportive community. Permanent supportive housing provides in-house medical and mental health care within the building for clients with more complex issues. For the purposes of this practicum project, the proposed shelter for women will be a combination of a congregate model and permanent supportive housing. Both options provide a social setting which is critical for providing a home environment "giving individuals a less isolated space

where they can be directly encouraged to develop a sense of community" (Gaetz et al., 2013, p. 11).

2.2.1 HOUSING FIRST IN CANADA: AT

HOME/CHEZ SOI. Housing First has already been successfully implemented in Canada. In 2008, the federal government put \$110 million towards five years (2009-2013) of research on the effectiveness of Housing First for people with mental illness experiencing homelessness. Five cities were chosen for field trials: Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal, Moncton, and Winnipeg. The project, entitled At Home/Chez Soi, aimed to identify "what worked, at what cost, for whom, and in which environments" (Goering et al., 2014, p. 6).

At Home/Chez Soi recognized the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in Winnipeg's homeless population thus "[t]he Winnipeg model was based on creating and maintaining culturally safe partnerships among local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations, universities, and government departments" (Distasio et al., 2014, p. 9). At Home/Chez Soi incorporated local Indigenous values into their program model which included "taking a more holistic approach, being relationship-based, having a communal focus, being strengths-based, and including traditional Indigenous ceremonies and protocols" (Distasio et al., 2014, p. 10). At Home/Chez Soi's Winnipeg model focused on integrating Aboriginal culture into their service delivery as an example of a culturally responsive approach. The two approaches (Culturally

Responsiveness and Housing First) work in congruence as an effective program to end homelessness in Winnipeg.

The Winnipeg site sample for the At Home/ Chez Soi project consisted of a randomly selected group of 64% male and 36% female, 71% of the sample population which were of Aboriginal decent. The 4-year study proved to be highly successful in improving the housing stability and well-being of the participants. During the last six months of the study, Distasio et al. (2014) reported: "45 per cent of [Housing First] participants were housed all of the time, 28 per cent some of the time, and 27 per cent none of the time; whereas 29 per cent of [treatment as usual] participants were house all of the time, 18 per cent some of the time, and 52 per cent none of the time" (p. 5). The Housing

First program cost approximately \$18,840 per year for high need participants and \$12,552 per year for moderate need participants; the cost includes staff salaries, program expenses, travel, rent, and utilities (Distasio et al., 2014, p. 8). At first glance, Housing First seems to be an expensive solution to end homelessness, but Distasio et al. (2014) "found that receipt of [Housing First] services resulted in average reductions of \$17,527 in the cost of services for [high need] participants, and \$4,838 for [moderate need] participants" (p. 8). The most significant offset being fewer hospitalizations. When provided with a place of their own, individuals were more eager to seek medical help. For some individuals their decision to seek out professional help only occurred to them once they were living in a stable place with supportive relationships (Distasio et al., 2014, p.

20). These findings suggest that early cure-first-then-house initiatives have been approaching the problem from the wrong direction.

Housing allowed participants to gain control of their lives again. For many, a combination of acquiring stable housing and a supportive relationship between service providers enabled participants to "gain control over their social relationships, reconnect with those with whom they had previous positive relationships such as children and family, and begin to establish new ones" (Distasio et al., 2014, p. 22). A permanent shelter allowed them to focus less on basic survival needs, such as finding a place to sleep or food to eat, and more on their future. Overall, the results of Housing First were a success in Winnipeg. Participants were not only successfully housed, but their health,

well-being, and quality of life also improved.

With the incorporation of immediate stable housing, supportive relationships with service providers, and a culturally responsive service approach, Housing First in Winnipeg was able to successfully change the lives of many people.

Housing First provides individuals with immediate physical shelter, "a place to call home."

The concept and meaning of home will be the focus of my literature review in order to understand the true meaning and effect of homelessness. The first section will describe the meaning of home and the essential elements of home through a physical, personal, and social framework. The second section will investigate the home environments of women experiencing homelessness. In the final portion of the literature review, important elements of home

(such as control, privacy, and personalization) will be explored in terms of their correlation to helplessness and low self-esteem. Each section will further inform the design of the facility to promote a positive response to the space, providing women experiencing homelessness with a place to call home.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW: UNDERSTANDING THE MEANING OF *HOME*

home noun | \ hōm \

1 a : one's place of residence : domicile

b : house

2 : the social unit formed by a family living together

3 a : a familiar or usual setting : congenial environment; also : the focus of one's domestic attention <home is where the heart is>

b : habitat

4 a : a place of origin <salmon returning to their home to spawn>; also : one's own country <having troubles at home and abroad>

b : headquarters 2 <home of the dance company>

5 : an establishment providing residence and care for people with special needs <homes for the elderly>

6 : the objective in various games; especially : home plate
— at home

1 : relaxed and comfortable : at ease <felt completely at home on the stage>

2 : in harmony with the surroundings

3 : on familiar ground : knowledgeable <teachers at home in their subject fields> (Merriam-Webster, 2014).

3.1 HOUSE AND HOME

Staying at a shelter often means giving up everything a person has ever owned and starting over. It means waiting in line every day for food and every night for a place to sleep. Many people have described homelessness as a 'rut' that is easier to get stuck in than to get out of. Emergency shelters are critical for keeping people safe and away from the elements when they fall into a housing crisis. In a winter city like Winnipeg, it is also a matter of life or death. Though they end up 'housing' some people for long periods of time, emergency shelters are not a home.

Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, 2012, p. 5

In order to understand homelessness, it is essential to understand home. The word home is a multifaceted term that is more than a physical shelter, and yet this is the most common use of the word. Merriam-Webster (2014) defines home as (a) physical space or place, (b) feeling, (c) and a state of being (at home). Comparatively, the Merriam-Webster (2014) defines house as: "a building that serves as living quarters for one or a few families: home." The use of the word home in lieu of and synonymous to house is problematic as home is a weighted word and its definition extends beyond a physical shelter and tangible unit. In this literature review, I will use house in regard to a physical structure and home as a feeling and a state of being.

3.2 THE ELEMENTS OF HOME

Despite various and differentiating views on the meaning of home, commonalities do exist. Researchers interested in the meaning of home commonly examine and relate home to concepts of (a) privacy, (b) security and haven, (c) family, (d) intimacy, (e) comfort, (f) self-identity, and (g) control. In order to understand the multidimensionality of home and create one for women experiencing homelessness, the previous recurring concepts of home will be explored in this section.

The meaning of home has been the focus of many researchers and studied through a variety of lenses: psychological, philosophical, phenomenological, sociologically, and culturally (Moore, 2000, p. 207). There is no conclusive definition of home as the various meanings simultaneously complement and contradict each other.

Parsell (2012) defines home as: "...something that people do experience, and something more-over, held in high regard. In this respect,

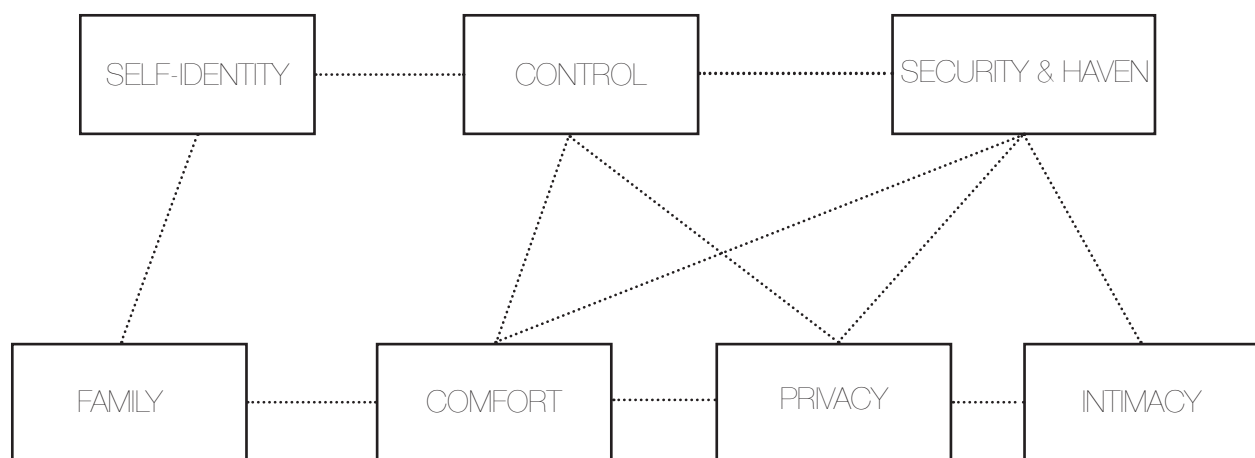


Figure 3.2.1 - Elements of home.

home has meaning on social, emotional, and spiritual and material levels" (p. 159).

Parsell's definition focuses on the temporal and experiential element of home. In this view, a house becomes a home over time, experience, and familiarity.

Rapoport (1995) defines home as "a place where we feel comfortable, defined by family, and friendships, where one finds laughter and contentment" (p. 27). Thus, home is a place of comfort, social connections, and well-being.

For many cultures, the meaning of home goes beyond the house, and extends to one's homeland. Yi-Fu Tuan (1977) studied place as homeland and the bond created between the individual and place. To Tuan, home is a place where people feel a sense of attachment,

rootedness, and comfort – a place where one can be themselves, safe, and secure.

Reference to home as one's homeland concludes that home is much like place and can refer to a variety of scales, with or without a physical shelter.

As seen from the previous definitions of home, it is difficult to define the meaning of home through one element – each element works cooperatively with the others to create a positive balance, providing a sense of home (see Figure 3.2.1). Defining home in terms of privacy cannot be accomplished without including the sense of control, comfort, and security; in the same way, self-identity is linked to controlling the built environment as a display of a personal and social self. A sense of home is all of these elements coexisting.

The use of the word home is commonly used as a positive evaluation of the one's living environment (Rapoport, 1995; Parsell, 2012). Thus, the feeling of home is a positive response to a space or place. An individual's personal and positive response is necessary for one to feel at home.

Shelley Mallett (2004) reflects upon relevant literature on home and notes that while home can be defined in terms of the elements of home, the meaning of home is all relative and depends upon an individual's history and social context. Thus, the experience of home is what differentiates house from home. The meaning of home to a typical middle class Westerner will differentiate from the meaning of home to a homeless Western woman – as such, both meanings will be explored in order

to understand and determine the various types of supports and special needs required and to be considered when designing a home for homeless women.

In an exploratory study of home, Sixsmith (1986) developed a model to divide home into three modes of experience: the personal home, the social home, and the physical home. The personal home refers to the home as an extension of oneself. The social home refers to presence of kinship and family ties within the home. The physical home refers to the structure and architecture of the home, as well as the services and conveniences it contains. This literature review will be divided similarly in order to discuss the recurring themes in home literature.

3.2.1 THE PERSONAL HOME. The personal home refers to the home as an extension of oneself. According to Sixsmith (1986), "the home appears as a profound centre of meaning and a central emotional and sometimes physical reference point in a person's life which is encapsulated in feelings of security, happiness and belonging" (p. 290). These emotions and feelings are intangible, but are prevalent and essential to the idea of home:

You feel as if you're part of the place and its part of you – you aren't a stranger or anything. It's part of your history.

It's comfortable, I'm relaxed. I feel relaxed in it because I suppose, I'm familiar with it all and, I know what to expect. (Sixsmith, 1986, p. 290)

From these excerpts, home is directly linked to the self. A place and/or space become a home through lived experiences, memories, and activities. Familiarity is rooted in our everyday interactions and routines with and within a place. Dovey (1985) states that "[w]hen we wander through the dark in our home, we do not need to see where the furniture and light switches are; we can "feel" them. The home environment is predictable" (p. 37). With that in mind, home is defined as knowing where you are and being spatially oriented within a space. In this way, home is less about a specific space and/or place, but rather how a person interacts with it. Over time, familiarity and comfort within a space allows one to feel security and a sense of belonging. Therefore, the meaning of home is partially a product of collective

memories and activities (memorable and mundane) within a given space.

Home is also a space that contains our personal belongings. Many authors have written about the close relationship between the home and self-identity (Després, 1991; Cooper, 1995; Dovey, 1985) and possessions and self-identity (Belk, 1988, Belk, 1988a, Jacobs & Malpas, 2013). Belk (1988) states that our belongings and possessions are a part of ourselves. In his essay, *My Possessions Myself*, he notes how burglary victims often feel as though they have been personally violated. Although these victims were not physically violated by the burglar, their dwelling is broken into and their possessions stolen. These feelings of violation are due to the physical breach

in security of the victim's house combined with the personal sense of self found within possessions of the victim.

Home as self-identity is the emotive belief that the home is an expression and symbol of the self: "Identity implies a certain bonding or emergence of person and place such that the place takes its identity from the dweller and the dweller takes his or her identity from the place. There is integrity, a connectedness between the dweller and dwelling" (Dovey, 1985, p. 40). The home is a vessel and canvas for self-expression. Dovey (1985) identifies two recurring perspectives regarding home and self-identity: social and individual. She explains that the social perspective views the home as a "statement," the home presents a social or ideal version

of the self, not necessarily one rooted in an individual's character. In contrast, an individual perspective argues a profound and psychological connection between the home and self – the home is viewed as a 'mirror' and a direct reflection of the dweller (Dovey, 1985, p. 40). Both perspectives are equally valid as a framework to understand home as self-expression and self-identity. The home is a place to be the truest version of yourself, as well as a method of expressing who you want to be. Although home as "mirror" and home as "statement" are opposing views, each draw attention to the psychological affects regarding personalization. The positive effects of personalization will be further discussed in Section 3.3.1.

3.2.2 THE SOCIAL HOME. There are four aspects of the social home to be considered as noted by Sixsmith (1986): 1) type of relationships, 2) quality of relationships, 3) friends and entertainment, and 4) emotional environment (with others). The type and quality of relationships refers to our ability to choose our relationships and the quality of these relationships over time. Friends and entertainment refer to people invited into the dwelling who are central to the social aspect of home. Emotional environment refers to the positive emotions, such as love and support, which are often used to describe the home.

A key element in literature regarding the meaning of home is the undeniable connection between family and home (Gilman, 1903/2002; Dupuis & Thorns,

1996). The social home refers to the "presence and relationships with other people that contribute towards the place being a home. Home is not only a place often shared with other people but is also a place allowing entertainment and enjoyment of other people's company such as friends and relatives" (Sixsmith, 1986, p. 291). A positive and healthy relationship with family generally leads to a positive emotive response to the meaning of home.

Our first notion of home is generally our childhood house – the place where an individual grows up, surrounded and supported by family. Concepts of home as family are traditionally supported by positive relationships in the home. Our concept and understanding of home is thusly derived from

our past experiences with and within our childhood house(s). To Gilman (1903/2002), "[i]t is a home while the family are in it. When the family are out of it it is only a house" (p. 338). Based on Gillman's definition, as long as there is family, there is home. The concept of family is equally as weighted and debatable as the word home. The ambiguous nature of both family and home – both embedded with emotional and intangible properties – causes difficulties in explaining their connection (Parsell, 2012, p. 161).

Although individuals cannot choose their family, the quality of the relationships (loving or loathing) is a sentiment to one's personal understanding of home. A participant in Sixsmith's (1986) study described how friction and tension within the house caused by her

father lead to the house feeling less like a home. Once her father left the house, feelings of friction and tension departed with him, and the house returned to the home she was familiar with (p. 291). The relationships built within and around the home are important to creating a positive response to a place. Bogac (2009) concludes "peoples' past experiences ... play a major role in their feelings of attachment to a particular place" (p. 276). In Section 3.3.2, I will discuss negative relationships in the home and their consequences.

3.2.3 THE PHYSICAL HOME. The physical home functions simply as shelter for the dwellers and their possessions. The physical home refers to the style of the place and

everyday services that make a house a home (Sixsmith, 1986, p. 292), as well as the physical structure which protects the self (Somerville, 1992). As a result of the physical shelter and the positive emotive response provide by the personal and social home, home is "often describe in literature as a haven or refuge" (Mallett, 2004, p. 70). A home is a private refuge from the public realm that protects the (physical and psychological) self. A home is a place and/or space where people can retreat and feel in complete control.

Comfort and familiarity are rooted in one's sense of control: "[p]eople feel at home when they have control, or can at least exercise a degree of control over a space" (Darke, 1994; Douglas, 1991; Dupuis & Thorns, 1996; Kavanagh, 1997; Kellett & Moore,

2003; Leith, 2006, as cited in Parsell, 2012). Control can take the form of access (Dovey, 1985), behaviour (Dovey, 1985), environmental (Sixsmith, 1986), and/or through a set of rules (Parsell, 2012). The home is one of the few places where an individual can establish their own rules – free and unique from the rest of the world. Outside the home, in the public realm, this level of autonomy is limited by acceptable social norms and common rules – thus the need and desire for control within the private realm of the home is greatly heightened (Parsell, 2012, p. 161). At home feelings of independence and control are desired and expected (Kellett & Moore, 2003), and without this sense of control, feelings of home are absent (Dovey, 1985; Pable, 2012; Parsell, 2012). Feelings of perceived helplessness due to the loss of control will be further

discussed in Section 3.4. At home, individuals have the freedom of choice – choice of visitors, décor, warmth/coolness, amount of light – an individual is in complete control of their environment. Parsell (2012) concludes: "Control over a space is important to people's understanding of what it means to be at home, because this control over a space also means the ability to take or exercise some control over one's life" (p. 160). Thus, the concept of home as self is strengthened by the element of control, and the feeling of control at home is directly correlated to the individuals' perceived control of their own life.

A consistent element of home that appears frequently in literature is the notion of security. Security, by definition, is a freedom from any physical danger or risk, but it is also defined

as a psychological freedom from care, anxiety, or doubt (Merriam-Webster, 2014). Manzo (2003) states that "places that provide comfort and security tend to be places with which we are familiar, so we may be attached to them on an unconscious level" (p. 53). Comfort is a resultant of physical control over the surrounding environment, while security is both physical and psychological. A home is expected to be a safe haven – one that is comfortable and safe. Students in Kenyon's (1999) study reported a key element of home missing within their term-time housing's: security. The students depend on the landlord to ensure safety. Additionally, the physical building and facilities were poorly maintained by custodial staff leaving the student's health and well-being at risk (Kenyon, 1999, p. 94). If the landlord cannot provide them with the security

they desire, feelings of distrust and anxiety become more prevalent. A house is not a home if residents are constantly on guard. The notion of home is also based on permanence and stability: trusting and knowing that when going out into the world, home will be there when one returns (Sixsmith, 1986, p. 294). In Kenyon's (1999) study, the instability of the term-time housing on campus hindered the student's ability to perceive their term-time shelters as home. Students believed their parental houses to be more home-like as it was permanent and stable. For one student, knowing that a place was permanent and stable produced a sense of home immediately (p. 90). Therefore, the sense of home is indicative to current and perceived future time spent in a place.

3.3. THE MEANING OF HOME TO A HOMELESS WOMAN

To fully understand the meaning of home, one must understand consequences of being without a home: homelessness. The prevailing general definition of homelessness is "the situation of an individual or family without stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it" (Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2012). Home as stated in the previous section, offers immediate physical and personal shelter, as well as a space for the dweller to experience absolute privacy, control, social entertainment, and personalization. Homelessness is the absence of a space and/or place in which to call home. Simply put, homelessness is the opposite of home. In Parsell's (2012) study, participants noted their lack of shelter reinforced their feelings

of homelessness and, in turn, defined their homelessness. The participants stated that their present housing circumstances, living on the streets, was the "antithesis of home" (Parsell, 2012, p. 160). In this way, a home is perceived as a goal to move forward and out of homelessness.

Somerville (1992) states that "homelessness can be represented as the semantic contrary of home" (p. 533), therefore when elements that evoke a sense of home are not present, feelings of homelessness emerge. In the previous section, the meaning of home is explored in regards to the positive response to a space and/or place through the personal, social, and physical home. In the following section, homelessness will be explored in the same regard. The meaning (or lack) of home to

a homeless woman will be described as well as its challenges and consequences.

3.3.1 THE PERSONAL HOME. In Section 3.2.1, the personal home refers to its psychological connection to the self through familiarity, routines, possessions, and memories present within the space and/or place. A home and one's possessions are a symbolic representation of the self, so for those experiencing homelessness, possessions may be the only link to one's sense of self. With the absence of a physical shelter, the importance of possessions and belongings increase. Personal and physical security is a main concern for those experiencing homelessness, as well as to

those who are housed (see Section 3.2.3). If one's personal security is threatened, so is their sense of self. In the following section, I will discuss possessions of particular importance to homeless women, their effect on self-identity, and "self-restoration."

The importance of possessions.

