Resilient and Sustainable Community: Insights from the Cohousing Research Network

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
- Increasing the rigor and reach of cohousing research -
Cohousing Research Network (CRN)

• Founded 2010 by Coho/US Board members
• Mission
  • Increase the rigor of cohousing research
  • Increase dissemination of cohousing research
  • Minimize burden on cohousing residents
CRN Organization

• Steering Committee
  • Interdisciplinary team of researchers and web manager
  • Includes cohousing residents
  • Meets monthly
  • Supports anyone doing research on cohousing who is willing to work with us

• Website: cohousingresearchnetwork.org
  • Bibliography

• Email list: research-l@cohousingresearchnetwork.org
  • Forum for collaboration
CRN Initiatives

• First Community Survey, 2011
• First Resident Survey, 2012
• Second Community Survey, 2017
  • Ongoing now!
• Second Resident Survey, 2017
  • Two versions: (1) multigenerational and (2) senior communities
  • Ongoing now!

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
Table of Contents

• Hot off the press! Early findings from 2017 Surveys
  • Resilience (Angela Sanguinetti): Begins Slide 6
  • Political engagement (Heidi Berggren): Begins Slide 13
  • Multigenerational living (Fiona Patterson): Begins Slide 24
  • Sustainability (Jenny Godwin and Bryan Bowen): Begins Slide 109
  • Cost of Living (Angela Sanguinetti): Begins Slide 122

• General Population’s Interest in Cohousing (Robert Boyer): Begins Slide 39

• Cohousing in the Context of Larger Intentional Community Movement (Betsy Morris): Begins Slide 64

• Community Budget Research (Phil Dowds): Begins Slide 136

• Comparing Traditional Retrofit Cohousing (Angela Sanguinetti): Begins Slide 80
Community Resilience Scale in Resident Survey

• If challenges arise for the group as a whole, we are able to actively respond to those challenges
• Our group is able to obtain what it needs to thrive
• Our group bounces back from even the most difficult setbacks
• Our group is able to achieve things
• Our group is adaptable
Community Resilience

If challenges arise for the group as a whole, we are able to actively respond to those challenges.
Community Resilience

Our group is able to obtain what it needs to thrive.
Community Resilience

Our group bounces back from even the most difficult setbacks.
Community Resilience

Our group is able to achieve things.
Community Resilience

Our group is adaptable.
Next Steps

• What predicts resilience?
  • Governance structure?
  • Practices? Participation?
  • Diversity? Homogeneity?
  • Size?
  • Ownership structure?
Cohousing and Political Engagement

Heidi Berggren, Ph.D., Associate Professor, University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
UNESCO

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
Responding Communities

Unknown
Unknown
Acequia Jardin
Arboretum Cohousing
Aria Cohousing Community
Bellingham Cohousing
Cambridge Cohousing
Capitol Hill Urban Cohousing
cascadia Commos
CoHo Ecovillage
Columbia Ecovillage
Durham Central Park Cohousing
EcoVillage Dungeness Cohousing
Elderspirit Community
Garland Ave Cohousing
Heartwood Cohousing
Higher Ground
Los Angeles Eco-Village
Manzanita Village
Maxwelton Creek Cohousing
Meadow Wood Condominium Association
Milagro
Muir Commons
New Brighton Cohousing
Nomad Cohousing Community
Pathways Cohousing
Putney Commons
Rocky Hill Cohousing
Sand River Cohousing
Silver Sage Village
Songaia Cohousing
Sonora Cohousing
Stone Curves Cohousing
Troy Gardens Cohousing Community
Two Acre Wood
Valley Oaks Village
Village Cohousing Community
Walker Creek Community
Washington House
Wolf Creek Lodge
- 40 Total
Type and Extent of Political Involvement

Do any of your residents hold a public office of any type at any level of government?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Valid</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (please specify):</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Missing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do any of your residents serve in the following political or civic capacities? (Check all that apply)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Member of City Council or other elected local legislative board</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worker for election campaign</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local government employee</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue advocate</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poll worker</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Host for candidates or ballot presentation</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of these</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myriad civic involvement from literacy to social services to farm worker support to immigration, etc</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Quaker service</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>party positions, voter registrar, public defender, political/social &amp; environmental volunteering</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>several teachers or school employees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we have had people work for campaigns and also be delegates for caucus in the past.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Meals, Work, and Politics

Percentage of Residents Participating in Common Meals in Communities with Election Campaign Workers

Percentage of Residents Participating in Work Program in Communities with Issue Advocates
Internal Economy and Politics

Presence of Home-Based Businesses in Communities with Poll Workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presence of Home-Based Businesses</th>
<th>No. of Communities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qualified Members Hired for Community Work in Communities Hosting Candidates or Ballot Presentations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualified Members Hired</th>
<th>No. of Communities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Income Diversity and Politics

