DESIGNING A CITY FOR WELLNESS **POLICY EDITION**
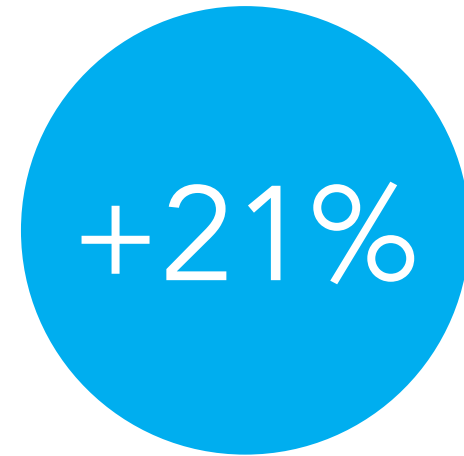
jonathan monfries m.arch, b.plan

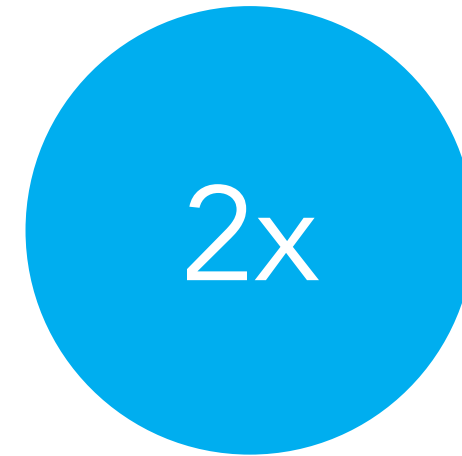what is the current state of urban life?

we all love cities
and 2/3 of the world's population lives in them
but living in cities is associated with

+39%

mood disorders

+21%
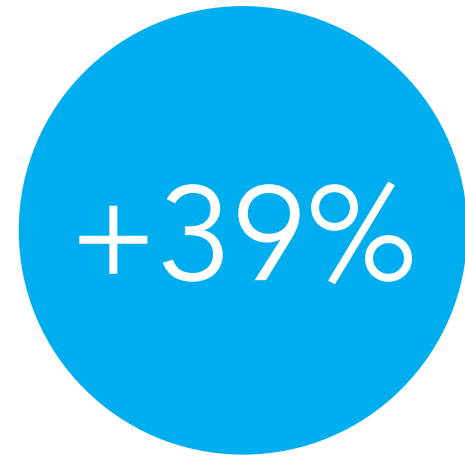
anxiety disorders

2x

schizophrenia

++

drug use

Peen, Schoevers, and Dekker (2010)
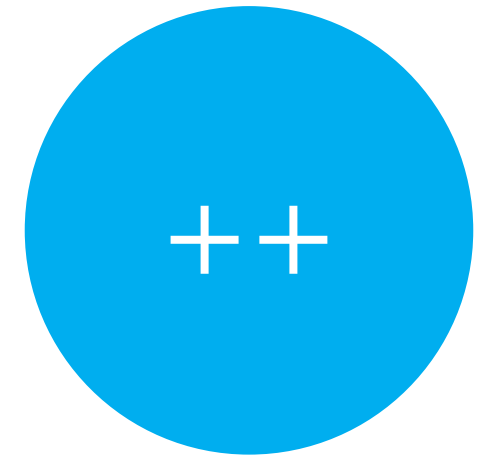
policy recommendation studies
how do we make cities better for our health

Neighbourhood Design

Transportation Networks

Housing

HEALTHY BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Natural Environments