Meaningful possessions define the personal home, but unfortunately, a common consequence of homelessness is losing some – if not all – of one's possessions. In Hill's (1991) ethnographic case study of homeless women and special possessions, he found three categories of possessions: (1) possessions obtained prior to homelessness, (2) possessions obtained while homeless, and (3) memories. In the study, possessions range from tangible (ie. photos, clothing, food) to

intangible (morals, values, and memories) (p. 305). Although minimal, these possessions are significantly important in terms of maintaining one's sense of self and self-identity. If possessions are the foundation on which one's sense of self is built upon, losing possessions as a result of becoming homeless threatens one's sense of self (Pable, 2013, p. 278). Collecting and creating new possessions, in many ways, may fill the void of lost possessions, as attachment to new ones can symbolize a better future and individual growth. Hill (1991) describes how a rosary given to a homeless woman represented moral support and inspired her to stay off drugs and attend Mass every day (p. 305). The possession is no longer simply an object, but a symbol of motivation, inspiration, and change. Both tangible and

intangible possessions help women to cope with their current circumstances and serve to restore and maintain their sense of self. Despite the women's lack of tangible possessions, their importance to the women suggests the possible restorative properties that incorporating areas to display such possessions may provide in order to motivate, encourage, and enable self-expression. Intangible possessions (such as their needs, morals, and values) suggest that "public and private support for homeless woman should be tailored to their individual needs" (Hill, 1991, p. 309). Meeting social, emotional, and psychological needs is crucial to developing temporary and permanent homes for this extremely vulnerable population.

3.3.2 THE SOCIAL HOME. A participant in the Novac et al. (2004) study stated: "[I was] afraid of losing stuff, don't want to be around a lot of strangers. I personally didn't want to be alone" (p. 17). This comment reveals the struggle between living with complete strangers and needing to feel safe. Although the women presented negative statements about living with strangers, congregate housing does present some benefits in terms of companionship and added sense of security. Additionally, shared housing arrangements can provide women with supportive social relationships with others who are experiencing homelessness. In the same study, negative comments seemed to be geared towards gender-mixed shared housing. One-tenth of women stated that abuse by their partner or unbearable tension within parental homes as the reason for leaving

their previous shelters (Novac, et al., 2004, p. 18). For some women, gender-mixed housing is not an option. A shelter exclusive to women provides an option for those that feel threatened by the presence of men.

3.3.2.1 CONTROL AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS. Supportive relationships within congregate housing are reliant on positive social interactions. However, Schroeder et al.'s (1996) research has identified crowded residences are related to greater psychological distress when compared to uncrowded residences. The study identified that one of the reasons for psychological distress within crowded residences is the negative effect it has on social relationship

and support systems due to social withdrawal (Schroeder et al., 1996, p. 41-42). Social withdrawal subsequently disrupts any possible supportive relationships that are created in a cohabitating situation.

Schroeder et al. (1996) states that depth, an interior element, has potential to alleviate feelings of crowding when living in communal housing. Depth is described as "the number of spaces one must pass through in order to get from one point in a structure to one or more specific termini" (Schroeder, 1996, p. 42). For example a depth of one is considered a public space, while three would be considered a private space. The more depth within an interior results in more opportunities to experience various social interactions (private, semi-private, semi-public,

and public), while also providing individuals to retreat. By providing a variety of opportunities for social interaction each resident can "more easily alter the degree of physical separation among themselves" (Schroeder, 1996, p. 42) and each other. Parsell's (2012) interviews with individuals experiencing homelessness revealed that living in public places are particularly frustrating when trying to regulate social interactions. It is difficult to avoid social interactions when a person does not have a place to call their own to retreat to. He concludes that "[l]iving in public places undermined people's agency to control who they did, and did not, form social relationships and interact with" (p. 165). Gaining control over social interactions also gives individuals the opportunity to choose positive social relationships and avoid negative ones.

In *Winnipeg Final Report: At Home/Chez Soi Project*, Distasio et al. (2014) reported gaining control over social interactions as a positive result of Housing First. Participants in the study were given a place of their own, allowing them to avoid negative social interactions that they would often find themselves involved in on the streets, shelters, or in a rooming house environment. He noted negative social interactions that involved drug or alcohol usage were easier to avoid when housed rather than while living on the street (Distasio et al., 2014, p. 23). Distasio et al. (2014) reported participants that engaged in negative social interactions soon learned to "set boundaries in order to stay clear of addictions and keep their place" (p. 23). Thus, having a place to call your own has the potential to motivated individuals to make positive decisions. For the participants

in the study, a private space holds higher value over negative social interactions because those types of interactions are what led them to their previous homelessness. When housed, individuals have more control over their social interactions (Distasio et al., 2014, p. 23) as well as a level of control over their own lives.

Interior design elements such as programming and room adjacencies can influence social interactions within a building and Schroeder (1996) suggest that this "could play a role in the household crowding-psychological distress link" (p. 41). Schroeder (1996) suggest "[s]ound attenuation, visual access and exposure, window views, and proximity to open spaces" (p. 45) as possible interior design solutions to increase depth and reduce negative effects of residential crowding.

Private living quarters with the option to lock the doors not only provides added security for possessions, but also gives individuals the opportunity to choose their social interactions and environment. Pable (2012) notes that crowding is not solely based on density, but also overlapping territories as "[c]ontact itself is not the problem, but rather unwanted contact that may be perceived as intrusive" (p. 13). Overlapping spaces that are typically perceived as "private" (e.g. the bedroom) and "public" spaces (e.g. the living room) are problematic (Pable, 2012, p. 13). Thus, spaces devoted to a specific private function, such as sleeping and personal hygiene, supplemented with semi-private and semi-public areas for socializing in small groups, can prevent feelings of crowding. This allows private rooms to become a sanctuary and safe haven when needed.

3.3.3 THE PHYSICAL HOME. As defined previously, the physical home protects the physical and psychological self. The home is a place where the dweller can seek refuge, feel secure, and be in complete control. Hostels and shelters provide immediate physical shelter for homeless people – but lack in security and individual control. In a study by Novac et al. (2004), women evaluated their experiences within hostels and shelters. A woman in the study commented that hostels were "somewhere to live, and get food, but they take away self-esteem" (Novac et al., 2004, p. 17). Despite the physical shelter provided, the participant still felt homeless when living in a shelter or hostel. An environment where a person's dignity is taken away is the opposite of a home environment. Excessive rules and a lack of independence inherently provides

an institutional environment, thus reducing the possibility for an individual to feel at home.

Homeless shelters are typically high-control environments in order to maintain predictability regarding the residents. The rules and regulations enforced in a typical shelter provide safety for staff and residents, but high-control living environments are also linked to feelings of helplessness and low self-esteem (Burn, 1992). Rules are necessary in order to ensure residents do not disturb each other, but an excess of rules "can minimize the level of control a woman feels over her life and family" (Hartnett & Postmus, 2010, p. 298). Enforced rules and policies regulate daily activities, providing limited choices in how residents choose to live their lives. Hartnett and Postmus (2010) studied the effect of strict

administrative regulations in place in current emergency shelters. Their study highlighted how rules and policies such as enforced daily chores, restricted access to a telephone and television, wake up and lights-out time, and limited access to personal hygiene are elements of a high-control environment that negatively affects a woman's sense of control over her own life.

Although the rules are intended to provide safety to both staff and women, the negative effects of high-control environments need to be addressed. Researchers have concluded excessive control can cause helplessness and low self-esteem (Burn, 1992; Novac et al., 2004). In contrast, positive living environments that promote internal control, rather than external control, positively affects a person's

state of mind and motivation (Pable, 2012). These environments will be further discussed in Section 3.4.

According to Parsell (2012), the meaning of home to people who are homeless is housing: the physical structure and functional shelter that a house provides is the antithesis to their present housing situation. Precarious living situations lack the fundamental functions of home (safety, control, comfort, and permanency), thus housing is a solution to the problems associated with homelessness. Being without shelter further restricts one's day-to-day functioning because the simple everyday comforts of home are absent. Having a space to cook your own food, a proper bathroom, and practice personal hygiene are not immediately available

when experiencing homelessness. For the homeless, housing is essential, but it does not always mean home.

Despite the definition of "home is housing," it does not always hold true as Parsell (2012) notes that "[m]any describe their annoyance at being reliant on the amenity and the timing schedule for services they relied upon to meet their personal hygiene needs" (p. 165). The notion of control is an overarching theme within the literature concerning home. Controlling one's home environment also means "the ability to take or exercise some control over one's life" (Parsell, 2012, p. 160). Controlling one's day-to-day life is not only a basic human need and value, but has been proven to be beneficial for homeless men and women (Culhane, 1992; Bridgman, 2003;

Bridgman, 2006; Pable, 2012). Although the walls of a shelter provide feelings of safety and security, without the ability to control what happens within those walls, one does not feel truly *at home*.

For those housed and at home, the meaning of home is both physical and emotive. For the homeless, housing is viewed as the first step out of homelessness. In Distasio et al.'s (2005) *Home is Where the Heart is and Right now that is Nowhere*, participants were asked to define what they meant by home.

For some respondents home referred to the physical house with basic modern comforts, personal safety, and refuge. But for others, it was a place where they could exert complete control and had a sense of independence (Distasio et al., 2005, p. 73). Interviews

conducted by Parsell (2012) reported that "a physical structure in which they had control was necessary" (p. 167) and important when placing home. Without a familiar place to call your own, one does not have the boundaries to begin to create a home. Based on the responses from the various participants, a house is necessary to their notion of home. Without a physical structure, one's territory is not bound by secure and safe walls, but rather open to the public where one and one's possessions are exposed and unprotected.

This section provides evidence of the need for Housing First. With a permanent shelter, a person is given back their dignity, rather than having it taken away. Mundane conveniences (such as a private bathroom and a safe space to sleep) become significantly more valuable for

individuals when experiencing homelessness.

A private room with communal social areas can provide homeless women with two of their contrasting needs – their desire for personal and physical safety, as well as opportunities for building social relationships.

3.4 CONTROL IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

As noted in the previous sections, the lack of homeliness within shelter environments has the potential to increase feelings of helplessness and contributes to lower self-esteem. Based on the positive impact Housing First (see Section 2.2) has given to participants, it is clear that providing a person with a place to call their own increases self-esteem and allows people to focus on their future. As stated previously, the home is a reflection of the self. Therefore,

giving someone a place of their own can also contribute to restoring the self, reduce feelings of helplessness, and increase self-esteem.

Shelter environments can benefit from subtle interventions that provide tenants control over their physical and social environment.

Internal and external control

Internal control is “the sense that one has the chance to personally influence life

outcomes and is a desirable characteristic for all individuals ... [and] may be related to perceptions of space including crowding and sense of privacy" (Pable, 2012, p. 9). Duttweiler (1984) developed the concept of *internal-external locus of control* in order to explain why some behaviours remain unchanged despite positive reinforcement. Individuals with internal control believe that their lives are controlled by their behaviours and actions while those with external control believe that their lives are based on luck, chance, or other universal life forces (Pable, 2012, p. 12). The internal control state of mind is ideal for all individuals as it evokes self-motivation and drive rather than helplessness.

Burn (1992) states that "environments [for the homeless] should be designed and organized

to provide individuals with increased control" (p. 2). It is unlikely that a physical redesign of a shelter will completely change an individual's locus of control and eliminate feelings of helplessness. But, a compassionate design with increased control and privacy has been linked with positive perceptions towards social crowding and privacy (Pable, 2012), increasing a residents comfort level and well-being within the shelter environment.

Self-restoration.

In *The Homelessness in America: An Examination of Possessions and Consumptive Behaviors*, Hill and Stamey (1990) states that "individuals will seek personal power over the events that affect and, therefore, define them by actively engaging their social and physical environments" (p. 317). Common complaints

made by homeless individuals while living on the streets and within shelter environments include their excess of rules, the lack of control over daily activities, and their physical and social environment (Hartnett & Postmus, 2010; Veness, 1994). Providing individuals with an amount of control over their social and physical environment enables one to feel in control of not only the built environment that surrounds them, but also their own lives. An individual that feels in control is the antithesis of helpless. Thus, Pable (2013) recognizes possessions as a symbol and reflection of the self, concluding that consumer culture and possessions may have a role in the homeless shelter environment as a tool to provide opportunities of *self-restoration*.

Self-restoration is a psychological mechanism used to make one feel whole again (Belk, 1988a; Hill and Stamey, 1990; Hill and Gaines, 2007). As stated previously, feelings of helplessness and low self-esteem may increase within high-control environments. Belk (1988a) concludes that "[i]f involuntary loss of possessions causes a loss of self, one of the primary reactions following such loss should be an attempt at self-restoration" (p. 143). Self-restoration allows individuals to regain or redefine their self-identity. Creating and collecting new possessions is a method to regain a sense of self to fill the void of previous possessions lost (Belk, 1988a, p. 143). Objects and possessions during periods of helplessness are exponentially more important as these items are the extent of their ownership and identity.

Possessions that individuals have managed to keep from before they were homeless and items that they have collected while housed and experiencing homelessness have a place within the interior environment as vessels aiding the process of self-restoration (Pable, 2013). Pable notes (2013), "[i]f possessions in general can help clarify identity ... then it is reasonable to conclude that a homeless shelter's physical, social, and psychological environment may logically be influential on a person's growth and evolution" (p. 281). Thus, private spaces (such as tenant suites) are an extremely important space in terms of self-restoration – in this space, tenants are provided with complete control over the space to provide opportunities to restore and express their personal identity.

Research on institutional environments where comfortable environments are fabricated has been proven to have negative effects on the inhabitant (Goffman, 1961; Snyder & Fromkin, 1980). Uplifting and motivational artwork, although hung with good intentions, can be interpreted as "deindividualization." As stated previously, a home is a vessel to express one's own identity – when standardized interior components are not organically placed, it can be negatively perceived as attacking one's identity (Snyder & Fromkin, 1980), causing feelings of anonymity and a lack of sense of self. Thus, creating an interior environment in which one can come back to containing "familiar possessions that evoke positive memories, reinforce who they are, and provide them with sense of self-determination" (Pable, 2013, p. 281)

has been proven to have positive effects on a resident. Having perceived control over the built environment, as noted before, also subconsciously evokes the notion of controlling one's own life. Giving people the opportunity to surround themselves with valued possessions and the ability to personalize the interior environment (rather than carefully imposed upon arrival) has been proven to give people an immediate sense of ownership and empowerment (Pable, 2013). Interior design strategies can potentially alleviate feelings of anonymity, lack of control and personalization, and help aid individuals redefine their sense of self. In a shelter study, Pable (2013) noted dramatic differences in mothers and children when re-organizing the same size room. In the study, an interior intervention included: additional storage,

open shelving for displaying possessions, areas for personalization such as a white board to write notes and important dates, and the ability to personalize their own door with their family name or a welcome greeting. Individuals felt empowered by their interior space and this "may be key to the person's recalibration and eventual truce with their situation" (Pable, 2013, 286). It may also be a key element in identifying one's self and recognizing the space as home. The display of possessions and personalization of one's space are all familiar routines of creating home – therefore, there is a therapeutic quality and psychological change that happens when given opportunities to control interior environments that are beneficial to individuals, whether they have a home or not.

3.5 CONCLUSION

According to the literature review, a supportive interior environment that fulfills user's needs in a space designed to promote psychological well-being can have withstanding effects on a person's sense of control over their own life. Each section in this literature review will enable the design of the congregate housing facility to function as a safe haven for women transitioning from homelessness.

Based on the literature review, the importance of privacy, security, family, intimacy, comfort, and control are what make home a home for both the housed and the homeless. In regards to the personal home, understanding a person's desires to personalize and create a familiar space is necessary in terms of establishing a sense of home. This section addresses the restorative properties of

tangible and intangible possessions and their significance to self-restoration. The ability to provide a connection between the dweller and the dwelling was found to influence self-identity, comfort, and familiarity.

An investigation of the social home provided context for the value of social relationships within supportive environments, as well as how to accommodate for social withdrawal.

The literature review clarifies the need for a design that is sensitive to the woman's past life experiences.

Providing a sense of security, while also providing a sense of control, is the balance necessary to provide a user-sensitive environment. Although rules and regulations are implemented with good intentions, high-

control living environments consequently have negative psychological effects on the tenants. Understanding the extent to which high-control living environments can consume a person's self-esteem was necessary for establishing the relevance and importance of control within the built environment.

Through an analysis of the literature, it can be established that a supportive, user-sensitive environment makes use of the elements of home. By applying the design considerations (Table 3.5.1), which were derived from the main concepts explored, a congregate living environment that focuses on providing a sense of home and encourages self-restoration is proposed. These concepts are explored and determined in Section 7.0.

CONCEPT	AUTHOR	DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS
The personal home	Sixsmith, Belk	> Provide opportunities for personalization within tenant suite. > Minimalistic gestures within tenant suite to accommodate self-expression.
	Hill, Pable	> Storage (visible and hidden) for display of possessions to reinforce self-identity. > Emphasize personalization, especially within individual rooms. > Opportunity to customize adjacent space to tenant suite as an extension of private space.
	Dovey	> There is a connection between dweller and dwelling – create a space that encourages and motivate tenants to move out of the cycle of homelessness. > Good design can be therapeutic – reduce stress and create a positive response to a space. > The home is a “mirror” and a “statement” of who they are and what they can be.
The social home	Sixsmith	> Ensure social and emotional needs are met. > Spaces that promote social activity – attach personal meanings and experiences to the space. > Give residents the option of interacting with other residents and staff or finding solitude in more private or semi-private areas. > Provide areas for guest within tenant suite or gathering spaces in close proximity.

	Pable	> Provide areas to encourage socialization or withdrawal. > Provide areas for close proximity to public areas without individual committing to participation within group setting.
	Schroeder et al.	> Provide more depth and control with scattered private, semi-private, semi-public, and public spaces. > Ensure that sound from public areas or vice versa do not travel to private areas to provide a true retreat. > Visual access and exterior views create spaces that appear more open and less crowded.
	Novac et al.	> Women struggle with the balance of not wanting to be alone and losing their stuff. Potential opportunity for shared suites.
The physical home	Sixsmith	> Provide adequate space for modern day conveniences within tenant suite.
	Dovey	> Individual suites to be favoured in order to establish familiarity over time.

Table 3.5.1 – Chapter summary and design considerations

CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDIES

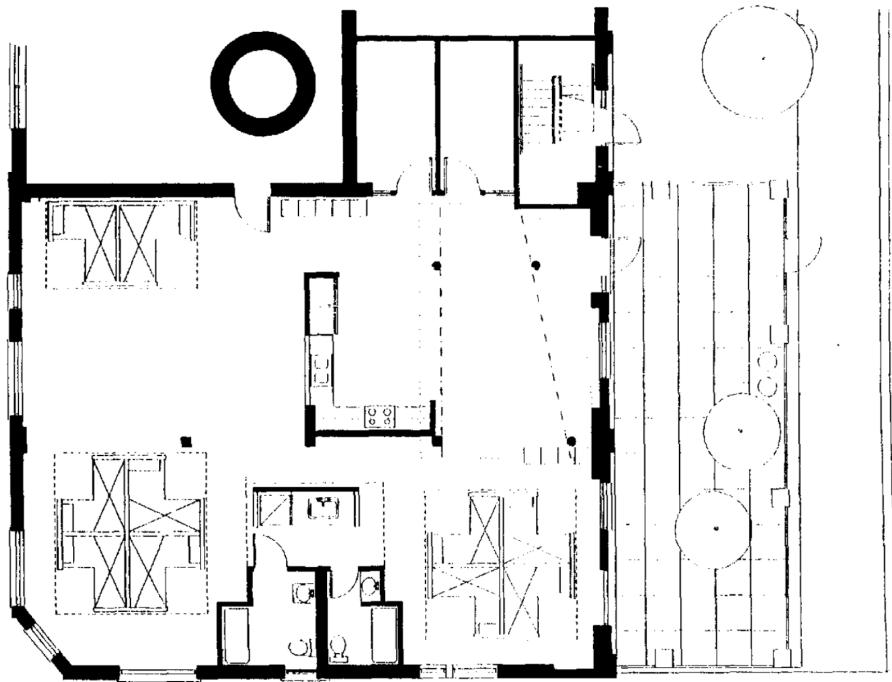


Figure 4.1.1 – Savard's Floor Plan, Extracted from Rae Bridgman. (2006). *Safe Haven: A Story of a Shelter for Homeless Women*.

4.1 SAVARD'S

Savard's (originally named the Women's Street Survivors Project) was developed by an advisory resource group and Homes First Society in Toronto, Ontario. The facility in opened January of 1997. Savard's was a response to the strict rules and policies of current homeless shelters that were leaving many homeless women people with no place to go (Bridgman, 2003). In contrast to typical shelters, Savard's enforced a "no barring or eviction" rule. A resident may be asked to temporary leave for a period of time but it would not endanger the woman's placement (Bridgman, 2003, p. 4). The facility is open 24-hours a day, allowing the women to go in and out of the facility at their own will. The initial rules of the facility are few: "weapons, violence, and the use of drugs or alcohol on the premises are not permitted. There are

no curfews. Women may come and go as they wish. Women are not required to take medication unless they so choose. Referrals to other services are made only when a woman has indicated interest herself in taking action" (Bridgman, 2003, p. 4).