Participation of Residents of Affordable Units in Voluntary Community Activities in Communities with Issue Advocates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of communities</th>
<th>Less than other residents</th>
<th>Same as other residents</th>
<th>More than other residents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
Do any community members participate in local environmental activism?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Valid</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes (please briefly describe):</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>86.1</td>
<td>86.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>88.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Missing</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>System</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
Descriptions of community members’ local environmental activism  
(more than one description may apply to a community)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Unknown)</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-nuclear and anti-pipeline actions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens Climate Lobby</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizens Climate Lobby &amp; Sierra Club</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>30.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City environmental participation, rallies, walks, signature gathering</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>32.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Advisory Committee Member</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth Day, Trail Clean-Up, Farmer's Market</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very opportunity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobbying, demonstrations, LTEs, meetings with elected officials, etc.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>45.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local environmental group work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>many members are active in the Corvallis Sustainability Coalition. We have two authors of books related to sustainability. One of our founders also founded the local chapter of the Natural Step Network. We often march as a community in the City's Earth Day parade. I pushed such issues when on City council.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marches</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>55.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marches, letter-writing campaigns</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>57.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>multiple efforts</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>occasional earth day activities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>petitions, demonstrations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>65.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protests,</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>67.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regular participants in local activitism</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular Thursday evening letter-writing sessions after Trump. Community members regularly participate in various activitism, such as writing Letters to the Editor, helping with groups, marches, etc.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>72.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rivers, sierra club, othr</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Several members very active in environmental issues, local and national.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>77.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sponsor events in common house, outreach, donations, local clean ups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>80.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop Fracking, creating coop ordinance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>82.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for several local groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through other groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many to describe.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>various public events</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>92.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water conservancy, permaculture guild, CDA coalition</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>95.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we have been involved in marches and 350. org activities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>97.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we're very active in our larger community around environmental concerns</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I hypothesized (using U.S. National Cohousing Survey, Phase III) that the higher level of political participation among those members of cohousing communities who are more highly involved in various cohousing activities is driven in part by an enhanced sense of responsibility for the natural environmental—or one’s “community” in the broader sense of the word.

This hypothesis was tested in two parts as follows: 1.) the heightened focus on community that comes with involvement in cohousing—including activities that are directly related to environmentalism and sustainability—is associated with greater appreciation for the natural environment, which is in turn 2.) associated with higher levels of political participation.
Multigenerational Living In Cohousing: A Way To Impact Health & Mental Health Issues And Reduce Ageism

Fiona Patterson, DSW, UVM
Kelly Melekis, PhD, Skidmore College

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
Study Background

• Our study seeks to explore: 1) How the growing number of elders in the U.S. impacts the experience of living in cohousing and 2) How being part of a mixed age cohousing population is experienced by people of various ages.

• I have lived in Burlington Cohousing for almost 10 years and enjoyed its strong multigenerational ties among residents of different ages. I believe this is helpful in strengthening health and mental health for all of us.

• This project builds on my 2008 research involving four Vermont communities – now expanding it to cohousing communities throughout the U.S.

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
Cohousing Survey Descriptive Statistics

Sample Characteristics

Question re: age: (n. 167) answered. Participants ranged from 28 to 89, average age was 61.

Question re: race: (n. 168) (95.2%) identified as White; remainder identified as “multiple races” (2.4%), Asian (1.8%), Black or African American (0.6%).

Question re: ethnicity: (n. 162): (99.4%) identified as not Hispanic or Latino; 1 respondent (0.6%) identified as Hispanic or Latino.
Cohousing Survey Descriptive Statistics

Based on 226 Participants

Sexual identity (n.164): (77%) identified as female, 21% as male, and 2% as “it’s not that simple.”

Sexual orientation (n.167) (77%) identified as heterosexual, 11% as bisexual, 8% as homosexual, and 4% as “it’s not that simple.”

Having children (n.166) (76%) have children, while 24% do not. (74%) do not have children currently living with them.
Cohousing Survey Descriptive Statistics

Physical Health (n.166): 43% rate their physical health status as much better than others their age; 27% rate it slightly better, 18% rate it neither better nor worse and 12% rate it slightly worse (9%) or much worse (3%).

Mental Health (n.167): 53% rate their mental health as very good, 37% rate it as good, 8% rate it as neither good nor poor, and 2% rate it as poor.

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
Cohousing Survey Descriptive Data

*Time in cohousing*: Less than one year up to 25 years. Average, living in cohousing for 7.78 years.

*Number of people in a community*: Smallest 10: Largest 250. Average 64.
Age Categories and Satisfaction with Each

*Multigenerational Living (n. 189)*

72% consider their community multi-generational. 25% indicated theirs is ‘somewhat’ multi-generational, and 3% not at all multi-generational.

96% stated that multigenerational living is important to them.

*Children*: The number of children per community ranged from 0 to 30. Average was 8 (SD = 6.02). Over 50% indicated their community had 8 children or less. (53%) reported that they are satisfied with the current number of children, while 46% wished there were more and 1% wished there were less.

*CohousingResearchNetwork.org*
Age Categories and Satisfaction with Each

**Teenagers:** Estimates ranged from 0 to 20. The average was 5, but over 50% estimated there were 4 or few teenagers in their community. 56% of respondents were satisfied with the current numbers while 44% wish there were more.

**Young adults:** Estimates ranged from 0 to 30. The average was 4, over 50% indicated that there were 3 or fewer young adults. Only 38% report satisfaction with current numbers while (62%) wish there were more.

**Elders:** Age they consider a person to be an elder ranged from 50 to 90. Most frequent response (31%) was 70, and average age was 67.5. 64% are satisfied with the current numbers while 28% wish there were fewer and 8% wish there were more.
Cohousing Results

(Question #39).
In your opinion, whatever your age now, does aging in cohousing seem better or worse than these alternative living arrangement?