Food Systems

BCCDC (2019)
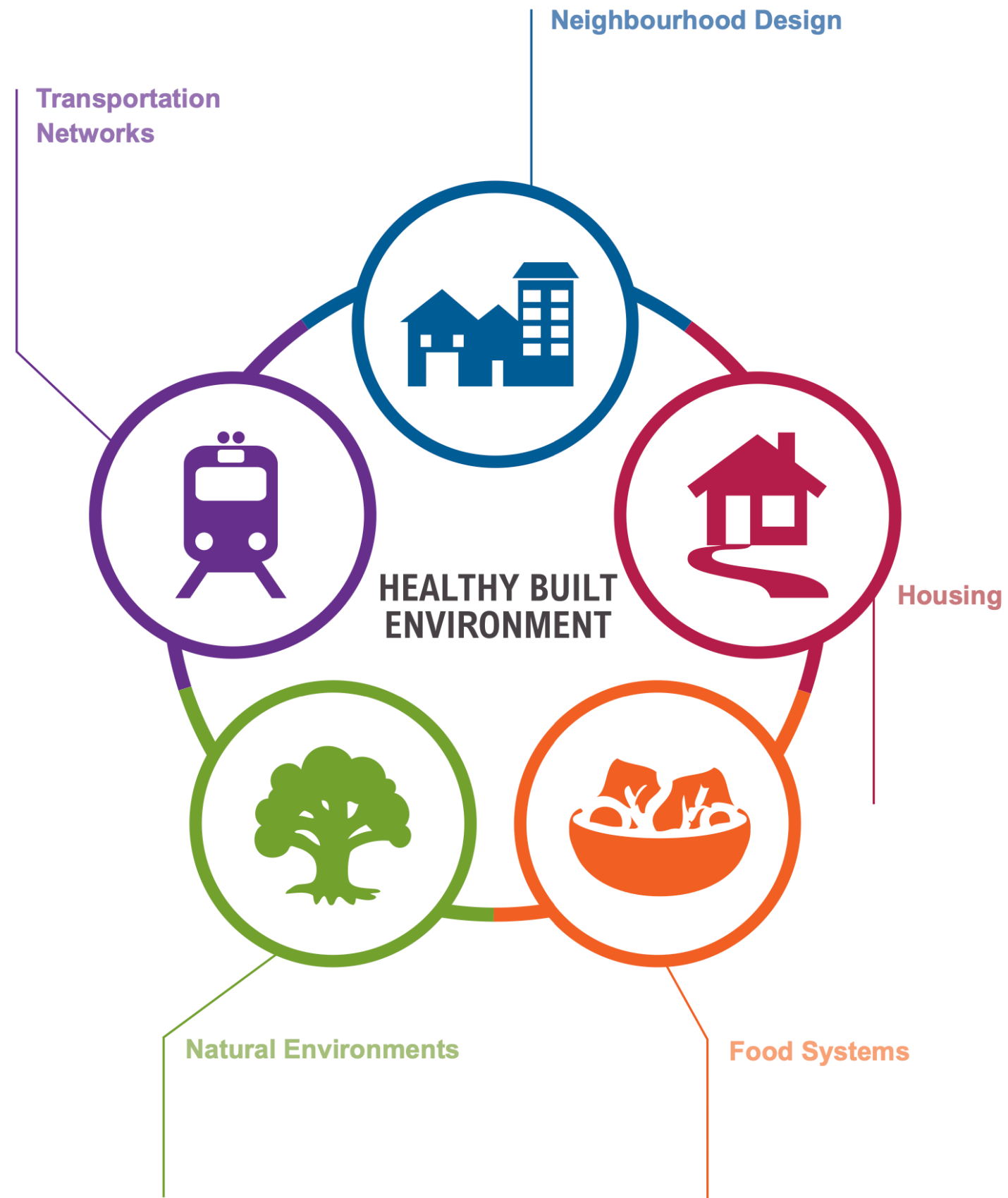
supporting housing diversity

an equitable community

Designed to Engage

Policy recommendations
for promoting sociability in
multi-family housing design
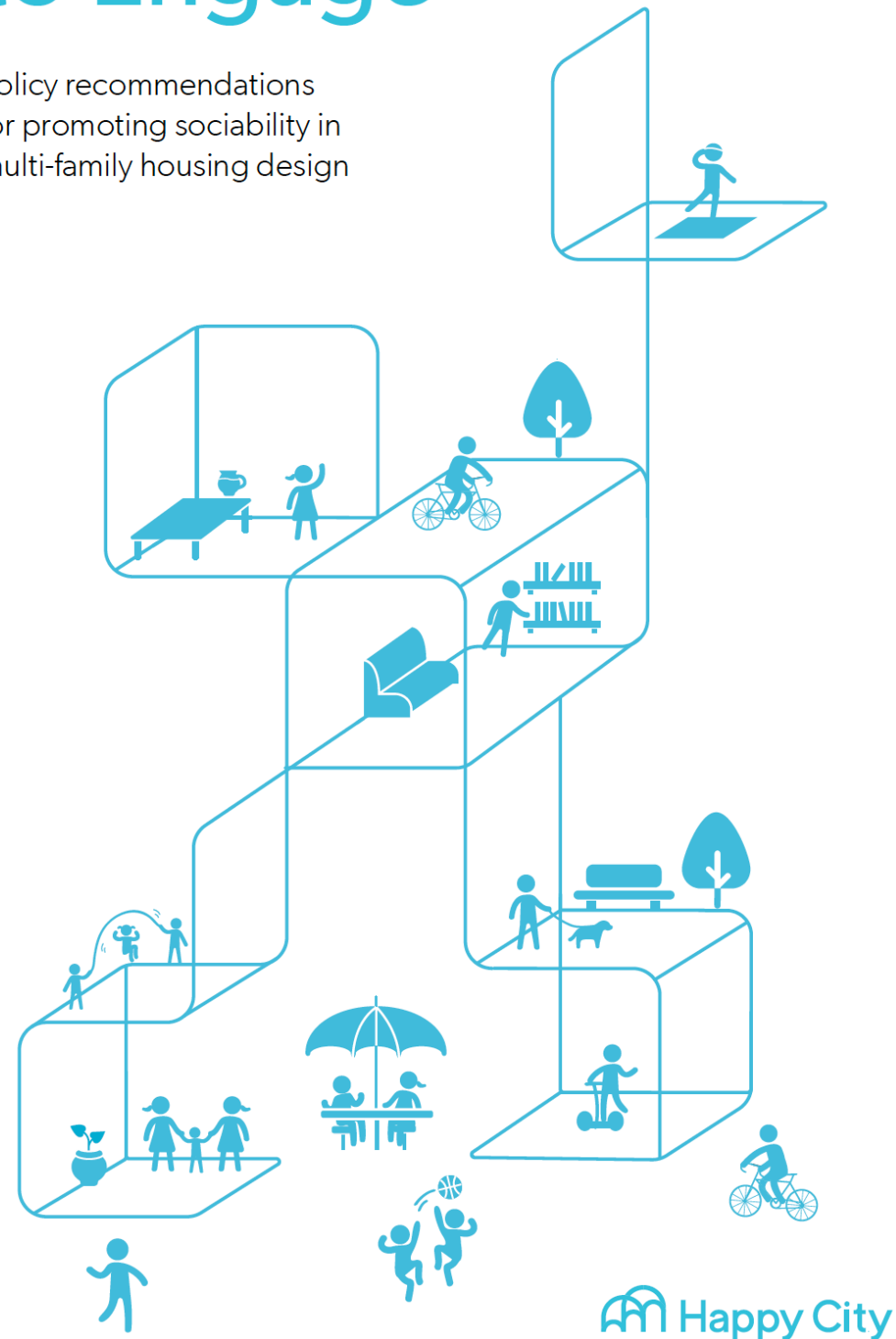
Happy City