The population that Savard's intended to serve was chronically homeless women with severe mental health problems. The goal was to create a facility that allowed for an unlimited stay within a low-demand environment and high support from staff. This type of philosophy would "allow time to engage individuals, assess their physical and mental health needs and their social service needs, and help them link up with appropriate community resources" (Bridgman, 2003, p. 54). Savard's original guiding principles were as follows:

This is a project that will evolve and change as the women evolve teach, educate and inform us about their strengths, abilities, issues, needs, wants, and perspectives.

The strengths, skills, and survival abilities of the women will be recognized and respected. They will determine what, if any, supports, programs, and services they want. (Bridgman, 2003, p. 58)

The space will be an 'envelope' that will respond to the ways in which the women want to live or be in it. The space will 'fit' the women rather than women 'fitting' into the space.

Special design features strengthen Savard's concept of the women's flexibility, choice, and sense of ownership of the space (Bridgman, 2003, p. 73). A communal kitchen and lounge provided a sense of community within the space, and 'sleeping nooks' (Figure 4.1.2)

No rules (other than what is necessary for health and safety) or treatment/program requirements will be placed on the women. There will be no expectations placed on the women to change. A flexible, non-judgmental, low-demand atmosphere and structure will be provided.

provided the women with privacy. The sleeping nooks were plywood modules with a bed, drawers, shelves, and a privacy curtain. The intention of the module form was for it to be flexible and easily moved within the facility in order for the women to decide their placement. The intent "was to support flexibility in use of the space and, at the time, a sense of ownership"

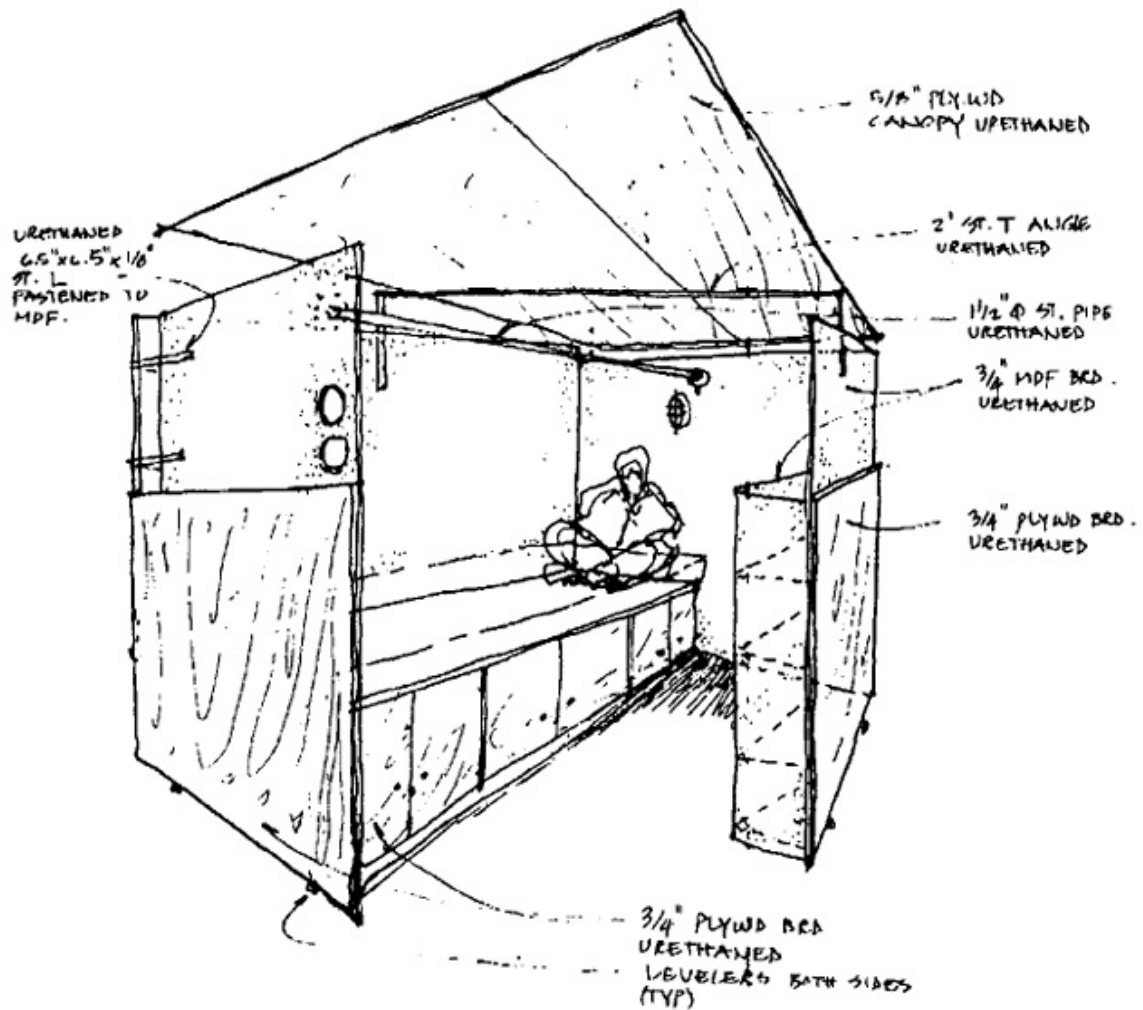


Figure 4.1.2 – Concept sketch of sleeping nooks, Extracted from Rae Bridgman. (2006). *Safe Haven: A Story of a Shelter for Homeless Women*.

(Bridgman, 2003, p. 65). Due to the spatial constraints of the space (2,000 square feet) some essential programmatic requirements were not included, such as a private meeting room, separate bathroom for staff members, and a ventilated smoking area (Bridgman, 2003, p. 73).

The concept of the sleeping nooks was not integrated within the final product. The intent of module flexibility was compromised by the size of the nook as it was too heavy to provide the modularity it was intended to provide (Bridgman, 2003, p. 109). Instead of the nooks moving, the women moved into available nooks. At times, some women would claim a nook as their own. Within the small space, privacy was highly valued. Due to fire safety, the ceilings of the nooks were removed thus further reducing

the privacy and sound-proofing of the nooks (Bridgman, 2003, p. 110).

Safety and protection of staff and residents is a high priority within a facility serving women who have been barred from other shelters within the city. Designing with safety at the forefront can reduce and prevent the occurrence of potential violent incidents. The staff room at Savard's was designed with only one means of access. The need for an additional door became evident when a staff member was assaulted by a resident. The staff member could not exit the staff room as the door was blocked by another resident (Bridgman, 2003, p. 132).

Savard's serves as a useful case study for this practicum in terms of programme, function, and design considerations. A similar (limited) set

of rules and regulations will be implemented in the proposed design (ie. no barring or curfews, support services as requested). Additionally, design concepts such as flexibility, choice, and providing a sense of ownership will be implemented throughout the facility to promote a sense of internal control (Section 3.4). In terms of weaknesses, women were not able to have a room of their own due to the lack of square footage; thus, reducing privacy, self-identity, and perceived security. Although the nooks in Savard's did not perform as intended, nooks will be considered as a semi-public space in addition to a private suite. Learning from Savard's weaknesses and its strong design concepts will be addressed in the design of the proposed shelter for homeless women.



Figure 4.2.1 - 4.2.3 - View of Bell Hotel lobby, reception desk, and suite. Excerpted from Bios Architecture (n.d.). The Bell Hotel. Retrieved April 16, 2015, from <http://thebios.ca/filter/2009/THE-BELL-HOTEL/>.

4.2 BELL HOTEL

Location: Winnipeg, Manitoba

Client: CentreVentue

Year: 2011

Architects: Bios Architecture

In 2012, the Bell Hotel opened its doors and provided 42 new single room occupancy suites to homeless men and women. The Bell Hotel is the first of its kind in Manitoba that utilizes principles of Housing First within a congregate model. This practicum project and the Bell Hotel's programmatic features and goals both correspond to the principles of Housing First,

so it is important to address how the Bell Hotel incorporated Housing First into the design of the facility.

Similar to the previous case study, residents are free to come and go as they please. Rules are minimal to promote freedom of choice, but the Bell Hotel does prohibit residents from being intoxicated within public spaces, and much like a home, what happens within an individual room remains private (Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, 2012). Due to their new and permanent housing, they learn how to be more

independent – residents are responsible to pay for their own rent, maintaining and cleaning their unit, and cooking their own meals (Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, 2012).

Individual rooms provide residents with a sense of belonging and privacy. Unlike transitional housing for the homeless, Bell Hotel is permanent, and residents are encouraged to stay as long as necessary (Bios Architecture, n.d.). Owning a permanent space does not only give a person responsibility and ownership; residents also expressed being proud of their space and wanting to maintain it (WinnipegHealthRegion, 2012). This sense of ownership and pride extends beyond the private rooms and into the public ones. For example, if someone does not pick up after themselves, another resident is sure to correct

them (WinnipegHealthRegion, 2012).

Security is taken seriously within the facility to ensure the safety of tenants and their belongings. The private room doors automatically lock when resident closes it.

Residents are allowed to have visitors in their rooms, much like any other home. The resident can choose whether or not they would like to invite the visitor up to their suite. For security purposes, visitors must check-in at the front desk (Figure 4.2.2) before entering the facility. Bios Architecture states: “[t]he building was designed to recapture its manner as a grand hotel. To that end, space was set aside for a large lobby with a reception area more akin to a concierge’s desk than a security desk” (Bios Architecture, n.d.). The lobby (Figure 4.2.1) is warm and inviting and does not depict an off-putting institutional atmosphere.

The individual suites (Figure 4.2.3) are equipped with a small kitchenette where residents can make small meals and store food in the pantry or fridge. Social spaces, such as a congregate kitchen, bring residents out of their rooms and into the community. Residents speak of each other and of staff as a "family" or "village" (WinnipegHealthRegion, 2012). This is in part due to in-house jobs and volunteering opportunities open to all residents. Cooking, cleaning, and technical support is provided in-house to help build a strong resident community and integrate residents back into society.

The Bell Hotel presents a successful example for my practicum project and solidifies the need for this type of typology in Winnipeg. Winnipeg needs more affordable housing options such as the Bell Hotel as it not only keeps people off

the streets but it also benefits the people who live in it – people feel healthier, their self-esteem and confidence have improved, and most importantly, they have a place that they can call home and be proud of. Programmatic features such as the individual suites and congregate kitchen have potential in my practicum project as it has proven to be successful in building relationships with both residents and staff members, and it provides individuals with new skills as they move forward into their lives.

4.3 EXODUS CUBE

Location: Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Year: 2013

Architects: Personal Architecture

Area: 12917 sq ft (1200 sq m)

Exodus Cube in Rotterdam, designed by Personal Architecture, is a halfway house project that houses ex-convicts transitioning from prison. Exodus Cube is one of the various Exodus homes by the Exodus Foundation.

These facilities are designed in order to "help bridge the gap between detention and society by providing personalized guidance as well as space and time for the inmates to get used to living with other people, whilst supporting them in finding a job and reuniting them with their families. These centers also provide a support network and structure that helps keep ex-cons



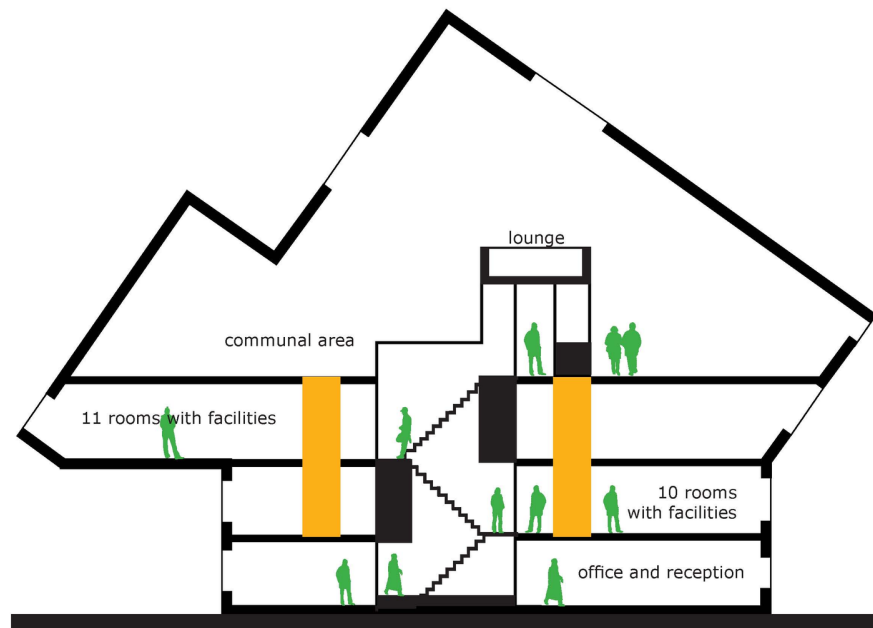
Figure 4.3.1 & 4.3.2 – View of Exodus Cube communal kitchen & atrium. Excerpted from ArchDaily, Exodus Cube / Personal Architecture. Retrieved March 13, 2015, from <http://www.archdaily.com/420290/exodus-cube-personal-architecture-bna>.

away from any old acquaintances exerting a bad influence" (Ampatzidou, 2014). It features 20 rooms, including one for staff members on night duty, in addition to shared living spaces. The architects designed the space to encourage interaction between the tenants and restore their sense of dignity, individuality, and self. This precedent review was chosen for exploration based on its programme, goals, and minimal aesthetic.

The floors are divided by spaces radiating from a central atrium (Figure 4.3.2). The division of programming (Figure 4.3.3) with public and private spaces on separate floors promotes a balanced sense of communal living space. Level One accommodates offices and reception. Level Two and Three feature 10 and 11 rooms respectively, laundry area, and

a small meeting space. Level Four includes a shared kitchen (Figure 4.3.1), dining room, living room, library, computer stations, and consulting room for private conversations. With Level Two and Three devoted to dwelling space, Level Four becomes a truly communal space that belongs to all tenants. The location of the atrium allows for natural light to penetrate into the building (Figure 4.3.2) as well as physically and visually connecting each floor as the heart of the house.

As the literature suggests, providing individuals with a place to call their own can reduce a tenant's sense of helplessness and increase self-esteem. In order to restore a tenant's sense of dignity and individuality, providing a home environment was very important to the designers. Subtle gestures such as



program

Figure 4.3.3 – Diagram of Exodus Cube's Programming. Excerpted from ArchDaily. Exodus Cube / Personal Architecture. Retrieved March 14, 2015, from <http://www.archdaily.com/420290/exodus-cube-personal-architecture-bna>.

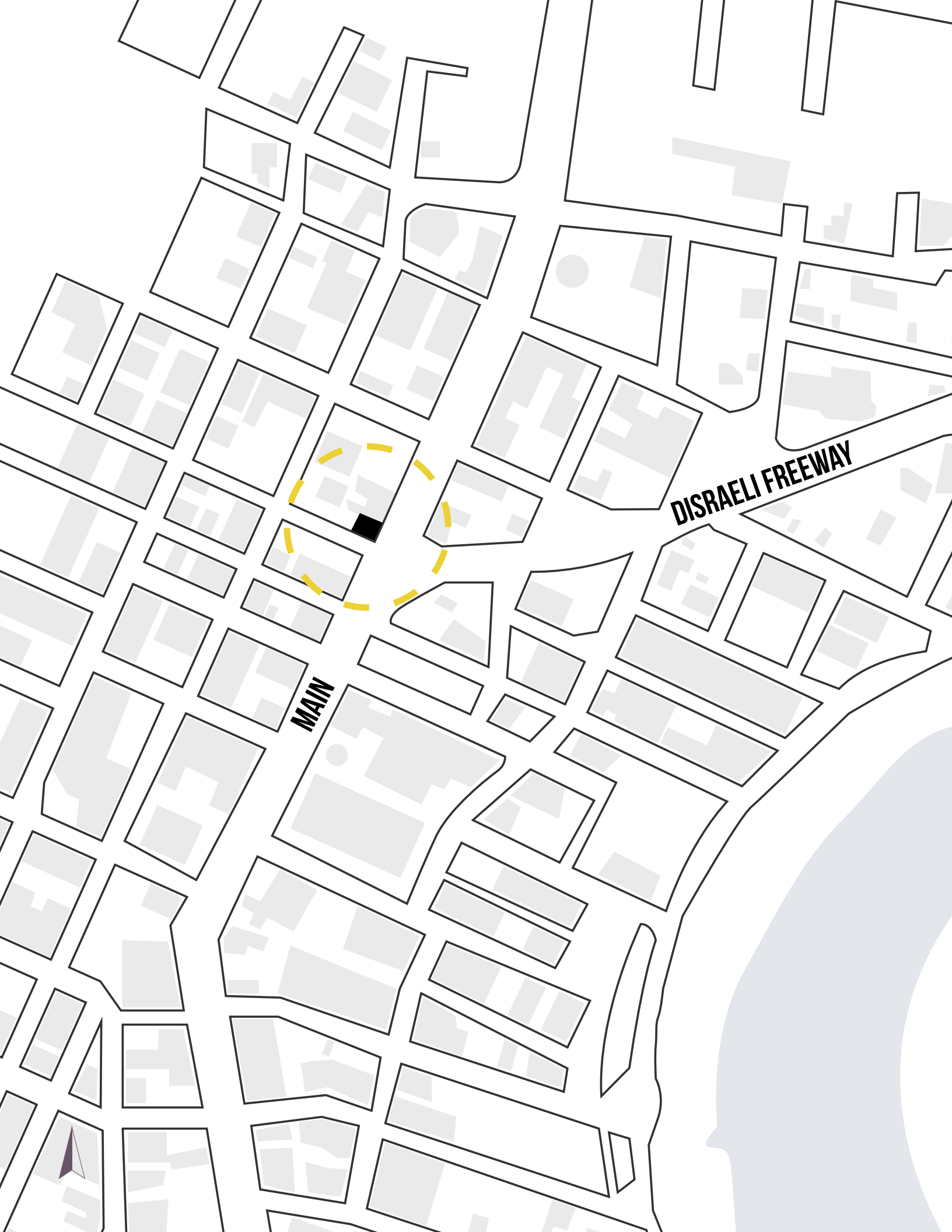
"painted-wood doorposts, a light in front of each room, large photographs of well-known spots in Rotterdam" (Metz, 2014) create a sense of belonging and familiarity through interior design. Unlike their previous cells, each tenant has their own room with a private shower, toilet, comfortable bed, and ample storage in each unit. Instead of bold gestures, the minimal aesthetic allows the tenants to explore self-expression.

The minimal palette throughout the facility successfully distributes an abundance of natural light into the interior. Furthermore, the use of plywood warms up the otherwise cold palette. Although tenants may only spend 9-12 months within the facility, a "former convict living there recently ... placed a mat in front of his door spelling out in florid letters: home" (Metz, 2014).

Exodus Cube is a positive example of how transitional and communal housing can still provide a sense of home. The successful location of programming and a connection between the multiple floor levels establishes a positive shared living experience for the tenants during their time in the facility. Despite the minimal colour palette, Exodus Cube maintains a warm and welcoming atmosphere. A similar palette will be considered to accommodate for self-expression and personalization.

CHAPTER 5

SITE



MAIN

DISRAELI FREEWAY

5.1 INTRODUCTION TO SITE

Based on the literature review, it is important that the entry of the building is highly visible for security as well as near support services. The site was selected to repurpose the Maycock Block (586 Main Street / 201, 205 Alexander Avenue) into congregate housing for women. The three-storey building is situated in Winnipeg's downtown, located in the China Town neighbourhood (Figure 5.1.1). As many of the women will rely on walking and public transportation, it was important to stay within the downtown core (Figure 5.3.2.1). Additionally, the Maycock Block is within close proximity to various services and supports for the vulnerable and impoverished population (Table 5.3.1.1 & Figure 5.3.1.2). In this way, the design proposal will add to the current structure of supports currently available.

The size of the shelter was based on the case studies Savard's (Section 4.1) and Exodus Cube (Section 4.3). The modest size allows the building to maintain functional and spatial requirements for the facility, as well as provide the intimacy of a home.