(Next slide)

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
## Cohousing Results

### Table 1.
Aging in Cohousing Compared to Other Living Arrangements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aging in Cohousing Better</th>
<th>Aging in Cohousing Worse</th>
<th>Not Sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N=174 Assisted Living</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Home</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehab</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing Care Community</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gated Retirement Community</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income Elder Housing</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior CoHousing</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with Friend or Family Member</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Alone</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cohousing Results

Question # 40
Please answer this question based on the definition of “ageism” as “prejudice or discrimination against the elderly.” Do you feel that there is less, more, or a similar amount of ageism in cohousing as in these other settings where elders live?

(Next slide)
## Cohousing Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N=174</th>
<th>Ageism in Cohousing More</th>
<th>Ageism in Cohousing Less</th>
<th>Ageism in Cohousing Similar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assisted Living</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Home</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehab</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing Care Community</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gated Retirement Community</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income Elder Housing</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior CoHousing</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with Friend or Family Member</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Alone</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cohousing results

Participants were asked how long they hope to keep living in their present cohousing community. 34% of respondents stated that they hope to live in their community “forever” or “until I die.” Another 14% reported that they hope to live in their community as long as they can, or as long as health permits. Many other respondents identified a specific number of years (e.g., 10, 20, 50), which for some may equate to the rest of their lives. (Question 8)

It is important to note that while a small number (5%) had plans to leave their community within the year, the vast majority (82%) planned to stay for 10 years or longer.
Cohousing Results

Participants were asked what circumstances might cause them to leave their current cohousing community, aside from a change in job or family situation.

The most common response related to health concerns, disability, an inability to care for oneself. Some specified health problems that were incapacitating, required intensive care, or necessitated long-term care. Several specifically listed ‘death.’

Other common responses were related to conflict in the community (e.g., inequity, lack of diversity, internal politics), financial concerns, and travel opportunities. Perhaps different from conflict, several respondents specifically noted that what might cause them to leave was “becoming tired” with the dynamics and/or process in their community. (Question 9)
Qualitative Data

Question #24
Do you consider your community to be multigenerational?

The respondents overwhelmingly answered “yes” in spirit and in literal fact (with ages ranging from infancy to 90).

But there are important challenges:
• The aging of original members
• Issues related to accessibility & support
• Affordability

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
Who is interested in Cohousing in the USA?
Results from nation-wide survey

Robert Boyer
Assistant Professor, Geography & Earth Sciences
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Suzanne Leland
Professor, Political Science and Public Policy
University of North Carolina at Charlotte
2011 sample of US cohousing residents

• Disproportionately...
  • Older (few in their 20s)
  • Disproportionately white and female
  • Highly educated
  • Fewer households with children
  • Owner-occupied
  • Women and senior women, living alone
  • Higher-than-average income
  • Diverse religious backgrounds

• Ideologically liberal (?)

(Margolis and Entin 2011)
How do the demographic characteristics of existing cohousing residents compare to “interest” in cohousing nationwide?

What does this reveal about the diffusion of cohousing, and future directions for growth?
Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) 2016 pre- and post-election

• Nationally-representative sample of 64,600 adults living in the US
• Half the content is “common content” administered to all respondents
• Half is “team content” administered in multiple 1,000-person studies
Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) 2016 pre- and post- election

UNC-Charlotte “team” sample

• N=1,000

• Every state sampled
  • Max: CA, NY (n= 86)
  • Min: ND, WY, AK (n=1)

• 46.7% men, 53.3% women

• Race/Ethnicity
  • 73.6% White
  • 12.5% Black
  • 6.7% Hispanic
  • 2.8% Asian

• Ideology
  • 32.9% “liberal”
  • 24.9% “middle of the road”
  • 36.3% “conservative”
  • 5.4 “unsure”

• Average age: 48.32, SD: 17.376

• Average family income: $48,000

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
Survey question:

“Cohousing” is a type of neighborhood with the following characteristics:

1. **Neighbors share access to common facilities** like meeting spaces, libraries, gardens, and kitchen appliances that most households in the US cannot afford independently.

2. **Neighbors spend time together**, sharing occasional meals and helping each other with household tasks

3. **Neighbors manage their community together**, meeting a few times a month to resolve conflicts and make decisions about their neighborhood

Assuming it was within your price range, and close to the city or town where you currently live, how interested would you be in living in a cohousing neighborhood?

(not at all interested) 1    2    3    4    5 (very interested)
Boyer & Leland. UNC-Charlotte. "Interest in Cohousing in the USA"

Interest in Cohousing

Mean = 2.54
SD = 1.389

1 Not at all interested (n=353)
36%

2 (n=170)
17%

3 (n=202)
20%

4 (n=153)
16%

5 "Very interested" (n=104)
11%

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
Interest in Cohousing: results from a nation-wide survey

By Robert Boyer
University of North Carolina at Charlotte
May 1, 2017

Date source: CCES Survey 2017
Gender (95% confidence interval)

Interest in cohousing by gender:

- Female: 2.45
- Male: 2.5
- Total: 2.48

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
Interest in cohousing (7-point scale) (95% confidence interval)

Mean Ideology Score = 4.05
SD = 1.78
Mean Income Category = 3.28
SD = 1.57

Boyer & Leland. UNC-Charlotte. "Interest in Cohousing in the USA"