Designed to Engage (2019)
Happy City
Real Estate Foundation of BC

policy recommendations for
promoting sociability in multi-
family housing design.

"Strong social connections are the greatest contributors to human health, happiness, and resilience. We need to turn multi-family housing into an engine of social wellbeing."

-Charles Montgomery (Happy City)

Happy Homes

Culture & values
People feel a stronger sense of belonging and attachment to places that reflect their culture, values and sense of self.

Doing things together
Residents who have opportunities to do meaningful or enjoyable things together are more likely to develop a sense of trust and connection.

Comfort
People are more likely to engage with others in environments that feel pleasant and comfortable.

Exposure
People who live in spaces that give them a greater sense of control over their exposure to others are more likely to build positive social connections.

Nature
Access to nature is strongly linked to positive neighbourhood relationships and trust among community members.

Tenure
The longer people can stay in their community, the greater the bonds of trust and local social connection.

Walkability
Mixed-use neighbourhoods that encourage walking are most likely to be associated with positive social encounters and a strong sense of community.

Social group size
Social group size has a direct influence on the quality and intensity of trusting relationships that people develop.

Participation
Residents who are involved in project design and site management processes are more likely to develop a sense of belonging and contribute to their community.

Feeling safe
People are more likely to build trusting and meaningful relationships in environments that feel safe.

1
diverse housing form

relaxation of height and setback regulations for developments that offer a variety of housing forms and range of bedrooms per unit.
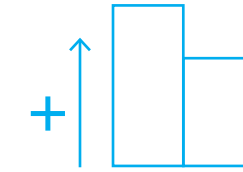
changes to the Zoning Bylaw that promote a wide range of housing forms in residential areas currently zoned for single-detached.

allowance for single-detached residences to be redeveloped into more flexible, multi-unit buildings
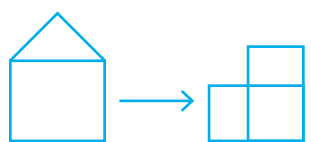
flexible spaces

offer density bonuses for projects where two or more units share services.

+

reconsider policy that places restrictions on living arrangements, including those on shared uses and shared spaces.

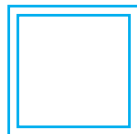reduction of development fees for pilot projects incorporating flexible units.

$

3
social corridors

promote different social corridor possibilities in multi-family developments through scalar adjustments to regulations
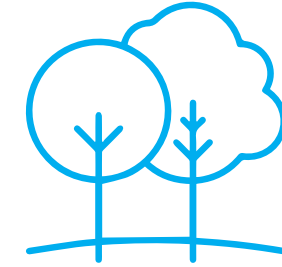
seek ways to support (safe) human interaction.

FAR exemptions for additional square footage that facilitates social activity.

public amenities

re-visit community amenity contributions so that they include public amenities in private developments in the case they promote a community-oriented space.

incorporate the provision of public amenities through a clear regulatory process that mandates their inclusion.

FAR revisions for instances of developments that include additional public social amenities that would be open to the community.

missing middle

density bonuses for mixed-use projects that address a predefined set of sociability criteria.

build flexibility into the zoning bylaw to accommodate middle-density pilot projects that also respond to the neighbourhood's character and conditions.
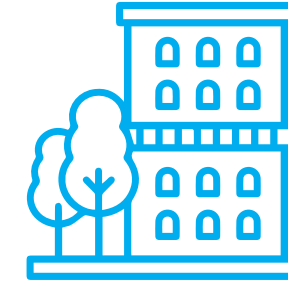
achievable density targets through missing-middle housing in certain residential districts OR fast-track rezoning projects proposing contextual missing-middle development.

social group size

modification of setbacks such that these social areas can instead be concentrated in a common courtyard.

incentives for additional social space or regulations that seek a reallocation of social space to be more effective.

relaxing height restrictions to allow for additional interior and exterior shared spaces in rooftops of developments.

"we shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us."

-Winston Churchill