5.2 SITE SELECTION

The following characteristics were used when selecting the site:

- > Located in the downtown core
- > Adaptive reuse site
- > Readily accessible to the homeless population
- > Easily accessible by multiple means of transportation: walking, cycling, buses, or vehicles
- > High visibility
- > Potential for green space/roof or courtyard
- > In close proximity to other homeless shelters and support services

Figure 5.1.1 – Proposed site



Figure 5.2.1 - Views



Figure 5.2.2 - Views

	Programs and services included:	
Aboriginal Health and Wellness Centre	> Clinic > Community Development > Community Outreach and Education > Health promotion and prevention > Access to traditional healers	> Children's Health > Head Start Program > Fetal Alcohol Syndrome / Effects prevention Program > Medicine Wheel Awareness Workshop
The Salvation Army Booth Centre Ministries	> Residential Services > Meals > Laundry facilities > Clothing distribution > Addiction treatment program	> The Haven (men's shelter)
Siloam Mission	> Emergency shelter > Food services > Clothing distribution > Employment training > Clinic	
Union Gospel Mission	> Meals > Daily chapel services > Clothing distribution > Food bank every MWF 1-4pm	
ACCESS Downtown	> Clinic > Community mental health > Employment and income assistance > Supported living	
Main Street Project	> Emergency shelter > Food services > Transportation services for medical or treatment related access > Clothing distribution	> Intoxicated Persons Detention Area > Counseling > Detoxification unit
Light House Mission	> Food services > Food distribution > Clothing distribution > Spiritual services > Literacy classes	

Table 5.3.1.1 - Important surrounding buildings & support services



5.3 SITE ANALYSIS

5.3.1 IMPORTANT SURROUNDING

BUILDINGS AND BUSINESSES. The site is within the vicinity of three major emergency shelters, Main Street Project, Salvation Army, and Siloam Mission. A full inventory of important surrounding buildings and the supports services provided are listed in Table 5.3.1.1

The introduction of the new facility intends to add to the already existing services available in the neighbourhood. In this way, women are encouraged to integrate into the community inside and outside the building.

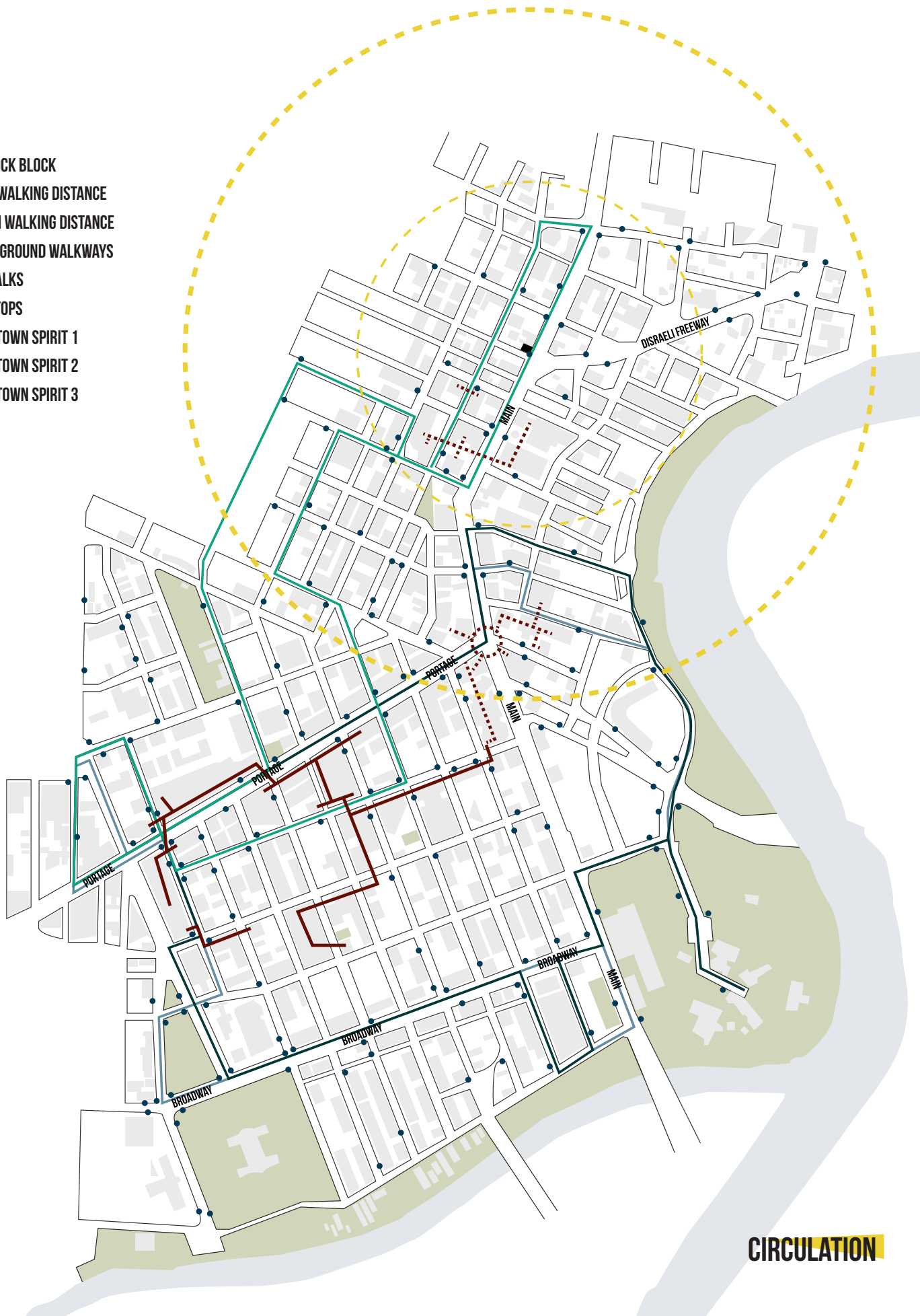
< Figure 5.3.1.1 – Corner of Main Street and Alexander

> Figure 5.3.1.2 – Important support services within a 5-10 minute walking radius

- MAYCOCK BLOCK
- EMERGENCY SHELTER
- FOOD SERVICES
- CLOTHING DISTRIBUTION
- SPIRITUAL CARE
- HEALTH SERVICES
- DRUG + ADDICTION SERVICES
- COUNSELING SERVICES
- - 5 MIN WALKING DISTANCE
- - 10 MIN WALKING DISTANCE



- MAYCOCK BLOCK
- - - 5 MIN WALKING DISTANCE
- - - 10 MIN WALKING DISTANCE
- ... UNDERGROUND WALKWAYS
- SKYWALKS
- BUS STOPS
- DOWNTOWN SPIRIT 1
- DOWNTOWN SPIRIT 2
- DOWNTOWN SPIRIT 3



5.3.2 CIRCULATION. Walking and buses are the primary sources of transportation for the homeless community. As Figure 5.3.2.1 illustrates, Maycock Block is located by a variety of transportation options. Within a five minute walking radius, there are twenty standard bus stops as well as the Downtown Spirit, a unique transit service that provides free transportation every day of the week. Within a ten minute walking radius, underground and aboveground walkways are another feature that can be utilized during the colder winter months.

5.3.3. SITE OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS. The site is located in close proximity to three major homeless shelters: Siloam Mission (4 min walking distance), Main Street Project (8 min), and Salvation Army Booth Centre (9 min walking). The proposed homeless shelter will add to the already existing services within the area, along with adding additional services to

further aid the homeless population. Within close proximity to the proposed site there are existing health, counseling, and spiritual care facilities that also provide services to the homeless population, such as the Thunderbird House, Lighthouse Mission, and Union Gospel Mission. Many of these facilities also provide food and clothing distribution (see Figure 5.3.1.2 and Table 5.3.1.1). The site is well-served by Winnipeg Transit and the Downtown Spirit provides free transportation covering all of Winnipeg's downtown. The site offers the women at the homeless shelter a variety of transit options since they are free to come and go as they please. Consequently, the close proximity of these services are both a strength and weakness of the site as tenants may find avoiding negative social relationships a challenge.

< Figure 5.3.2.1 – Circulation

THE MAYCOCK BLOCK

- > 586 Main Street / (201, 205 Alexander Avenue)
- > 8,253 square feet
- > Mixed Retail/Office
- > Brick & Stone Construction

5.4. BUILDING ANALYSIS

5.4.1 INTRODUCTION TO BUILDING.

The Maycock Block is a 3-storey structure located on the corner of Main Street and Alexander Avenue. The building was erected in 1885 for retail and office use (City of Winnipeg, 2004). The exterior of the building is ornamented in a popular style in the 19th century – High Victorian Italianate (City of Winnipeg, 2015). The brick and Tyndall stone construction is accented by heavy red ornamentation at the roofline and above the windows (Figure 5.4.1.2).



Figure 5.4.1.1 – Scale

The ground level has three entrances, two located on the north façade (Figure 5.4.2.5) and one located on the west façade (Figure 5.4.2.6). An additional metal fire escape is located on the east façade (Figure 5.4.2.4) of the building. The current entrances do not require stairs and are slightly above floor level. In order to provide universal accessibility, a ramp or a change in level around the building will be implemented. The interior was developed for retail use on the main level, with offices above. Historically, Young Men's Christian Association occupied the second floor (City of Winnipeg,

2015). Over the course of time, the Maycock Block has housed various retail stores as well as a bank (City of Winnipeg, 2015). The simplicity of the interior presents opportunities for residential suites on the Level 2 and 3, however the lack of windows on the south façade will be considered when space planning to confirm each suite has a window.





Figure 5.4.2.1 – Maycock Block, existing exterior

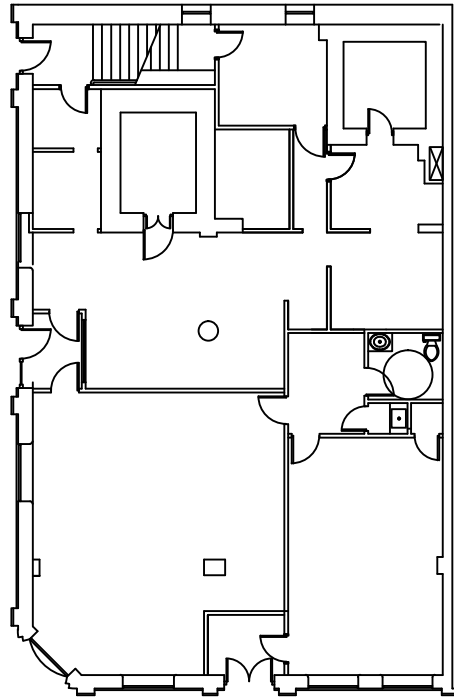
5.4.2 BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

BUILDING OPPORTUNITIES

- > brick construction
- > exposed brick in interior merges the boundary between inside and outside
- > thermal mass; retains heat during winter
- > flat roof - opportunities for a green roof
- > high ceilings (12 ft) - provides an opportunity to change ceiling heights and create more private and intimate spaces
- > wood floors - provides visual texture and warmth

CONSTRAINTS

- > columns along centre of building - spatial planning dependent on location of columns
- > may need to provide more windows - no windows on south façade
- > typical Winnipeg Exchange district building with accessibility issues - will need to incorporate a ramp and/or level change into the design



MAIN LEVEL

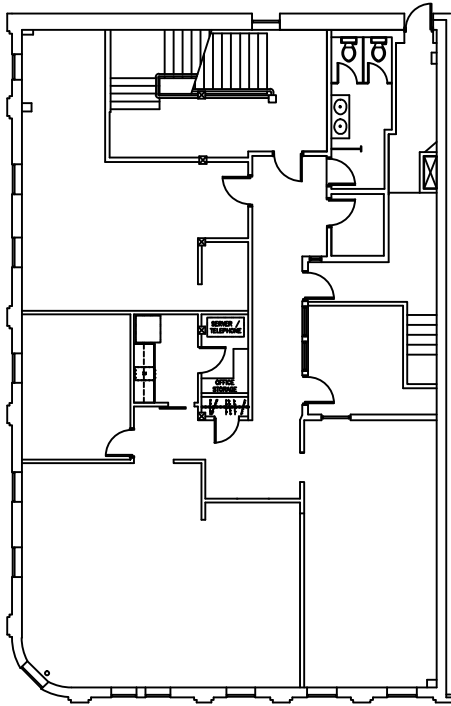
Figure 5.4.2.2 – Maycock Block, Floor Plan. Courtesy of Stephen Lamoureux.



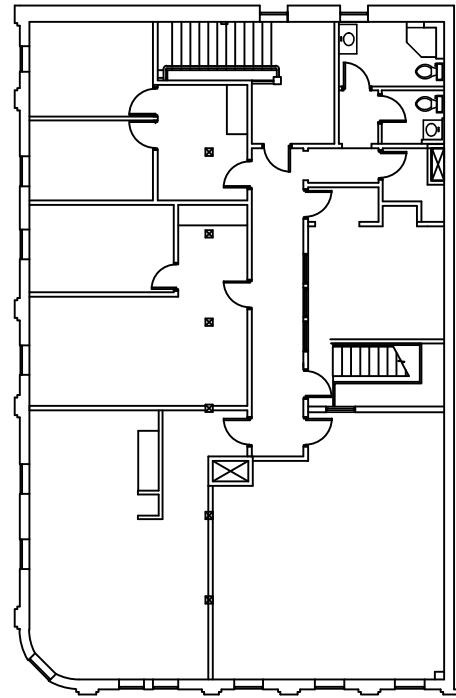
Figure 5.4.2.3 – Maycock Block, Brick Detail



Figure 5.4.2.4 – Maycock Block, East Elevation



2nd LEVEL



3rd LEVEL – OFFICE LAYOUT



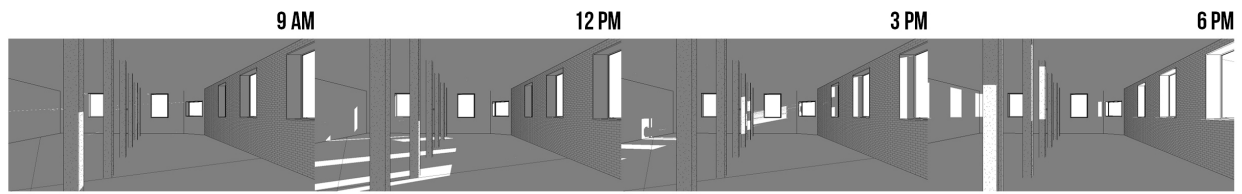
Figure 5.4.2.5 – Maycock Block, North Elevation



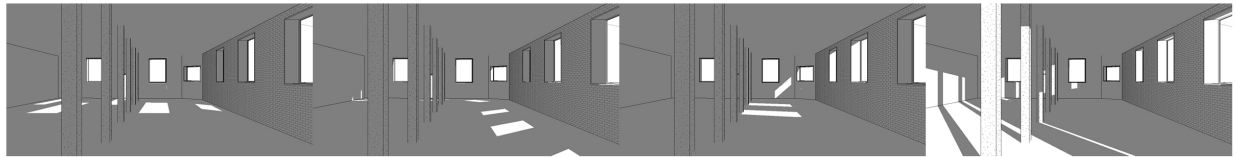
Figure 5.4.2.6 – Maycock Block, West Elevation

5.4.3 INTERIOR DAYLIGHT STUDIES

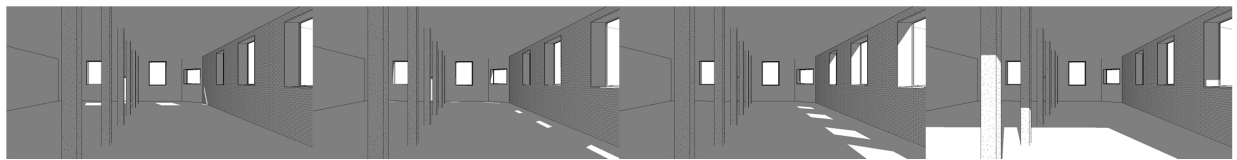
The building has windows located on three sides of the building and most are south facing. As seen in the light studies (Figure 5.4.3.1), the windows provide direct sunlight deep into the building winter and spring. Providing natural light to the space will not pose a problem, but controlling glare and the placement of interior partitions will be essential to the final design.



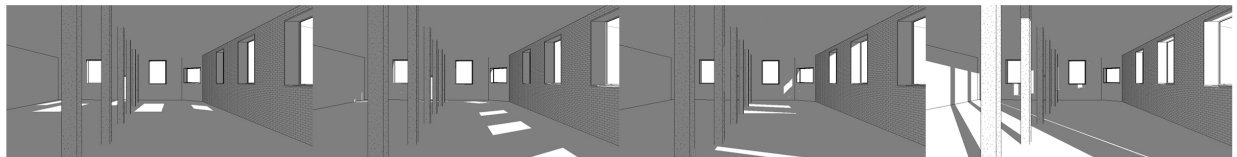
WINTER SOLSTICE



SPRING EQUINOX



SUMMER SOLSTICE



FALL EQUINOX

Figure 5.4.3.1 – Interior daylight studies

CHAPTER 6

PROGRAMMING

6.1 DESIGN GOALS

1. Create a safe and secure atmosphere for the female homeless population in Winnipeg, MB;
2. Provide the female homeless population with a sense of belonging and place;
3. Provide a community built on trust and security;
4. Create an environment in which users and residents can be proud of.

6.2 CLIENT PROFILE

Our Home is a fictional local non-profit agency working in partnership with the Bell Hotel (see Section 4.2). Both projects are similar programmatically; however the Bell Hotel is open to both men and women. Similar to the Bell Hotel, *Our Home* intends to provide "longer term supportive and transitional housing by focusing on a housing first approach to help people make the transition out of the cycle of homelessness" (Manitoba Housing, n.d.). In regards to the Housing Continuum, *Our Home* falls between supportive housing and subsidized housing (Figure 6.2.1). *Our Home* will provide permanent supportive housing for women as long as they need or want to. In addition, tenants will pay rent based on their income to provide affordable housing while they are most vulnerable. For some women, *Our Home* will be the extent of their housing

journey, for others the journey will continue up the housing continuum towards independence and homeownership. The Project Manager and off-site staff will determine individual programs with the client, customized to fit their specific needs. A complete description of *Our Home* staff is provided in Section 6.4.

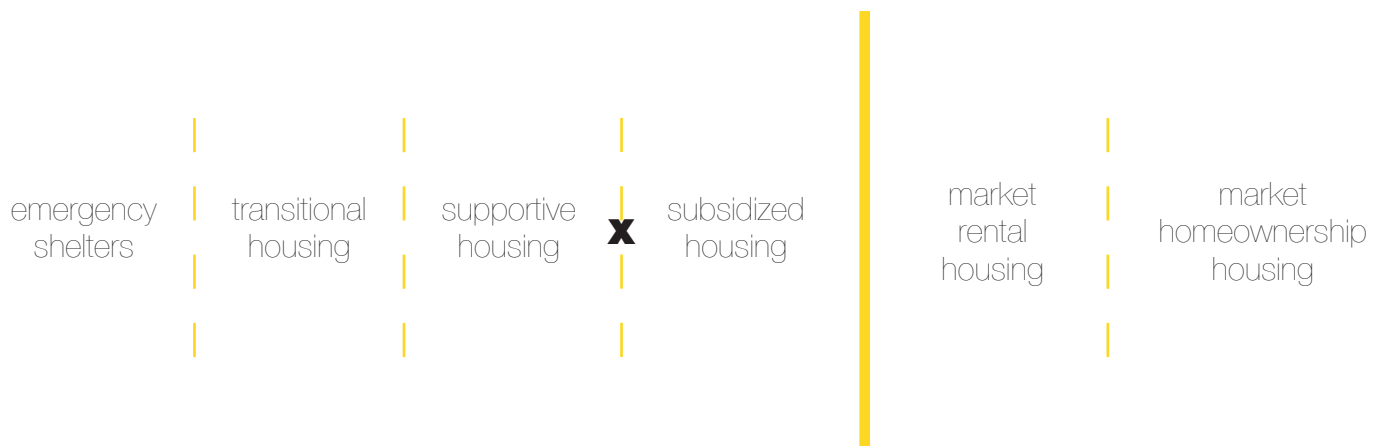


Figure 6.2.1 – Housing Continuum (as described by CMHC-SCHL, 2015), "X" locates *Our Home* on the continuum.

6.3 USER PROFILE

PRIMARY/TARGET USER (#1): CHRONICALLY HOMELESS WOMEN IN WINNIPEG

Description of User

- > 2% to 4% of Canada's homeless are chronically homeless.
- > Middle aged and older
- > Female
- > Have been homeless for six months or more in the past year.
- > May have disabling conditions such as chronic physical or mental illness, substance abuse problems.
- > Typically from a marginalized group – 75% of individuals in Winnipeg's emergency shelters are Aboriginal (see Section 1.3).
- > Various physical capabilities.
- > Highly vulnerable to sexual abuse and robbery.
- > May have been barred from other shelters due to "poor" behaviour.