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
Interest in cohousing

Income in the past year? (95% confidence interval)

- Decreased a lot: 2.05
- Decreased: 2.34
- Stayed the same: 2.41
- Increased: 2.54
- Increased a lot: 3.08
- Total sample: 2.47
Martial Status (95% confidence interval)

Interest in cohousing

Married: 2.34
Separated: 2.76
Divorced: 2.59
Widowed: 2.95
Single: 2.63
Domestic partnership: 2.43
Total: 2.48

Boyer & Leland. UNC-Charlotte. "Interest in Cohousing in the USA"

CohousingResearchNetwork.org
Average age of interest category (95% confidence interval)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interest in Cohousing</th>
<th>Average Age</th>
<th>Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>51.95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>49.15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>45.14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>44.46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>47.01</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>48.37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Boyer & Leland. UNC-Charlotte. "Interest in Cohousing in the USA"
Sharing Economy Applications Sum
(95% confidence interval)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of sharing economy applications used</th>
<th>Interest in cohousing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Car Sharing?</td>
<td>2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Sharing?</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couch Surfing?</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborgoods?</td>
<td>3.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing Swaps?</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Support Agriculture?</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean # of applications used = 0.35
SD = 0.76

Boyer & Leland. UNC-Charlotte. "Interest in Cohousing in the USA" CohousingResearchNetwork.org
"I consider myself an extrovert." (95% confidence interval)

Mean Extrovert Score = 4.10
SD = 1.88
Interest in cohousing by education level:

- No HS: 2.46
- High school graduate: 2.39
- Some college: 2.47
- 2-year: 2.6
- 4-year: 2.42
- Post-grad: 2.63
- Total: 2.48

Mean Edu = 3.28
SD = 1.54
Race/Ethnicity Category (95% confidence interval)

Interest in cohousing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity Category</th>
<th>Interest in Cohousing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>2.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>2.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>2.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Eastern</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Children under 18 in your household? (95% confidence interval)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children under 18?</th>
<th>Interest in cohousing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>2.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yes</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Descriptive statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohousing Interest (min=1, max=5)</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>1.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ideology scale (v. lib= 1, v. cons=7)</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>1.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>47.80</td>
<td>17.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>race (white=1, not white= 0)</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gender (male=1, not male= 0)</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homeownership (own =1 not own=0)</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family income category (min=1, max=6)</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>1.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sharing economy sum (min =1, max=6)</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children under 18 (no child=0, child=1)</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>widowed (yes=1, no=0)</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education level (no HS= 1, postgrad=6)</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extrovert (str. agree=7)</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Boyer & Leland. UNC-Charlotte. "Interest in Cohousing in the USA"

N = 825  
F (11, 813) = 13.06  
Prob> F = 0.000  
R-squared = 0.1502  
Adj R-squared = 0.1387  
Root MSE = 1.2901  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>coefficient</th>
<th>std. error</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ideology scale (conservative +)*</td>
<td>-0.097</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>-0.005</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>race (white)</td>
<td>-0.063</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gender (male)</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homeownership</td>
<td>-0.116</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family income*</td>
<td>-0.109</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sharing economy sum*</td>
<td>0.425</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children under 18*</td>
<td>0.211</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>widowed*</td>
<td>0.560</td>
<td>0.245</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education level</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extrovert level*</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constant</td>
<td>2.845</td>
<td>0.240</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variables</td>
<td>coefficient</td>
<td>std. error</td>
<td>p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ideology scale (conservative +)*</td>
<td>-0.097</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td>-0.005</td>
<td>0.003</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>race (white)</td>
<td>-0.063</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gender (male)</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>homeownership</td>
<td>-0.116</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family income*</td>
<td>-0.109</td>
<td>0.034</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sharing economy sum*</td>
<td>0.425</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>children under 18*</td>
<td>0.211</td>
<td>0.108</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>widowed*</td>
<td>0.560</td>
<td>0.245</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education level</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>0.033</td>
<td>0.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extrovert level*</td>
<td>0.095</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constant</td>
<td>2.845</td>
<td>0.240</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Change in “coho interest” score with a one unit increase in ideology score.
Significant explanatory variables (in descending strength)

• Widow status
• Use of “sharing economy” applications
• Children under 18
• Lower family income
• Liberal ideology
• Extroverted

Has no significant effect...
• Age
• (white) Race
• Gender
• Home ownership
• Education
Conclusions

“Interest” in cohousing appears broader than its current resident constituency

• Study limitations:
  • What people want and what people can access are different problems
    • Cost?
    • Availability in region, near job?
    • Familiarity with- and friends in cohousing?
  • The “definition” of cohousing is necessarily abridged, and incomplete
Conclusions

• Possible implications:
  • The cumbersome and expensive process of developing cohousing is a major barrier to certain groups that might otherwise want to live in cohousing
  
  • Cohousing diffuses through specific social and spatial networks
  
  • COHO/US and individual initiatives can ease the process of transitioning from non-member, to provisional member, to full member
  
  • COHO/US can push for cohousing in architecture and urban planning curricula
  
  • Public policy can create more space (literally and metaphorically) for cohousing

Boyer & Leland. UNC-Charlotte. "Interest in Cohousing in the USA" CohousingResearchNetwork.org
Flash in the Pan or Game Changers?

History, Institutionalization and Long-term Sustainability of Cohousing and other forms of Intentional Communities in the US

Betsy Morris, PhD
Cohousing California
Planning for Sustainable Communities
Berkeley, CA

CohousingResearchNetwork.org

-- Increasing the rigor and reach of cohousing research --
Cohousing –
Flash in the Pan? Sui Generis?

A quick look at intentional communities before and after cohousing came to the US

Sustainability through governance and design of commons-and intentional communities

Associations and Networks across Intentional Communities and wider Federations

Is cohousing a movement for significant social change?
Governance

%established communities in the US N=745
Ic.org/Directory

64% Consensus/modified consensus
15% Leadership Council/council of elders
8% Democracy (majority or representative)
1.5* Sociocracy
15 Other
Eating Meals Together

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W/Responses</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-5x week</td>
<td>30.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 x month</td>
<td>16.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~1x/week</td>
<td>15.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ All dinners</td>
<td>12.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~All meals</td>
<td>15.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>5.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
<td>80.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Resp.</td>
<td>19.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>745</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Growing Food

- 52 communities have Farm in their title
- 39 refer to farm or farming in their Mission or Purpose statement
- 10-12* of US cohousing communities also host farms, CSA
- Majority of communities grow 0% to <25% of their own food

Unverified

Source: FIC COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY, 2016
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Founded</th>
<th># Listings by Date</th>
<th>Cumulative Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>530</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1889</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900-1910</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910-1919</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922-1929</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-39</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-1949</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1959</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-1969</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-79</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-89</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-99</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2009</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>778</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2015</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>946</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# of Communities by Date Established

530-2015*

* 2015 count not fully verified
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cohousing</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>36.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecovillage</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commune</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious/Spiritual Community</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Cooperative</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition Town</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School/Educational/Experience</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Org/Association</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Respondents</td>
<td>604</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: [www.ic.org/directory](http://www.ic.org/directory), Fellowship of Intentional Community, May 2016, and NOTE: Both Type and Established are self-described categories chosen by the community contact, and summarized with minimal editing by the directory search engine. Multiple types may be mentioned. They are not legal structures. Newer communities may aspire to a model. A few entries are multi-site networks or include multiple neighborhoods. Also, many communities identify with multiple types or do not name a type in the field where these descriptors are requested.
Ostrum’s Principles: Sustainable Commons*

1. Clear and accepted boundaries of users, and the physical resource

2. Rules governing contributions & use match local conditions & needs; distribution of costs is proportional to the distribution of benefits

3. Most of those affected by the rules can participate in modifying the rules.

4. Those who monitor the health and harvest of the resource are accountable to the users or are the users

5. Rule violations receive graduated sanctions that depend on seriousness and context

6. Access to local, low-cost and prompt dispute resolution.

7. Local control & agreements respected by external authorities

8. Connected thru nested or networked set of supporting institutions

*Common Pool Resources such as water districts, fishing grounds, managed forests

GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Established communities in the US, N=745  Ic.org/Directory

64% Consensus/modified consensus
15% Leadership Council/council of elders
8% Democracy (majority or representative)
1.5*  Sociocracy
15*  other
**Eating Meals Together**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>W/Responses</th>
<th>All</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-5x week</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 x month</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~1x/week</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ All dinners</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~All meals</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>30.60%</th>
<th>38.13%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2-5x week</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-3 x month</td>
<td>16.78%</td>
<td>20.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~1x/week</td>
<td>15.30%</td>
<td>19.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~ All dinners</td>
<td>12.35%</td>
<td>15.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~All meals</td>
<td>5.23%</td>
<td>6.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Resp.</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>19.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>745</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Growing Food**

- 52 communities have Farm in their title
- 39 refer to farm or farming in their Mission or Purpose statement
- 10-12* of US cohousing communities also host farms, CSA
- Majority of communities grow 0% to <25% of their own food