Description of behaviour

- > Novac et al. (1999) note that "[t]hese women are isolated and alienated, with few or no social supports. Some of them rely on extreme reclusiveness for protection and stay huddled in corners of shelters. Others will not accept any assistance from service providers" (p. 38).
- > Behaviour such as yelling and screaming, violence, and disruptive behaviour is not uncommon.

PRIMARY/TARGET USER (#2): EPISODIC HOMELESS WOMEN IN WINNIPEG

Description of User

- > 3% to 11% of Canada's homeless are episodically homeless.
- > Varies
- > Female
- > Have experienced three or more episodes of homelessness in the past year.
- > In-and-out of hostel systems – leave when their lives are stable but are unable to maintain stability due to addictions, behavioral problems, conflicts leading to eviction from housing facilities.
- > These women may engage in prostitution and other illegal activities to maintain their addictions.

The following descriptions apply to both episodically and chronically homeless women:

Description of psychological values

- > Safety
- > Privacy
- > Sense of control
- > Self-identity
- > Supportive atmosphere
- > Noise control from public spaces within private suites.
- > Communal spaces for building relationships and providing a sense of belonging.

Description of special needs

- > May need barrier-free suite due to disability

Description of user values

- > Freedom and independence
- > Control
- > Personal possessions

Description of physical needs

- > Safety
- > Mental and physical health care

6.4 STAFF AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Our Home staff will be present on site 24/7, with a minimum of two staff on at all times. During an average work day, a combination of housing, clinical, and administrative staff will be present. The housing staff is responsible for operating and maintaining the building. The housing staff will include administrative, maintenance, and security staff. The *Our Home* congregate team will consist of clinical and social services that specialize in the field of mental and physical health, addictions,

housing, and employment. Support services will be provided by on and off-site staff members. Off-site staff members will meet with clients as needed. Refer to Table 6.4.1 for a list of off-site and on-site staff members.

Table 6.4.1 – On-site and off-site staff

On-site Staff	Off-site Staff	Housing Staff
1. Project Manager 2. Program / Project Manager Assistant	1. Psychiatrist 2. Primary Care Practitioner 3. Registered Nurse 4. Peer Specialist 5. Employment Case Manager 6. Family Services Case Manager 7. Mental Health / Addictions	1. Maintenance / Janitorial 2. Security

ON-SITE STAFF

PRIMARY USER PROFILE: PROJECT MANAGER

> Ages 25-60

> Female

> Full-time

The Project Manager is responsible for organizing, planning, motivating, training and mentoring staff. Privacy is required for weekly (or as needed) one-on-one meetings with staff members in order to assess staff well-being and to discuss specific cases or client situations. User will require private office, private document storage, meeting room, and break out/retreat area.

PRIMARY USER PROFILE: PROGRAM / PROJECT MANAGER ASSISTANT

> Ages 25-60

> Female

> On-call

The Project Manager Assistant is responsible for assisting the Project Manager with organizing and planning. User will require meeting spaces, staff room, and document storage.

OFF-SITE STAFF

PRIMARY USER PROFILE: PSYCHIATRIST

> Ages 25-60

> Female

> On-call

Psychiatrist duties include assessing and evaluating clients; and medication management. The psychiatrist works closely with the support staff and provides a psychiatric perspective to the team. The Psychiatrist also works closely with the clinical staff to ensure that the client's medical needs are being met. Client meetings are completed within the suite or in a meeting room. User will require meeting spaces, staff room, and document storage.

PRIMARY USER PROFILE: PRIMARY CARE PRACTITIONER

> Ages 30-60

> Female

> Part-time / On-call

The Primary Care Practitioner duties include performing physical exams, diagnosis development, and illness management. The PCP works closely with support and clinical staff to develop a cohesive and manageable plan for each client based on their individual needs. Client meetings are completed within the suite or in a meeting room. User will require meeting spaces, staff room, and document storage.

PRIMARY USER PROFILE: REGISTERED NURSE

> Ages 25-60

> Female

> Full-time / On-call

The Registered Nurse duties include reviewing client intake assessment/documentation, in house visits to assess client's physical and mental health, coordinating client's medication (at client's request), and accompanying clients to medical appointments. Client and nurse interactions typically happen within the suite. User will require meeting spaces, staff room, and document storage.

PRIMARY USER PROFILE: PEER SPECIALIST

> Ages 25-60

> Female

> On-call

The Peer Specialist is a current or former client of mental health services. The PS provides clients with inspiration that recovery is possible and provides the congregate team with a lived experience perspective. The PS works closely with clients through in-suite visits. User will require meeting spaces, staff room, and document storage.

PRIMARY USER PROFILE: CASE MANAGERS (EMPLOYMENT, FAMILY SERVICES, MENTAL HEALTH/ADDICTIONS)

- > Ages 25-60

- > Female

- > Full-time

The Case Managers work closely with clients to improve and restore social relationships (e.g. employment, familial, mental health/addiction services). The CM and client may meet within the client's suite, meeting room, or off-site (coffee shop, lunch). User will require meeting spaces, staff room, and document storage.

HOUSING STAFF

SECONDARY USER PROFILE: JANITORIAL / MAINTENANCE / SECURITY STAFF

- > Ages 25-60

- > Female

- > Various physical abilities

Residents will be required to maintain and clean their own private suites. The janitorial staff will be responsible for maintaining all public and semi-public areas. These individuals may also be housing residents. The maintenance staff will require storage and sanitization areas. Security will be provided on the premises 24/7.

TERTIARY USER: VISITING FRIENDS AND FAMILY

- > All ages
- > Male and female
- > Various physical abilities

Visiting friends and family are welcome in the facility. These individuals will need to check-in at the front desk where a receptionist will inform the resident that there are visitors for them. If the resident does not want a guest, they can refuse. If the guest is not refused, they are welcome in the communal spaces or in the suite. Communal and private spaces will require extra seating and flexibility to accommodate for guest.

6.5 FUNCTIONAL AND AESTHETIC REQUIREMENTS

Summary of spaces provided within *Our Home*:

Private	Communal / Community Space
<i>Staff</i> > Reception Desk > Project Manager Office > Staff room > Donation storage (basement) > Decontamination area (basement) > Meeting room <i>Resident</i> > Meeting rooms > Suites	<i>Residents</i> > Kitchen > Dining Area > Spiritual Room > Living Room > Computer Room > Corridor nooks <i>Public</i> > Drop-in Centre > Public W/C > Hospitality station

Table 6.5.1 – Summary of spaces

Table 6.5.2 – Space Description and Furniture, Fixtures, & Equipment

PRIVATE: STAFF EXCLUSIVE SPACES	
<i>Front Desk</i> <i>This space will be designated for administrative staff and security only. Visitors will check-in at the front desk upon entry. Resident mail will be delivered and distributed at the front desk.</i>	
200 sqft The front desk is adjacent to the main entrance and is the first impression visitors have upon the establishment. The front desk should be visually welcoming and approachable with qualities of a sanctuary and refuge. Avoid dark colours, and consider light and warm materials with home-like qualities.	Reception desk Task seating (2) Document storage Computer (1) > security & data entry Telephone Printer
<i>Private office (1) - Project Manager</i> <i>This space is exclusive to administrative staff only. Clients will meet with staff in separate meeting areas. Area is restricted for clients and residents.</i>	
120 sqft – private office Quiet and organized work space with a calm and residential atmosphere.	Task seating (1) Document storage > filing cabinets Computer (5) Guest seating (2) Desk (1)

<i>Staff room</i> <i>This space is exclusive to administrative staff only. Area to retreat from work related stressors. Area is restricted from clients and residents.</i>	
200 sqft The staff room should be a retreat for staff members with a calming and relaxed atmosphere.	Microwave refrigerator Counter Sink Soft and hard seating
<i>Donation storage</i> <i>This space is for administrative staff and volunteers. Donations will be sorted and stored as required.</i>	
250 sqft Donation storage is a utility space. Area should be clean and well-lit. Facility should be lockable to avoid stealing. Should be adjacent to delivery door.	Storage/shelving Table
<i>Decontamination area</i> <i>This space is for new residents and staff members only. All belongings and individuals will be decontaminated – checked for bed bugs and lice. Belongings will be examined and any weapons will be disposed of or locked away. Clothing will be washed and returned to the resident.</i>	
150 sqft The decontamination area is a service space. Area should be clean and sterile, but also inviting and non-threatening. Consider materials such as stainless steel, non-slip vinyl, porcelain tile, and wood. Easy to clean materials will be favoured.	Washer / Dryer Shower room Toilet Sink Hard seating (2)

Meeting Room (1)

Staff will meet with clients and residents in meeting rooms. This space will be used by staff and residents to converse with clients/residents.

250 sqft

The meeting room is an area for clients and staff members to interact intimately. Due to the nature of topics discussed, clients may become hostile and aggressive. An enclosed space is discouraged. The space needs to feel private, intimate, and non-threatening. Consider meeting pods as an option for an enclosed meeting room. Consider soft materials with warm accents (carpet, soft seating, and wood tables).

Table

Chairs (4)

PRIVATE: RESIDENTS

Suites (14)

This space will be used by residents only or by those invited into the space by the resident of the suite.

150-225 sqft

The suites are the residents' retreat and a space for them to call home. The materials within the space should be kept light and neutral in order to allow the resident to personalize the space as they see fit. Consider storage, visible and hidden, for display of possessions. Durable, commercial materials and furniture are ideal. The suites should have a home-like atmosphere, rather than an institutional one. Consider resilient vinyl flooring with warm patterns.

Twin bed

Hanging storage

Shelves

Kitchenette

> miniature refrigerator

> storage for cups/
utensils

Personal bathroom:

> shower

> toilet

> sink

> storage

COMMUNAL SPACE: RESIDENTS

Communal Kitchen

This space will be used by all by residents to prepare meals as a group or individually.

550 sqft

Commercial quality grade kitchen. Area should have a clean (sanitary) atmosphere. Consider easy to clean hard surfaces (tile, stainless steel), resilient and non-slip flooring. The space should be bright and well-lit.

Commercial sink

Commercial stove

Commercial oven

Commercial range

Cold storage

Microwave

Meal prep. counter space

Dining Area

The dining area is for resident dining.

500 sqft

The dining area should provide various seating options to offer residents a choice and to allow for social and non-social behaviours. The space should mirror a home-like dining experience as much as possible via materials, seating arrangements, and lighting. This space will be heavily used, select materials and furniture based on their durability. Consider resilient flooring and easy to clean surfaces.

Tables

Dining chairs

Pendant lighting

Buffet area

Tray storage

Dinnerware storage

Area for unclean dinnerware

<i>Personal laundry</i> <i>The personal laundry space is for resident laundry – residents are expected to do their own laundry.</i>	
60 sqft The personal laundry space is a utility space. The space should be easy to clean. Consider light colours, tile, and resilient flooring.	Washer Dryer Utility sink Folding counter Cleaning product storage
<i>Lounge/Living room</i> <i>The living room is a space for communal entertainment and socializing.</i>	
200 sqft The lounge/living room should provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere. This space will be heavily used, select materials and furniture based on durability. The space should resemble a living room via furniture arrangement, materials, and lighting. Dimmable lighting where appropriate.	TV Soft seating Coffee table
<i>Computer Station</i> <i>The computer station is a space for researching and reconnecting.</i>	
100 sqft The computer station is an individual learning space. Appropriate lighting for computing should be considered to avoid glare.	Computers (5-7) Tables (2) Task seating (2) Task lighting (2)

<i>Spiritual Room</i> <i>Spiritual Room responds to the needs and values of the homeless demographic in Winnipeg, Manitoba.</i>	
300 sqft The spiritual room should provide space for sacred Aboriginal traditions to take place. Due to the nature of the space there is potential to integrate traditional Aboriginal motifs (such as the medicine wheel) through the use of materials, spatial organization, and details.	Seating in a circular formation
PUBLIC SPACES	
<i>Lobby/waiting room</i> <i>The lobby/waiting room is a public space for the community. This space will be used to socialize, relax, and watch for transportation.</i>	
400 sqft The lobby is the first impression visitors have of the establishment. The space should emit a warm and inviting atmosphere similar to that of a living room. This space will be heavily used by the public, easy to clean materials and surfaces are preferred. The durability of furniture and materials should also be considered. The lobby/waiting room should be adjacent to the front desk.	Soft seating Coffee table Bulletin / information area Hospitality station – coffee, tea, and water Stool or booth seating adjacent to window
<i>Public Water Closet</i> <i>The public water closet is a public washroom available for the general public to use.</i>	
50-100 sqft The public water closet is a utility space. The space should be easy to clean and safe, consider stainless steel and non-slip flooring. The water closet should satisfy Section 3.8 of the NBC.	Toilet Sink

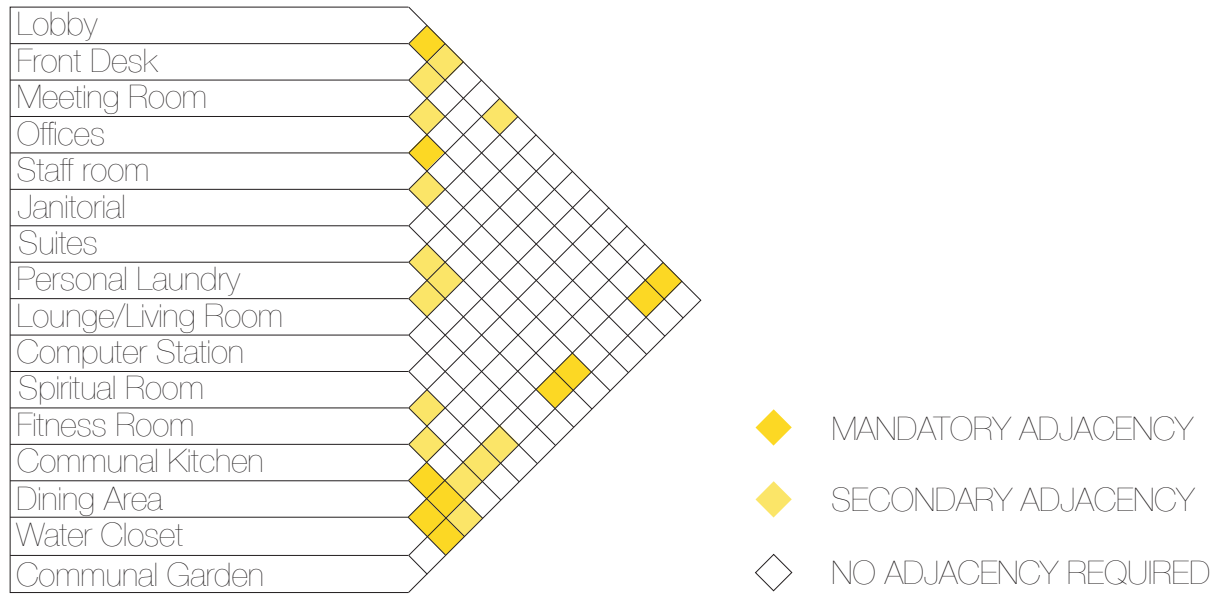


Figure 6.5.1 – Adjacencies

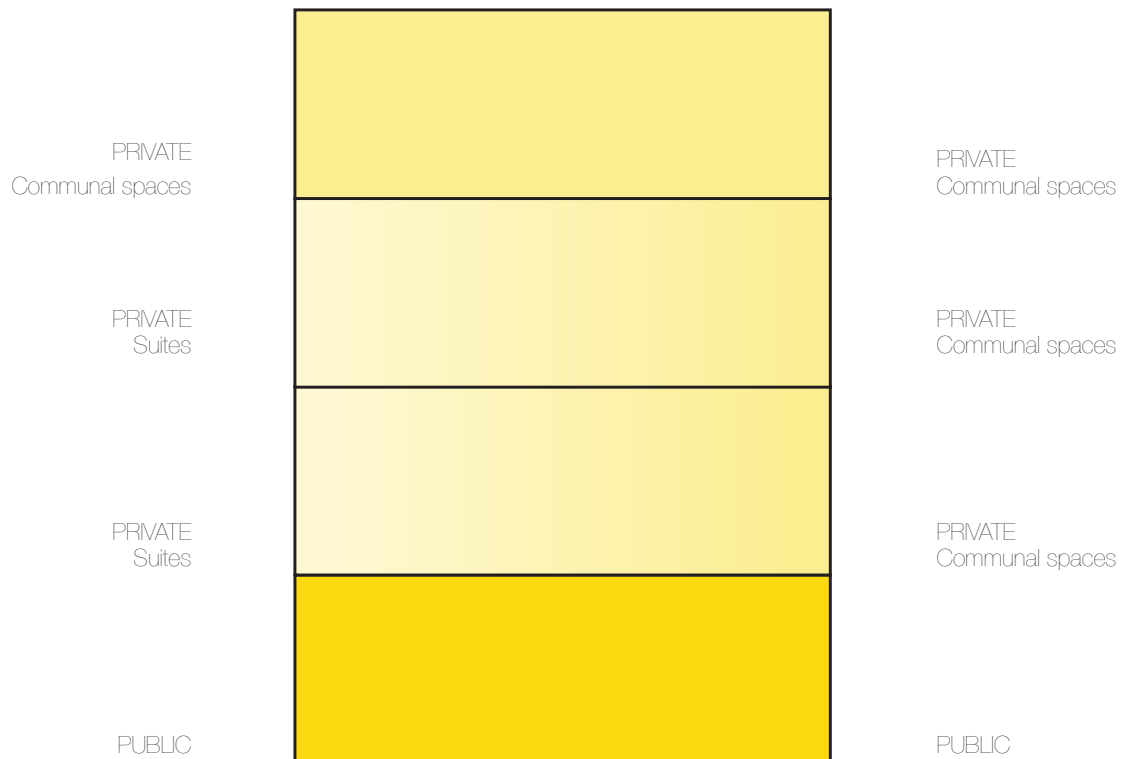
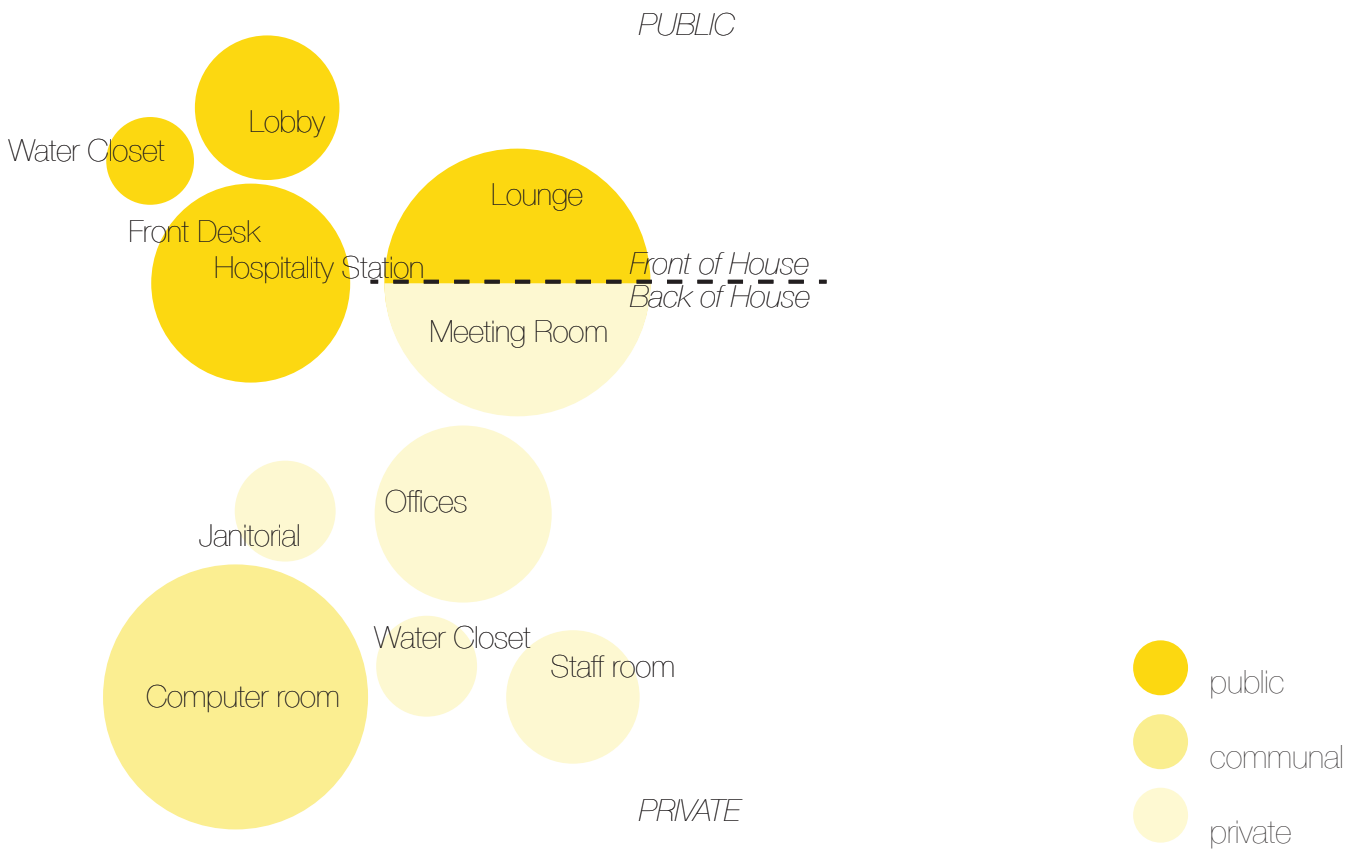
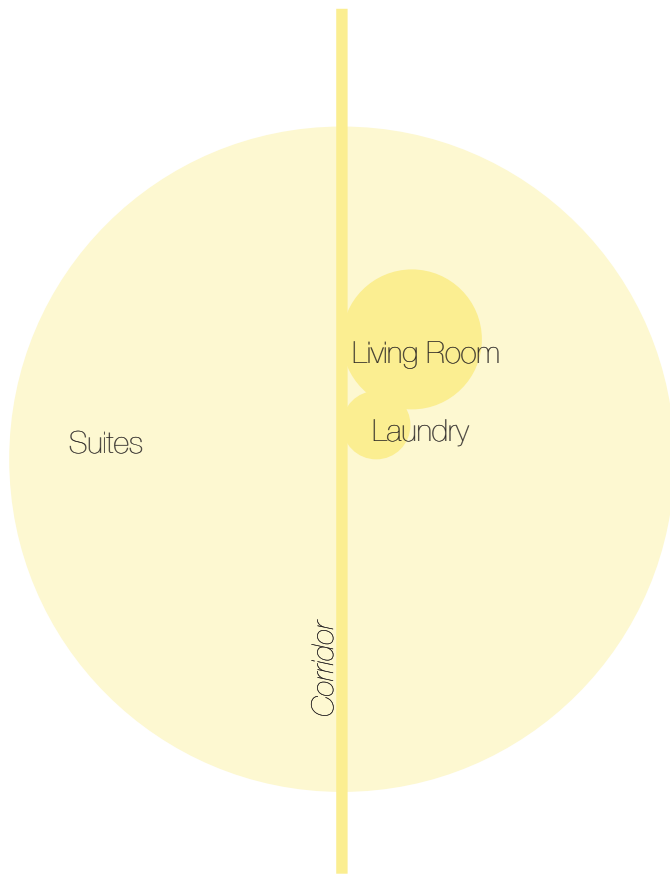