---

**Needs verification**

Source: **FIC COMMUNITIES DIRECTORY, 2016**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global Ecovillage Network &amp; Regional GENs: Ecovillage Network of North America, CASA, GENNA Canada Ecovillage Network</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North American Students of Cooperation Subnetworks of NASCO (Michigan University Student Cooperatives, Madison Coop Network, Santa Cruz Berkeley Student Cooperatives)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camphill Association of the US Catholic Workers /Dorothy Day Catholic Orders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutterian Brethren Bruderhof Rochdale Coops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Association of Housing Cooperatives International Communes Desk Cohousing Association of the US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willing Workers on Organic Farms School for Living Twelve Tribes Ananda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fellowship for Intentional Community Federation of Egalitarian Communities NICA - Northwest Intentional Communities Association Catholic Orders Christian Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madison Community Cooperatives (see NASCO) Utopian Ecovillage Network GEN of the Americas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others inferred from other fields Kibbutz Religious Society of Friends</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Comparative Design and Governance Principles Among Common Pool Resources Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Clear and accepted boundaries of a) users and of the resource</td>
<td>1. Open, voluntary membership without discrimination</td>
<td>Participatory Process - Residents actively involved in physical design and decision-making before move-in.</td>
<td>Each of the FEC communities:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Rules governing contributions &amp; use match local conditions &amp; needs; distribution of costs is proportional to the distribution of benefits.</td>
<td>2. Democratic governance; 1 member-1 vote</td>
<td>Neighborhood Design</td>
<td>1. Holds its land, labor, income and other resources in common.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Most of those affected by the rules can participate in modifying the rules.</td>
<td>3. Economic participation of members (Shared or limited return on equity)</td>
<td>Extensive Common Facilities</td>
<td>2. Assumes responsibility for the needs of its members, receiving the products of their labor and distributing these and all other goods equally, or according to need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Those who monitor the health and harvest of the resource are accountable to the users or are the users</td>
<td>4. Surplus belongs to members.</td>
<td>Resident Management</td>
<td>3. Practices non-violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Rule violations receive graduated sanctions that depend on seriousness and context</td>
<td>5. Education of members and public in cooperative principles.</td>
<td>Social Transformation – in support of Basque and region (Mondragon)</td>
<td>4. Uses a form of decision making in which members have an equal opportunity to participate, either through consensus, direct vote, or right of appeal or overrule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Access to local, low-cost and prompt dispute resolution.</td>
<td>6. Cooperation among cooperatives.</td>
<td>Nonheirarchical Leadership</td>
<td>5. Actively works to establish the equality of all people and does not permit discrimination on the basis of race, class, creed, ethnic origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Local control &amp; agreements expected by external authorities</td>
<td>7. Attention to the larger community</td>
<td>Independent Incomes</td>
<td>6. Acts to conserve natural resources for present and future generations while striving to continually improve ecological awareness and practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Connected thru nested or networked set of supporting</td>
<td>8. Social Transformation</td>
<td>Member households have their own sources of income and maintain separate finances except for common community expenses. In rare cases the communal property generates</td>
<td>7. Creates processes for group communication and participation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Directory of Catholic Worker Communities [http://www.catholicworker.org/communities/]

Network For a New Culture

Ananda Sangha Worldwide

The Twelve Tribes
Sources

*Cohousing: Growing Green and Silver* by Raines Cohen and Betsy Morris, *Communities*, v127 #2, 2005

Census of Cohousing, 2006 and 2008 – produced for


**Why Intentional Communities Matter** by Sky Blue and Betsy Morris. Paper Presented at the Mini-conference 'Re-embedding the Social: New Modes of Production, Critical Consumption and Alternative Lifestyles' to the Society for the Advancement of Socio-Economics, June 24-26, 2016, University of California at Berkeley


*Homer Morris and the history of FIC: Getting by with a little help from our Friends*, internet research for article in progress for *Communities: journal of cooperative culture*, fall 2017.
Diversifying Cohousing: The Retrofit Model

Angela Sanguinetti, PhD, BCBA
Director, Cohousing Research Network

-Increasing the rigor and reach of cohousing research -
Barriers to cohousing: Mitigated with retrofit model?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers to cohousing growth</th>
<th>Mitigated by retrofit model?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing industry, supply-side</td>
<td>Not competing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing industry, demand-side</td>
<td>Can be more conventional/compatible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource-intensive/complexity</td>
<td>Less resource-intensive/simpler</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Growing cohousing: Easier with retrofit model?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors that promote adoption</th>
<th>Easier with retrofit model?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local normative influence</td>
<td>Already locally established</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trialability</td>
<td>More trialable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observability</td>
<td>More observable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diversity in cohousing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criticism of cohousing</th>
<th>Better with retrofit model?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of diversity: Race, income, ideology, education, etc.</td>
<td>Let’s find out!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diversifying Cohousing: The Retrofit Model

Objective: Compare residents of retrofit cohousing to residents of new build and reuse cohousing developments.

Published in *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research*
Multilevel Methodology

- CRN 2011 Community Survey
- Geospatial analyses of cohousing clusters
- CRN 2012 Resident Survey
CRN 2011 Community Survey

• 76 respondents on behalf of their communities
  • 9 retrofits; 67 “traditional” (new build and reuse)
• Supplemented by FIC directory data
### Retrofitts in 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Name</th>
<th>No. of Units</th>
<th>City, County</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Location Type</th>
<th>Legal Ownership Structure</th>
<th>Year Established</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Berkeley Cohousing</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Berkeley, Alameda</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>HOA</td>
<td>1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borland Green Ecovillage</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Pittsburgh, Allegheny</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Common space owned by development corporation HOA</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boulder Creek Community Gardens Cohousing</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Boulder, Lansiing</td>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Members are planning to create a limited liability company for the common house Tenancy in common</td>
<td>2003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Gate Cohousing</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Oakland, Alameda</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>HOA</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidden Creek Cohousing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Oakland, Alameda</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>HOA</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles Eco-Village</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Los Angeles, Los Angeles</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Nonprofit ownership; renter-members working on cooperative ownership of land trust and housing Condo on community land trust land</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariposa Grove Village</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Oakland, Alameda</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Limited liability company owners renting to members</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayfair Village</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Denver</td>
<td>CO</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Limited liability company owners renting to members</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monterey Cohousing</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>St. Louis Park, Hennepin</td>
<td>MN</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Cooperative ownership for mansion, condo association for townhomes, and a master association that covers both Tenancy in common</td>
<td>1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N Street Cohousing</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Davis, Yolo</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>None; most homes are part of planned development zoning that prevents fences from being installed Tenancy in common</td>
<td>1988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brighton Commons</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Aptos, Santa Cruz</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>HOA</td>
<td>2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peninsula Park Commons</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Portland, Multnomah</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>HOA</td>
<td>2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Mateo Ecovillage</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>San Mateo</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Founders own and rent out units</td>
<td>1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temescal Creek Cohousing</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oakland, Alameda</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>HOA</td>
<td>1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Orchard</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Oakland, Alameda</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tortuga</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Mountain View, Santa Clara</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>Tenancy in common</td>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Triple Point Cohousing</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Oakland, Alameda</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Mixture of tenancy in common and private ownership</td>
<td>2005</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Summary of Community Comparisons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>Retrofit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average size**</td>
<td>25 units</td>
<td>10 units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location**</td>
<td>46% urban</td>
<td>72% urban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal structure**</td>
<td>96% HOA</td>
<td>44% HOA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community resistance*</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in zoning</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosures</td>
<td>0.2 per community</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .10$; ** $p < .01$
Geospatial analyses

• Case study areas
  • Cluster of new build cohousing in Seattle area
  • Cluster of retrofit cohousing in Oakland area
  • Characterize census tracks in terms of:
    • Racial diversity
    • Median household income
    • Educational attainment

• Cohousing communities in relation to 2008 presidential vote in US states and CA counties
WA New Build and CA Retrofit Cohousing Developments Relative to Median Household Income

- Counties
- Cities
- New Build Cohousing
- Retrofit Cohousing

Median Household Income
- Less than $25,000.00
- $25,000.00 - $49,999.99
- $50,000.00 - $74,999.99
- $75,000.00 and greater
WA New Build and CA Retrofit Cohousing Developments Relative to Educational Attainment

- **Counties**
- **Cities**

- **New Build Cohousing**
- **Retrofit Cohousing**

Percent 25 and older with graduate or prof. degree:
- Less than 5%
- 5% - 19%
- 20% and higher

Map showing the distribution of new build and retrofit cohousing developments in Washington and California, with a focus on educational attainment.
CRN 2012 Resident Survey

• National
• Random sample
• Oversampled retrofit cohos

• 433 traditional cohousers
• 44 retrofit cohousers
• About 10% of all cohousers
Similarities between traditional and retrofit cohousers
Similarities between Traditional and Retrofit Cohousers

• Gender
  • Traditional: 72% female
  • Retrofit: 70% female

• Household size
  • Traditional: 2.5
  • Retrofit: 3

• Number of children under 17 in home
  • Traditional: 1.7
  • Retrofit: 1.5

• Duration of residence in cohousing
  • Traditional: 8 years
  • Retrofit: 6 ½ years
Education

- Not significantly different
Politics

• Not significantly different
Similar income
Similarities between traditional and retrofit cohousers
Similar income but significantly less in assets (more diverse)
Age

- More diverse
- Younger
- More evenly distributed
Race
• More diverse
• Still majority white
Partnership Status

• More diverse
• More never married
• Fewer married
Employment

- More diverse
- Fewer retired
- More students
Housing tenure

- More diverse
- More renters
- Fewer owners, especially free and clear
Conclusion

Retrofit cohousing is more diverse and more accessible for younger, never married, renters, more limited assets, students...

But this diversity doesn’t address the criticism of cohousers as white, relatively high income, liberal, highly educated...
Cutting edge resiliency in cohousing

Climate Leading Communities SURVEY PROJECT

NASHVILLE MAY 19-21 2017

NATIONAL COHOUSING CONFERENCE

Building Resilient, Sustainable Communities

Nashville, TN | May 19-21, 2017

Jenny Godwin & Bryan Bowen
Our Journey Today

So you’ve built this green community (and learned some great tips from Justin on effective systems and certification), now what?

- What happens after the groundbreaking, the grand opening?
- Findings from recent surveys of cohousing communities: CRN & ours
  - What communities are doing right now to combat climate change
  - Highlight climate leaders in the cohousing world
Beginning with the Neighborhood

“Greener cities [and communities] are the most important element in the fight against climate change and sticking to temperature rises agreed upon in the Paris Agreement, according to climate experts...”
Underlying Assumptions

- Sustainability challenges and opportunities vary greatly from community to community based on...
  - Local politics – Is composting cool? Recycling?
  - Acreage – 300 acres or .3 acres?
  - Financability – Subsidies for solar? CFL discounts?
  - Number of residents, scalability – 9 or 90?
  - Climate – Perfect for solar? Summer temps require A/C?
  - Overall sense of the need, driven (or not) by residents
CRN Survey Results

*Cohousing Research Network’s 2017 survey results:*

**Most Common Green Features in the Common House:**
- 30+% have low flow faucets and/or toilets
- 40% have solar panels
- 60% have LED lights

**In Individual Homes:**
- 60% have some homes with solar
- 85% have some homes with low-flow showerheads
- 42% have some homes with rainwater catchment

**Community wide:**
- 76% have low impact landscaping
- 87% have composting
- 76% have community-managed recycling
- 82% have community veggie gardens & 47% also participate in an off-site CSA
CRN Survey Results

*Cohousing Research Network’s 2017 survey results:*

**Community Location**
74% convenient to public transportation
66% convenient trip to café, library, movie store, etc.
53% have easy bike storage on site