Figure 6.5.2 – Stacking Diagram

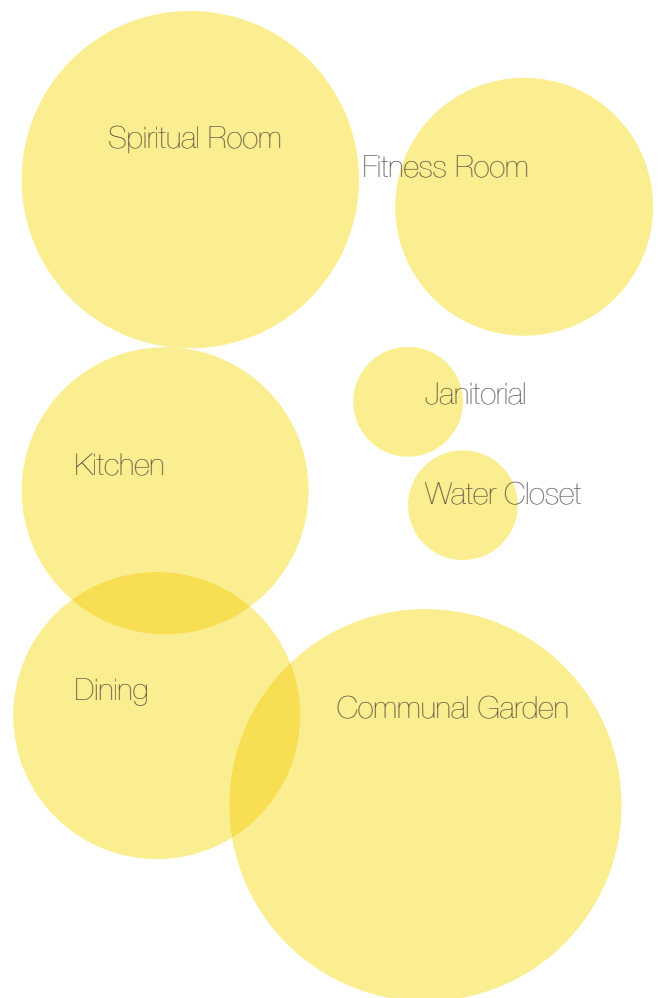


LEVEL 1

Figure 6.5.3 – Spatial Organization



LEVEL 2 + 3



LEVEL 4

CHAPTER 7

DESIGN

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The following chapter reveals the renovation of Maycock Block at (586 Main Street / 201 – 205 Alexander Avenue). This design proposal involves the redesign and an addition, to propose a home for (14) homeless women living in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The design involves the integration of a drop-in centre on the main level, as well as residential suites and communal spaces on the upper three levels. The tenant suites are designed to be occupied by one woman, with space for a potential guest or family member. The intention of the design is to create a space that would improve

upon traditional shelters and transitional housing. The interior environment was informed by the literature review, programming, and precedent review. The proposed design focuses on the elements of home and self-restoration, as well as an examination of personal control in the built environment. The most prevalent design concept is stemmed from control. The user-sensitive environment provides the women with control within an institutional setting, rather than being controlled by it.

7.2. DESIGN OVERVIEW

Home is a positive reaction to an environment and the balance of various elements of home cooperatively working with each other to create a sense of home. An over-arching theme within the literature review is control. Control affects one's sense of security, comfort, privacy, and intimacy (see Figure 3.2.1.) In the following section, I discuss the major concepts established in the literature review and their application to the design.

Personal home. In the investigation of the literature, the personal home is defined as an extension of oneself, lived experiences, and memories. Over time, familiarity and comfort within a space allows for feelings of security and a sense of belonging. A home and personal possessions are symbolic representation of the self and for those

experiencing homelessness, possessions may be the only link to one's sense of self (Pable, 2013). In the design, references to personal home are apparent in the tenant suites, modular furniture throughout the facility, and gallery wall in the dining room. The tenant suites provide women with the most control within the built environment by providing areas for personalization and displaying possessions. The gallery wall in the dining room provides an additional area for personalization by creating a sense of home outside of the suite. Additionally, furniture was selected for its modularity and ability to be reconfigured with ease in order to customize the space to fit the occupants' present needs.

Social home. The social home includes the network of people living in and invited into

the home as the home is a social space. The social home is defined by private, semi-private, and public spaces; spaces to be social and spaces for retreat. The relationships built within and around the home are important in terms of the user(s) having a positive response to a place. For previously homeless women, the social home is a compromise in regards to not wanting to be alone and not wanting to lose their 'stuff,' (Novac et al., 2004, p. 17). With that said, congregate housing does present many benefits in terms of companionship and provides an added sense of security.

As stated by Schroeder et al. (1996), more depth within the built environment has the potential to reduce the perception of crowding within a congregate living setting

(See Section 3.3.2.1). The depth of an interior is measured by the amount of spaces one must go through in order to arrive at their desired destination (Schroeder et al, 1996, p. 42). The more depth within the built environment results in more opportunities to experience various social interactions: private, semi-private, semi-public, and public. In this way, residents are in complete control of their social interactions. Depth is translated into the design by creating nodes for public and private interactions throughout the floors. The living spaces are located between two mainly public and communal areas (See Figure 7.3.1 and Figure 7.3.2). On Level Two and Three, there is a gradient from private space to a public space expressed as a private suite, to semi-public/private nook, public corridor, to a public living room (Figure 7.3.2). Examples of

social home are apparent in the design and spatial organization of the drop-in centre and meeting room, as well as within the tenant suites and adjacent areas. In order to allow individuals to be within a group setting without committing to participation, subtle nodes of public and private spaces are introduced to provide areas of socialization or retreat (while still in a social environment). This offers the women a choice and a level of control over their social interactions within a communal living environment, as well as the chance to be an observer.

The physical home & control in the built environment. The physical home refers to the safety and security within the home. The home is a place where the dweller is secure, comfortable, and in complete control. The

physical home also includes modern day conveniences that are often taken for granted (e.g. private bathroom, telephone, and storage). Control within the built environment is important in terms of creating a feeling of being at home. Comfort and familiarity are rooted in one's sense of control and are linked to feelings of control within one's own life (See Section 3.4). Thus, homeless shelters can benefit from subtle interventions that provide tenants control and choice over their physical and social environments.

As noted in Section 3.4, individuals with internal control believe that their lives are controlled by their own behaviours and actions while those with external control believe that their lives are based on luck, chance, or other universal life forces (Pable,

2012, p. 12). This theory is applied into the design by giving tenants a high level of control in their private suites. Creating subtle areas for choice and personalization offers the women a sense of control within their built environment. Lockable doors allow tenants to decide who can and cannot come into their suite, as well as control over their social relationships and interactions. Modern conveniences within the tenant suite (such as a private bathroom, closet, storage, and a mini-fridge) provide comfort through ensuring the security of their possessions and privacy. Seemingly mundane things, such as the ability to adjust lighting, select furniture, pull down a curtain, or open a window for fresh air, are freedoms that often go unnoticed – all of which will promote a level of internal control for the user.

A consistent element of home that appears frequently in literature is the notion of security. Although traditional hostels and shelters provide safety from the street by providing immediate physical shelter, a lack in security and individual control is enough for homeless people to refuse their services. Homeless shelters are typically high-control environments in order to protect the residents; however, highly controlled living environments are also linked to feelings of helplessness and low self-esteem (Burn, 1992; Novac et al., 2004). Instead of providing a high-control living environment, security in the design proposal is discrete. Public entry is available to Level One (during business hours); this provides access to the drop-in lounge, public bathroom, and a meeting room. Guests unaccompanied by a resident will need to check-in at the

reception desk and be escorted to the upper levels by the woman they are visiting. In regard to security, individual private suites and bathrooms were a necessity. Public spaces were planned with an open and flexible design to maintain visual sightlines if confrontations do arise. This allows tenants and staff members to be visually aware of their surroundings. Additionally, seating was carefully considered so that security could be maximized in public spaces. Seating arrangements adjacent to a wall provide a "protected back" as women may be sensitive to physical confrontation or memories of past attacks. A mix of seating options are provided to allow the women to choose a level of security for different activities. Security, for both staff and tenants, is further enforced by a key fob system required for entry through

most doors. Although a small gesture, a key in itself is a symbol of home, contributing to the concept of ownership and responsibility.

7.3 INTERIOR DEVELOPMENT



Figure 7.3.1 – Section 1

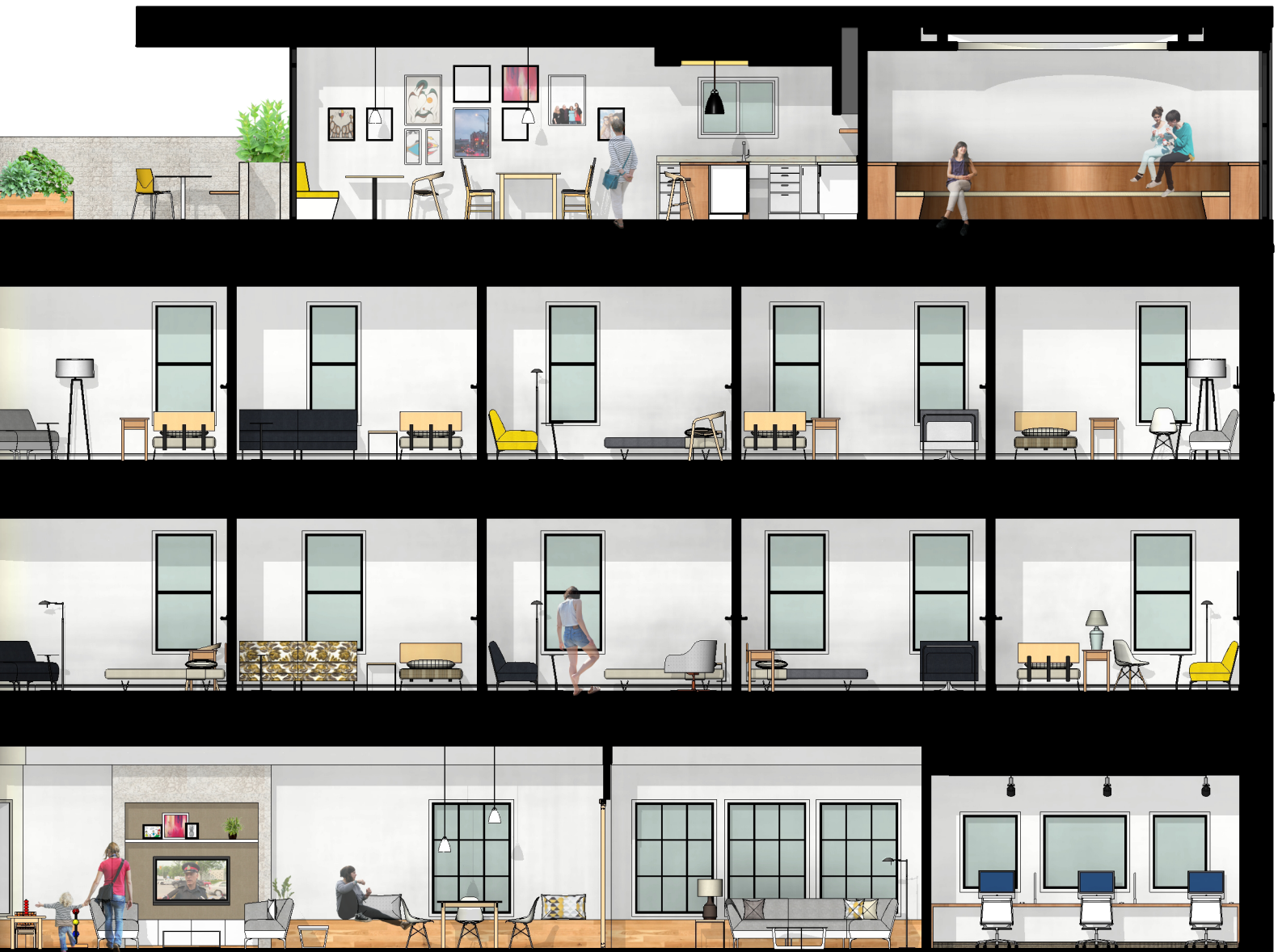
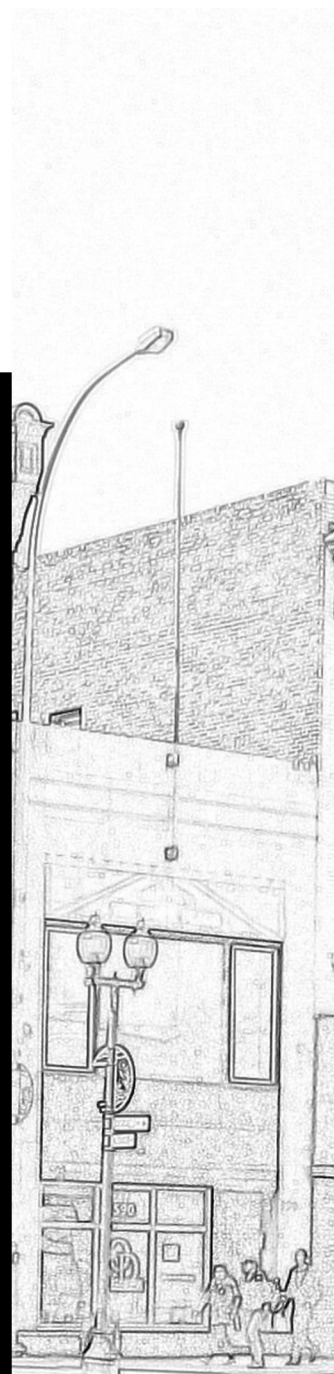




Figure 7.3.2 – Section 2



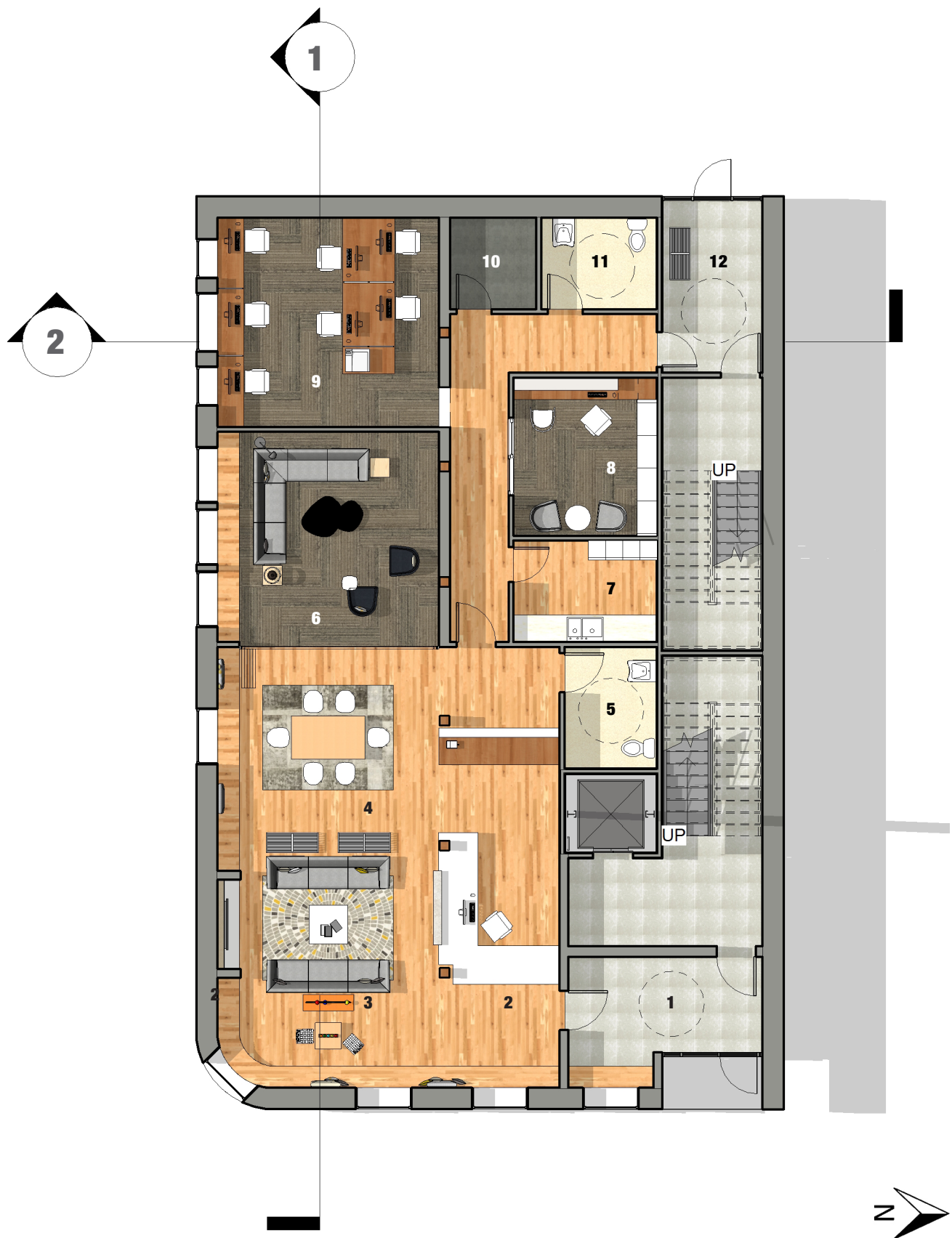


Figure 7.3.3 – Floor plan, Level 1

LEVEL 1

1. west entry
2. reception
3. play area
4. drop-in centre
5. w/c
6. meeting room
7. staff room
8. project manager office
9. computer lab
10. janitorial
11. w/c
12. east entry



Figure 7.3.4 – View of drop-in centre

Entry & drop-in centre. Upon entry, a vestibule directs you towards the reception desk or upstairs to the second floor. Access to the second floor is provided for staff and tenants, but guests are required to check-in at the reception area if not accompanied by a tenant. The main entrance is open and welcoming. It offers visual access to the children's play area, a drop-in lounge, and a meeting room. The receptionist has clear sightlines of the drop-in centre which contribute to increased levels of security and safety for both staff members and tenants. The welcoming and residential feel of the drop-in lounge, as well as the Tyndall stone reception ledge, counteracts the necessary overview of the reception desk. This arrangement allows visitors and tenants to

they are under constant surveillance.

Bench seating along the east and south walls provides a protected-back seating option for individuals who may feel vulnerable with seating locations that expose their back. In keeping with the residential feel, a "dining table setting" is located in the drop-in centre for semi-private social interactions.



Figure 7.3.5 – View of drop-in centre



Figure 7.3.6 – North reception elevation



Play area. Directly left of reception, the play area offers the women and their children a place to play and reconnect. In addition to allowing natural light to enter the space, the large windows on the main floor provide passerbyers with a quick glance into the lives of the women. There is an undeniable social stigma associated with the homeless population, thus the location of the play area has potential to reduce the dehumanization of homeless persons. The bench seating along the east wall (anchored against the windows) is included as an optional spot for guest to wait to be accompanied upstairs.



Figure 7.3.7 – West reception elevation

Meeting room. Immediately behind the dining table is the meeting room. This space is designed for team (between caseworkers and health practitioners) and client meetings. A Nana wall (a folding glass wall) can be opened or closed for addition privacy for sensitive discussions. Additionally, the Nana wall allows the receptionist clear sightlines into the meeting room when open or closed. The open plan of the main floor provides a high level of transparency from the front to the back of the space. Unlike a traditional meeting room, the furniture is organized in a manner similar to a living room, therefore resulting in a less institutional and clinical feel when meeting with clients. The environment provides a relaxing and intimate atmosphere for personal conversations. Movable side tables provide a hard surface for laptops or for writing.

> Figure 7.3.8 – View of meeting room









Project Manager Office. Through the doors is the Project Manager's office. The residential character of the facility extends to the office spaces to maintain a non-institutional feel. Ample storage is provided for office supplies and client files. A meeting space with soft seating is also provided. The desk is reminiscent of other comfortable elements in the facility such as the nooks and the benches in the spiritual room. Maintaining the same visual language on the residential floors and the support floors was important in terms of providing comfort through familiarity within all spaces of the building. Familiarity, over the course of time, is achieved in the proposed design by providing a cohesive architectural language throughout the building. The sense of home is not limited to only the residential floors but is carried throughout the entire building.

< Figure 7.3.9 – View of Project Manager Office



Figure 7.3.10 – Floor Plan, Level 2 with furniture

LEVEL 2

- 1-7. suites
- 8. living room
- 9. laundry
- 10. corridor



Figure 7.3.11 – Floor Plan, Level 3 without furniture

LEVEL 3

- 1-7. suites
- 8. living room
- 9. laundry
- 10. corridor

Corridor. Nooks on the living levels are provided as a semi-public space adjacent to the private suites. Caseworkers will often meet with their clients at selected meeting places. The nooks in the corridor provide a semi-private space for such meetings which enables the tenant to choose the level of intimacy for their meeting. The nook seats are anchored to the wall and provide a "protected back" for an additional sense of security. The tenant suite flooring material projects into the corridor providing a sense of home (security/haven) prior to entering the suite. The intention is to welcome the resident and make them feel at home. The change in material between corridor and tenant suite is symbolic of the spatial change from public to private. The transitional space between the tenant suite and the corridor is an area for potential

personalization. Tenants may choose to personalize this space with less important objects (such as a house plant or a welcome mat). Within each suite, a secure window (viewable from the corridor) is provided to allow tenants to share important possessions (such as a photo of their family or a treasured trinket) without the fear of losing them. As stated in the literature review (Section 3.2.1 and 3.3.1), possessions prove important to regaining and restoring ones sense of self. Due to the women's vulnerability during the transition from homeless to housed, Pable (2013) concludes there is "a need of familiar possessions that evoke positive memories, reinforce who they are, and provide them with a sense of self-determination (p. 281).

Figure 7.3.12 – Corridor elevation, NTS





Figure 7.3.13 – View of corridor

Tenant Suites. In the suites everything is compact and minimal to enable the women to fully personalize their own suite. The suites begin as a blank canvas without furniture. This allows the women to curate their own furniture and fill the room with their own possessions. However, each room is provided with a bathroom (sink, toilet, and shower), millwork containing a mini-fridge, and a closet. A ledge is provided on the east and west walls of the suite that blends into the wall when not in use. The ledge allows tenants to display personal possessions with minimal effort.

A warehouse of furniture will be stored in the basement. Each woman is able to select her furniture based on her own specific needs. For example, a woman may want to have a futon instead of a sofa to convert into a bed

for when her children visit. Or, a resident may just want a table and chairs for meetings with caseworkers. The suite is open and flexible to change as the needs of the women change.

The custom millwork included in the suites allows each woman to personalize the surface of the upper wall cabinets. The surface is finished with dry-erase paint. This allows the user to write important dates and deadlines, meetings, or a motivational quote to get them through this vulnerable time in their lives.

Displaying important dates and deadlines may be a source of anxiety for some tenants (Pable, 2013, p. 283), however it could also be motivating and empowering for some other women.



Figure 7.3.14 – View of Suite 6

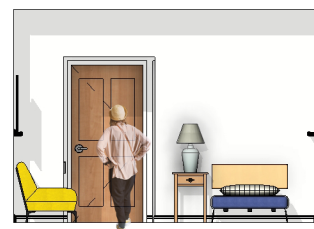
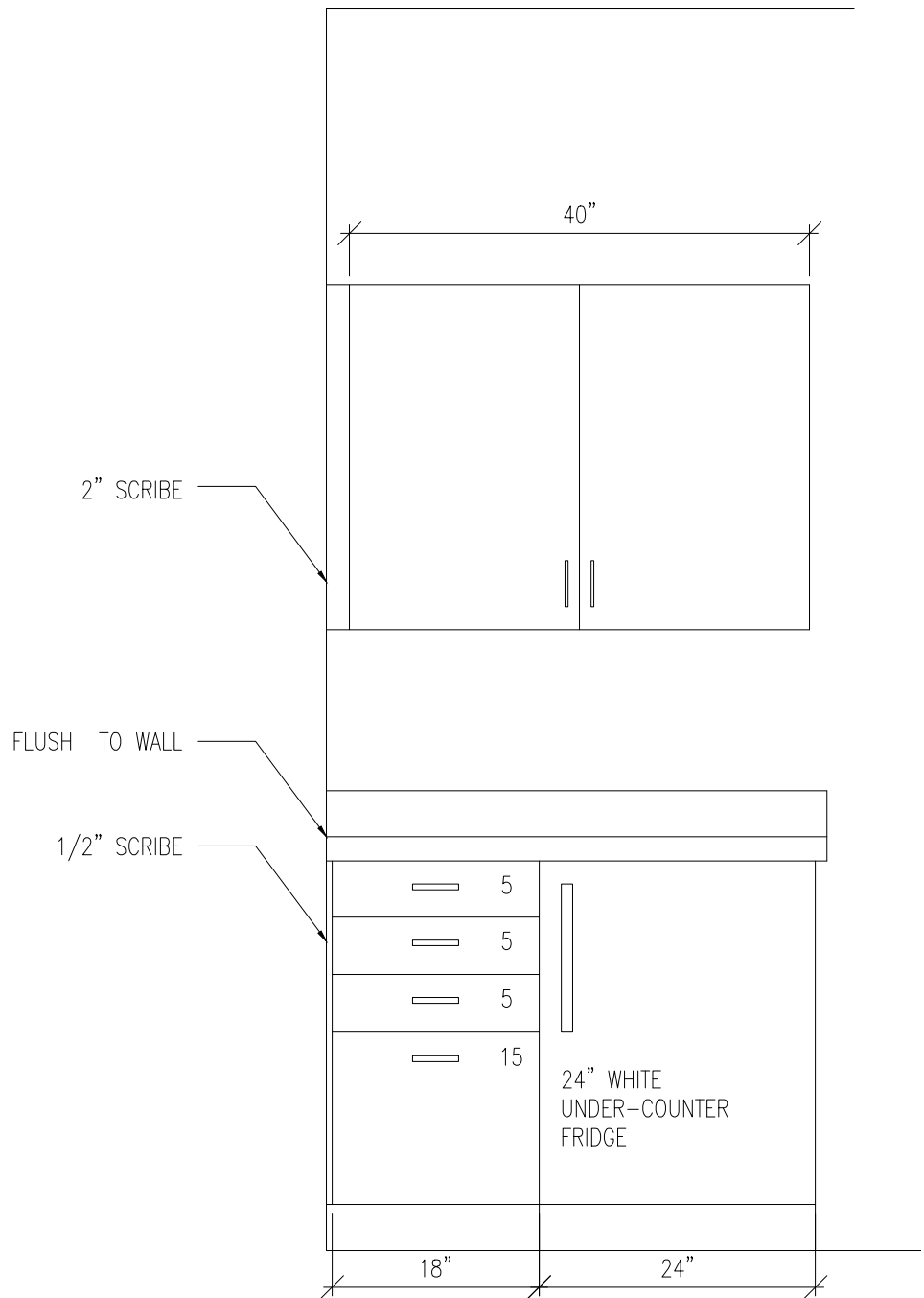


Figure 7.3.15 - 7.3.17– Suite 6, West Elevation; Suite 6, East Elevation; Suite 6, North Elevation



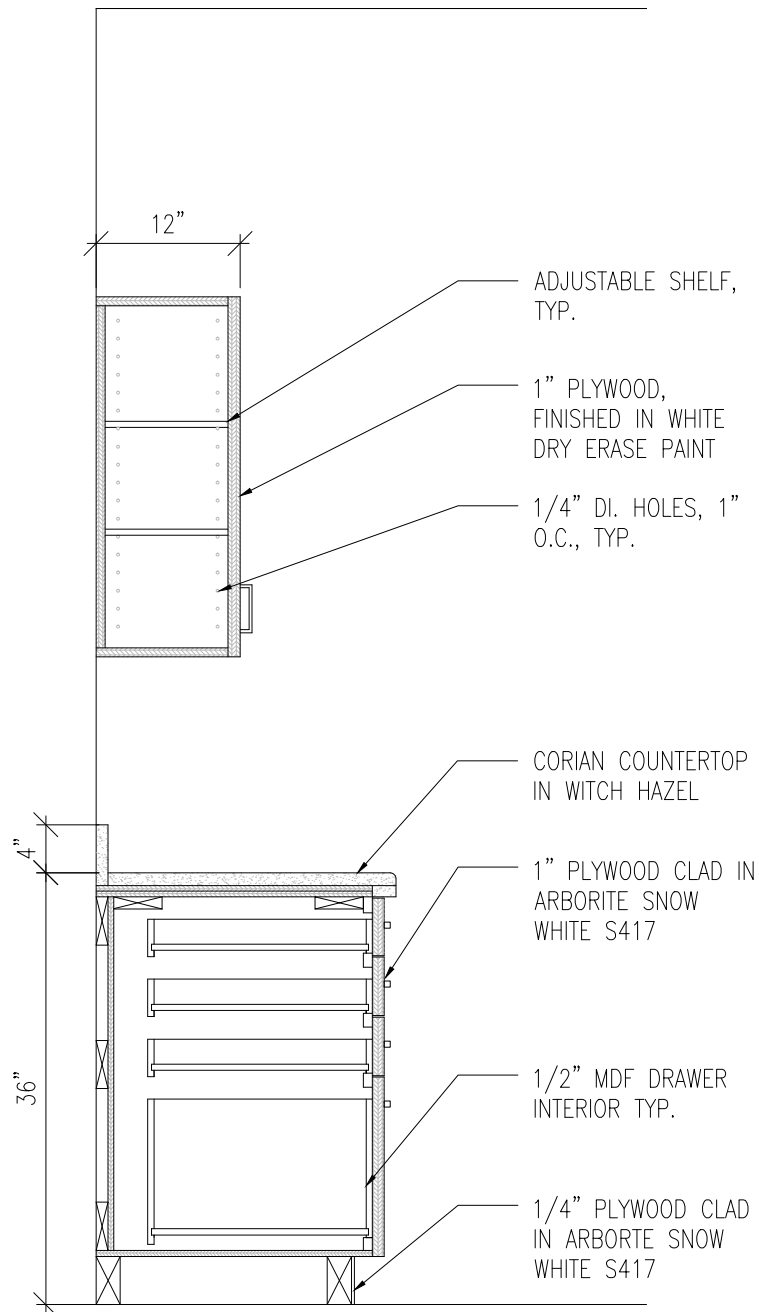


Figure 7.3.18 – Detail of suite millwork

Living room. A warm, safe, and inviting living room setting is provided on each residential floor. Two access points provide an open atmosphere and invites passersby to engage in social activities. The access points also provide comfort for individuals who are exceptionally vulnerable. The living room is furnished with modular furniture that allows the user to reconfigure the sofa to fit their personal needs. The configuration shown, however, is ideal for safety and comfort as it allows the user to maintain a protected back and view of the corridor traffic. In order to control noise transfer, the television faces the north wall (away from the corridor) and projects sound towards fabric acoustic wall panels.



Figure 7.3.19 – South living room elevation



Figure 7.3.20 – North living room elevation



Figure 7.3.21 – View of communal living room

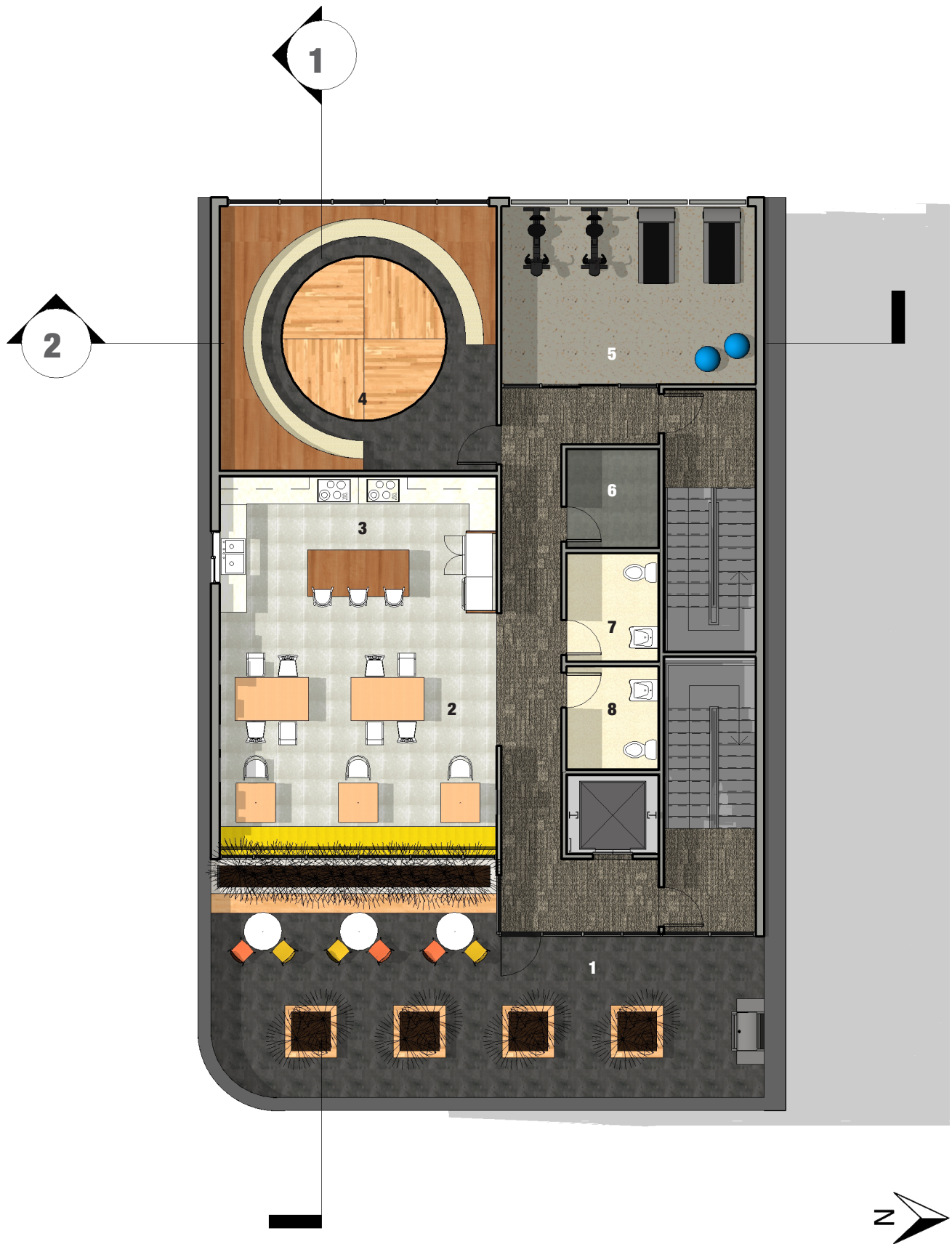


Figure 7.3.22 – Floor Plan, Level 4

LEVEL 4

1. communal garden
2. dining room
3. communal kitchen
4. spiritual room
5. fitness room
6. janitorial
7. w/c
8. w/c



Figure 7.3.23 – View of Spiritual Room

Spiritual room. The spiritual room is an additional environment in the shelter that responds to the homeless demographic in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The spiritual room is an environment in which the women can practice and learn about traditional Aboriginal ceremonies. Prior to living in the facility, the women may have very few physical possessions but, according to Hill (1991) intangible possessions (such as beliefs) play a significant role in self-restoration. Thus, providing a space to practice valued traditional rituals can provide another avenue for women to regain their sense of self and self-identity.

The room maintains the rectilinear geometry present in the rest of building's architectural language. In contrast, the flooring, millwork, and ceiling allude to the circular geometry

of the medicine wheel. The two tiers of bench seating provide a choice of two seating options corresponding to the level of participation (as some may want to spectate rather than participate).

Dining Room & Communal Kitchen.

The dining room and communal kitchen are the most public and important environments within the shelter. All the women will utilize the communal kitchen to prepare meals whether it is as a group or individually. To provide the women with the skills they need to live independently, cooking workshops will also be facilitated within the communal kitchen. It was important to design the communal kitchen with durability and maintenance in mind, while also providing the warmth and welcoming atmosphere of a residential kitchen. The millwork is finished in a solid surface and glossy high-pressure plastic laminate for durability and ease of cleaning. Due to the communal nature of the kitchen, a generous circulation path around the island is provided to accommodate and encourage

the women to prepare meals together. In addition to being a meal preparation surface, the island functions as a space for tenants to socialize. Three stools are available for woman and children who are not cooking, but who still wish to be part of the communal setting. The island is finished in a wood-grained high-pressured laminate to evoke the warmth of a wood dining table.

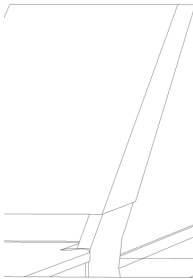
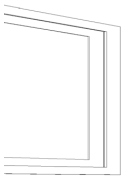




Figure 7.3.24 – View of Communal Kitchen



Figure 7.3.25 – View of Communal Dining Area



According to Schroeder (1996), some women may choose to be anti-social and withdraw from social environments. Women have the option of eating as a group or bringing their food to their room. Congregate housing is beneficial in terms of companionship and the coming together as a community. It was important to provide an in-between (semi-private) area within proximity of public areas to allow women to be within a group setting without forcing the women to commit to participation. Tables of 2 and 4 are available and can be moved together or apart for individuals who want to be more social or more private. The booths also provide a protected back seating option for an extra sense of security. The booths are upholstered with a polyurethane fabric for ease of maintenance and a vibrant colour to brighten up the space.

Communal garden. Lastly, the communal garden provides the women with a safe space to be outside while still being within the security of the shelter. In the warmer months, this space provides opportunities for dining, socialization, and/or smoking. Heat lamps are installed under the overhang to provide warmth during cooler nights. A communal garden is provided for women to plant and grow herbs, fruits, and vegetables. Located behind the bench seating, local low-maintenance prairie plants provide shade for the interior dining space.



Figure 7.3.26 – View of Communal Garden



7.4 MATERIALS, LIGHTING & FURNITURE

Selecting materials, lighting, and furniture for the space included several criteria such as durability, ease of maintenance, and local accessibility. The women's past life experiences and memories of a past home all differ – what is consistent in their lives is *Winnipeg*. Thus, the colour palette is inspired by the surrounding areas (Figure 7.4.12). For example, in the corridor the carpet features a cobblestone pattern much like the sidewalks that perimeter the Maycock Block. Overall, the color palette is neutral and non-offensive to accommodate for self-expression and personalization.

Seating for the lounge and meeting areas were selected for their modularity and durability, as well as, their suitability within a wide range of applications and environments such as commercial and residential.



MATERIALS & FINISHES

FLOORING

WD1: Engineered Hardwood, Armstrong, White Oak
- Natural 5" Plank

SF1: Marmoleum, Forbos, Concrete - 3707 black
hole

SF2: Sheet flooring, Armstrong, Connection Corlon -
88705 Devon Beige

CPT1: Carpet Tile, Interface, Human Nature - 850
Pumice

CPT2: Carpet Tile, Interface, Equal Measure - 553
Cobblestone Blvd.

CT1: Ceramic Tile, Olympia, Beestone Series - White
& Nero

WD1



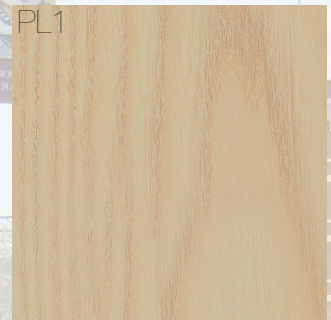
SF1



SS1



PL1



MILLWORK

SS1: Tyndall Stone

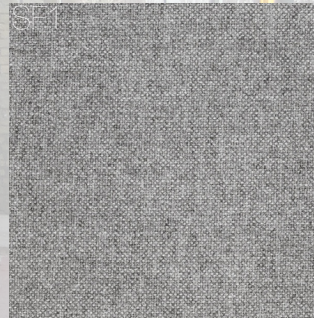
SS2: Solid Surfacing, Corian, Witch Hazel

PL1: Plastic Laminate, Herman Miller, Natural wax ash

PL2: Plastic Laminate, Arborite, T488 CA - Dolce Vita

PL3: Plastic Laminate, Arborite, S-417 GL - Snow
White

SF1



SF2



SEATING

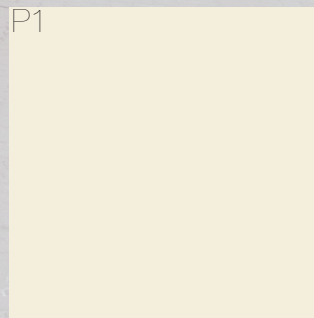
SF1: Seating Fabric, Maharam, Hallingdal by Kvadrat
460760, 130

SF2: Seating Fabric, Maharam, Divina Melange by
Kvadrat 460830, 170

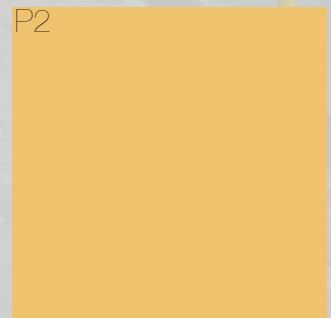
SF3: Seating Fabric, Maharam, Pocket 466243, 001

SF4: Seating Fabric, Maharam, Alloy 466064, 003
Chamomile

P1



P2



WALL COVERING

WC1: Wall Covering, Design Tex, Luxe - 6545-806
Pyrite

PAINT

P1: Benjamin Moore - Ice Milk

P2: Benjamin Moore - Hannah Banana

P3: Benjamin Moore - Ray of Light

P4: Benjamin Moore - Hope Chest

P5: Benjamin Moore - Trench Coat

WALL TILE

WT1: Glass Wall Tile, Cerasec, Glossy Series by
Lifestyle, Dark Taupe



< Figure 7.4.12 – Maycock Block, Existing Exterior

LEGEND

○ Recessed downlight

⊙ Pendant accent lighting

—○— Adjustable track lighting

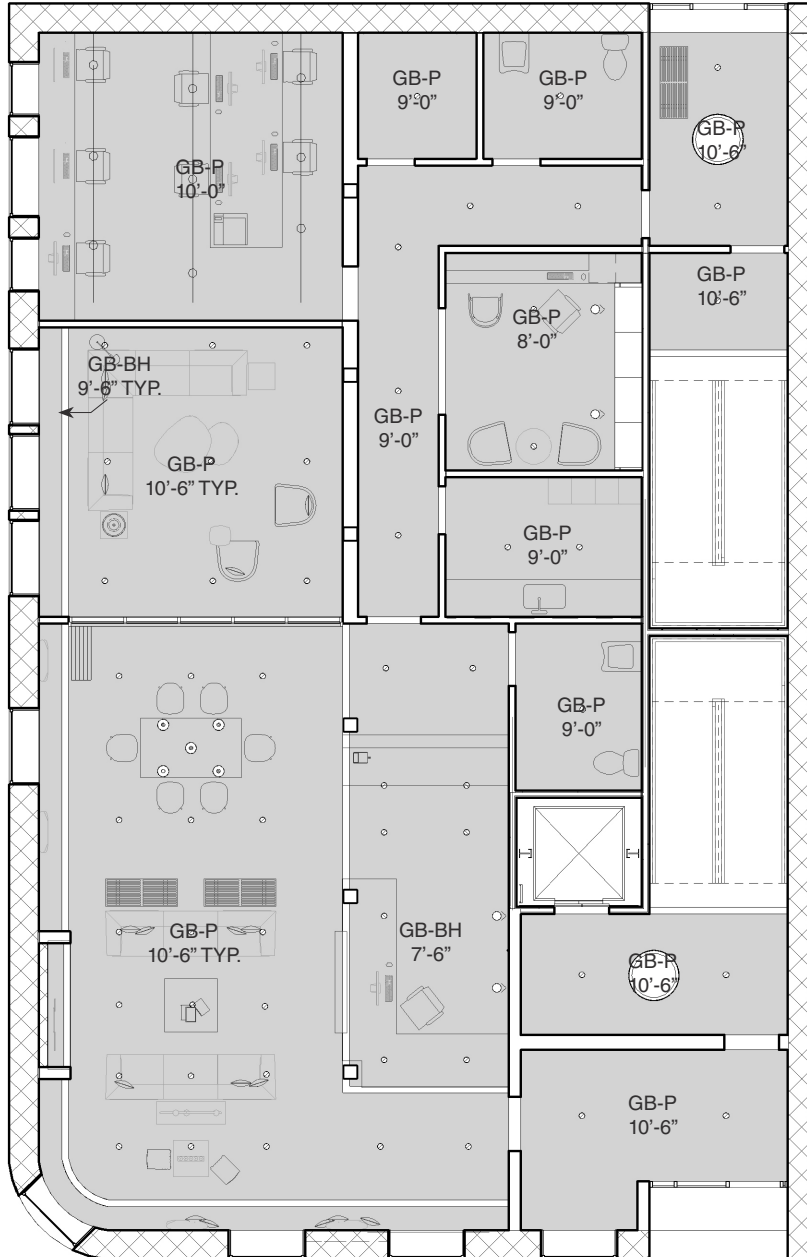
⌒ Wall washer

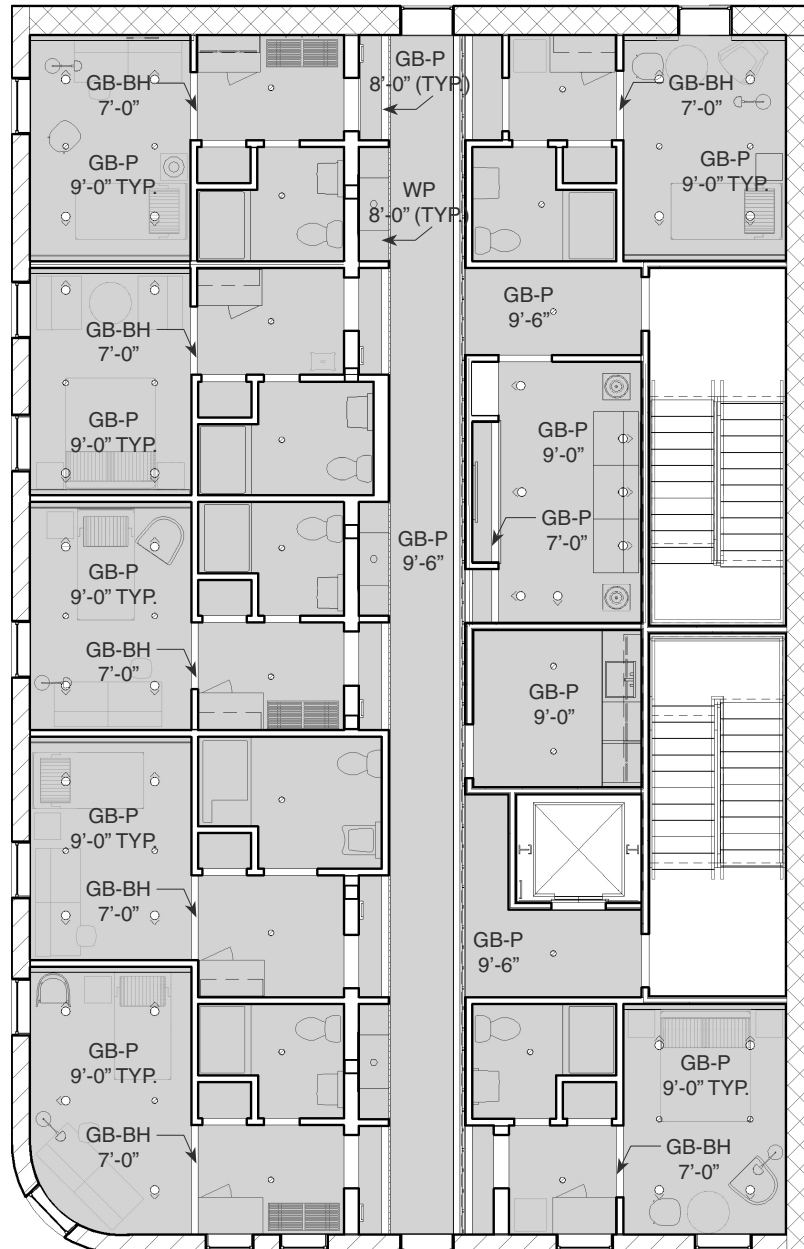
▬ Wall sconce

▬ Cove LED lighting system

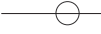
REFLECTED CEILING PLAN

LEVEL 1





LEGEND

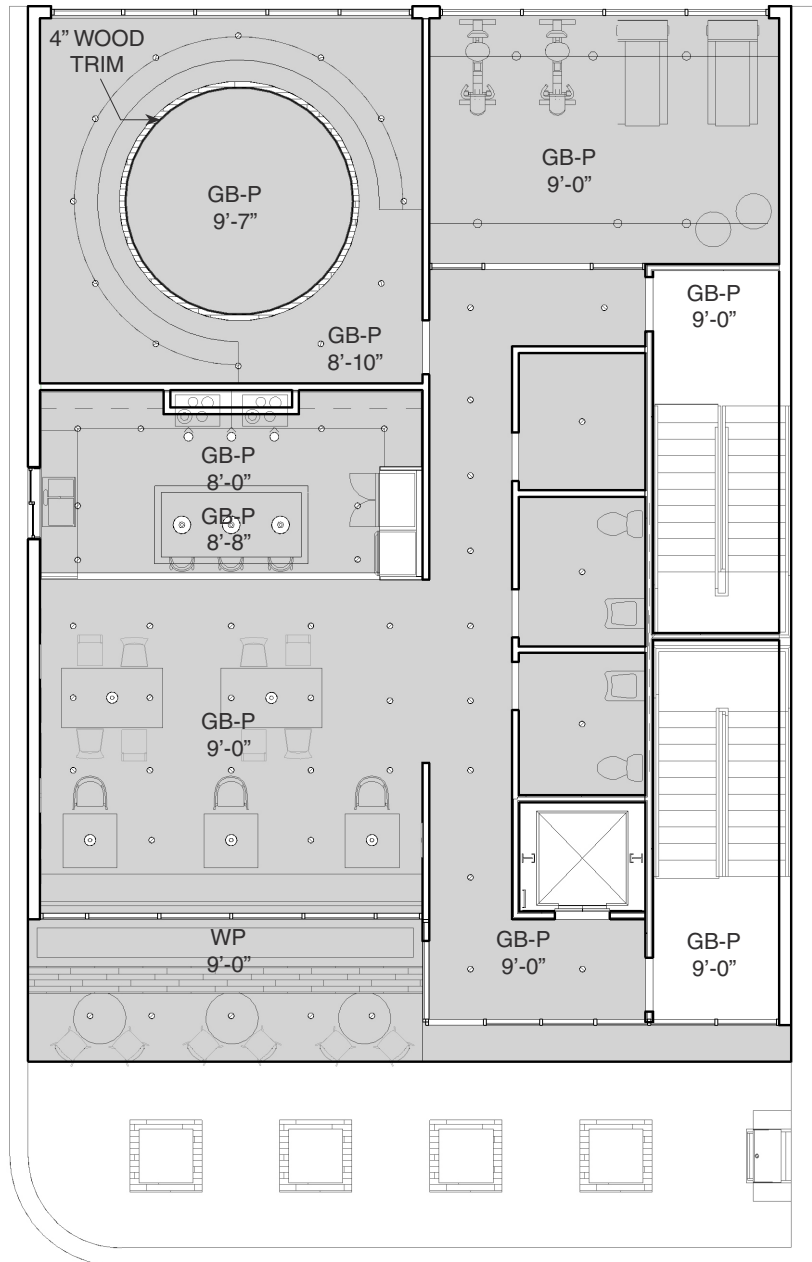
-  Recessed downlight
-  Pendant accent lighting
-  Adjustable track lighting
-  Wall washer
-  Wall sconce
-  Cove LED lighting system

REFLECTED CEILING PLAN
LEVEL 2 + LEVEL 3

LEGEND

-  Recessed downlight
-  Pendant accent lighting
-  Adjustable track lighting
-  Wall washer
-  Wall sconce
-  Cove LED lighting system

REFLECTED CEILING PLAN
LEVEL 4



CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

8.1. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES REVISITED

To conclude the practicum project, the following chapter revisits and reflects upon the research objectives outlined in Section 1.2.

(1) To understand the current structure of supports in present homeless shelters;

In *All Our Sisters*, Scott (2007) notes that mixed shelters do not address the needs and values of women. In my project, it was pertinent to understand what services existing homeless shelters provide and how the needs of homeless women were not being met. It was also important to learn how to apply design interventions within the built environment so as to meet the needs of the user. As informed by the contextual analysis, literature review, and precedent study on Savard's (Bridgman, 2003), it occurred to me

that a shelter devoted to housing previously homeless woman would need to provide the additional sense of safety and security women desire.

Traditional housing designed for the homeless are not user-sensitive environments. While traditional environments successfully provide immediate shelter and a hot meal, they do not provide opportunities for restoring a sense of home or self-identity. Perhaps the intent of a traditional homeless shelter is to motivate people to strive for more. A typical homeless shelter is designed as a high-control environment in order to control the residents and know their whereabouts at all times. Consequently, high-control living environments are also linked to feelings of helplessness and low self-esteem (Burn, 1992; Novac et

al., 2004). From an intensive examination of the meaning of home to a homeless woman, the elements of home, and control in the built environment, subtle design interventions that provide control can effectively increase an individual sense of home, self-identity, and belonging.

(2) To explore what home means to the homeless;

The literature review presented elements of home important to the housed and homeless. To understand what home means to the homeless, it was important to acknowledge what home meant to the housed. The needs to personalize a space, control the built environment, socialize with family and friends, and seek refuge, are elements that establish a

sense of home for the housed. Comparatively, for women experiencing homelessness, a loss of (a) control, (b) safety and security, (c) self-identity, (d) comfort, and (e) privacy define their homelessness. A consequence of losing any of these elements has potential to contribute to feelings of helplessness and poor well-being.

Regardless if you were housed or homeless, the elements of home were unchanged. However, for individuals who have experienced homelessness, past-life experiences effect how they perceive the built environment and social relationships. Current and future accommodations for the homeless population can benefit from an analysis of end-user needs and implementing design solutions to better serve the end-user.

(3) *To incorporate homeless women's unique values and needs within the built environment in order to provide better service and care than those that exist today.*

The contextual issues and literature review uncovered the needs and values of women experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The needs and values stated above correlated with elements that make a house a home. Thus, it was important to maintain the atmosphere of home within the design proposal – looking at residential design for inspiration regarding spatial planning, furniture placement, and other design elements. Ultimately, the concept of control informed and offered safety and security, self-identity, comfort, and privacy. Research by Pable (2012) suggests that

providing opportunities for control within the built environment has the potential to positively motivate individuals to move forward and out of the cycle of homelessness. For that reason, the proposed user-sensitive environment is designed to accommodate the various needs and values of each user by providing a sense of control. The design proposal allows the women to change, choose, and control their environment, as well as select an appropriate level of privacy and interaction for different activities.

In conclusion, this design proposal offers one possible way in which the theories identified could be used to design a user-sensitive environment for previously homeless women in the context of Winnipeg, Manitoba. From the research, a breadth of knowledge was

gained on the meaning of home to both the housed and the homeless, the importance of control in the built environment, and the effect of "feeling at home" on one's sense of self and self-identity. As a result, a new type of environment for women experiencing homelessness emerged that focuses on their needs and values, as well as control and self-restoration. The design proposal questioned the present structure of supports in existing homeless shelters, and demonstrated how to effectively incorporate the values and needs of homeless women in order to better serve the demographic. The result is a space that enables the user(s) to control their built environment, seek refuge, and achieve internal control to positively motivate herself to move forward in life.

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APPENDIX A

BUILDING CODE ANALYSIS

APPENDIX A: BUILDING CODE ANALYSIS

		NBC REFERENCE
GENERAL		
Project Description	The existing building is a 3-storey building mixed retail/office. The renovation work will involve converting 1-storey (Level 1) into offices and administration and 3-storeys (Level 2-4) into residential suites and living accommodations.	3.1.2.1.(1)
Major Occupancies	Group C – Residential Occupancies Group D – business and personal services occupancy	3.1.2.1.(1)
Occupant Load	<u>Based on area:</u> Office 2113 ft ² (196 m ²) / 9.30 m ² /person = 21 persons Dwelling units 14 sleeping rooms / 2 persons per sleeping room = 28 persons Total = 49 persons	3.1.17.1

BUILDING FIRE SAFETY

Building Area	3081 ft ²
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Number of Storeys	4
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Height of Building	49' - 6 1/2"
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Multiple Major Occupancies	3.2.2.6.
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Number of Streets/Access	2 streets	3.2.2.10.
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Routes	3.2.5.5.
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Building Classification	Class C Occupancy	3.2.2.58.
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Sprinkler System	This building is sprinklered	3.2.2.58.
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EXITS

Types of Exits	Exits provided: exterior doorway, interior stairway, interior passageway.	3.4.1.4.
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Minimum number of exits	2 exits per storey required.	3.4.2.1.(1)
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2 exits provided on Level 1

2 exits provide on Level 2, 3, and 4

Distance Between Exits	Exits locations satisfy requirements of one half the maximum diagonal dimension of the floor area.	3.4.2.3.
Location of Exits	Offices: 40 m travel distance to at least one exit. Residential: 30 m travel distance to at least one exit.	3.4.2.5.(1)(c) 3.4.2.5.(1)(f)
Exit Width	Exit width conforms to Tables 3.4.3.2.A. and 3.4.3.2.B. and is sufficient for the intended occupancy. Required width = exit corridor: 1100 mm, ramps: 1100 mm, stairs: 1100 mm, doorways: 800 mm. Provided width = exit corridor: 1118 mm min Stairs: 1320 mm min Doorways: 915 mm min.	3.4.3.2.

Dimensions of Landings	Length of landing = at least the width of stairway. Provided width = 1118 mm	3.4.6.4.
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HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Water Closets	Based on occupancy: Office 21 persons = 11 male + 11 female Therefore, 1 male WC + 1 female WC 1 male universal toilet room and 1 female universal toilet room provided.	3.7.2.2.(1)
Lavatories	1 male and 1 female barrier free provided.	3.7.2.3.

BARRIER-FREE REQUIREMENTS

Entrances	Not less than 50% of pedestrian entrances of the building are barrier-free All doorways have a clear width of at least 800 mm when the door is open.	3.8.1.2. 3.8.3.3.(1) 3.8.3.3.(2)
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Areas Requiring a Barrier-Free	Level 1 (office) will require a barrier-free	3.8.2.1.(1)
Path of Travel	path of travel. Upper levels that provide	3.8.2.1.(2)(j)
	barrier-free dwelling units will require a	3.8.2.1.(2)(k)
	barrier-free path of travel.	
Ramps	Clear width > 870 mm.	3.8.3.4.
	Slope $\leq$ 1 in 12.	
	Level area $\geq$ 1500 by 1500 mm at	
	intermediate levels and 600 mm beyond	
	the edge of the door.	
	Handrail/guard are provided.	
Water Closets Stalls / Water	WC as describe is provided.	3.8.3.8.
Closets		3.8.3.9.
Lavatories and Accessories	Barrier free lavatory and accessories	3.8.3.11
	provided.	3.8.3.12

Counters	Every counter at which the public is served.	3.8.3.14.
	Counter width $\geq$ 800 mm wide	
	Surface height $\leq$ 800 mm AFF.	
	Knee space $\geq$ 800 wide, 700 high, 500 deep.	