**Activism**
31% have a committee tasked with addressing green issues
44% don’t, but consider enviro impacts in most decisions
80% of communities have members involved in enviro activism
  - Regular Thursday evening letter-writing sessions after Trump.
  - Citizens Climate Lobby
  - We often march as a community in the City's Earth Day parade
Climate Leading Communities Survey

- 37 responses from 28 communities
  - Valuable insight on variance of perceptions
- How strongly does your community value sustainability?
  - 1 = only barely, 5 = quiet strongly
  - 2.7% say 2
  - 8.1% say 3
  - 54.1% say 4
  - 35.1% say 5
Survey: Standout Community Profile

Cobb Hill Cohousing: Hartland, VT

STRENGTHS

- (W) Composting toilets plus on-site compost
- (E) Energy Star homes/appliances, low flow, triple pane windows
- (E) Solar hot water, wood-fired heating serve community
- (F) Farm & forest acreage used for milk, egg, veggie, meat and wood harvest
- (F) 5 acre CSA farm on site provides community food
- (L) Have sustainability topic/discussions at every community meeting
- (L) Members are very active – marches, education/enviro groups

CHALLENGES

- Rural location makes for car-dominated transportation
- Green committee turned down as “people trying to get others to change their lifestyle”
- “To be truly sustainable, we would have to change our lifestyles. We mostly live the modern lifestyle with a lots of green practices. In the end, this is not enough.”

WISH LIST

- Our own electrical grid!

23 families (~65 people)
3 apts, 6 duplexes, 8 single homes
270 acres

“There are so many options, you want to choose one that people in your community are excited about and eager to reach toward.”

“One child age 5 came back from a trip somewhere and said ... "you know what, there were using water to flush down their poop. That is really wasteful isn't it?”
Nyland Cohousing: Lafayette, CO

STRENGTHS
• (W) City recycling, compost, special recycling done by members (bags, batteries, cloth, etc.)
• (E) Passive solar and solar panels (on 2/3 of rooftops)
• (E) Swamp cooler for common house
• (F) CSA farm on site provides community-used food
• (L) Children active in local waste reduction, food production
• (T) Formal car share of electric car (eliminated at least 4 cars from community lot)

CHALLENGES
• Cheap gas means less motivation for alternative transportation

WISH LIST
• Geothermal retrofitting, wind power

Moved in 1992
42 homes (~135 residents)
43 acres

“After the recent election, we have formed an Indivisible group and an email group to share information about current political events and ways to act, so everyone has the option to be engaged if they’d like.”

www.nylandcohousing.org
Survey: Standout Community Profile

Acequia Jardin: Albuquerque, NM

STRENGTHS
- (W) Quarterly free store/collection space in common house
- (W) Avg 1.5 rollout bins of trash and 2 of recyclables per week for all
- (E) 70% of homes have solar (paid by individual owners)
- (E) Well insulated, Energy Star, lowE windows (small home size helps)
- (F) Fruit trees in common area provided to all
- (F) Organic growing, nontoxic pest control, composting
- (T) Walkable area: shopping, library, community centers
- (T) 1.1 vehicles per household
- (R) Providing meals when someone is ill or recuperating

CHALLENGES
- Small community means big impact with individual choices

WISH LIST
- Convert our carport roof into a solar collector and power a charger for electric-powered vehicles

Moved in 2013
10 units
1.1 acres

“We City originally tried to make us pave our driveway and we insisted on using permeable crushed rock instead to help with recharge of surface water into our city’s aquifer. We won!”

“We urge folks to remember that "water is the new oil" and to protect water from pollution and privatization at all costs.”

www.acequijardin.com
Survey: Standout Community Profile

Winslow Cohousing: Bainbridge Island, WA

STRENGTHS
- (W) Community-wide composting
- (W) Freecycle center in common house, allows for re-use
- (W) Surface water collection system to return water to aquifer
- (F) Extensive community garden and orchard production
- (T) Ease of alternative transportation use
- (L) Daily ride and product sharing
- (R) Part of property in land trust/conservation easement
- (R) Process and Communication group works on broad scope of issues: aging-in-place, support of ill neighbors, diversity, affordability

CHALLENGES
- Green practices can come with a high price tag
- Green committee turned down as “people trying to get others to change their lifestyle”

WISH LIST
- Upgrading our electrical service to support electric vehicle charging

Moved in 1992
30 homes
5.5 acres

“A few children chafe at the rules and restrictions, but most model sustainable practices as their normal way of living. Many children have now grown to adulthood within our community, and some are now involved in environmental education, legal practices, and non-profits as their chosen career.”

www.winslowcohousing.org
Suggestions from Community Survey

- “Plan community design for smart systems early: Net Zero design, geothermal HVAC, PV energy.”
- “Having a central collect area for reuse items and hard to recycle items is one of the easiest and most cost effective things to do.”
- “Hang your car keys away, so to drive requires a conscious decision.”
- “Change your landscaping to be edible. It requires more care, but it helps you get in touch with the abundance of nature, the sense of growing and maybe preserving your own food.”
- “I think the work we are starting to do through our Care Committee could be one of the more important things to do, especially with other seniors in cohousing.”
  - “Have a "Sustainability Fund" which people can donate to on a monthly basis. Many people view this as a way to offset their carbon footprints.”
  - “Your state may have programs available to provide free or low-cost insulation and air-sealing.”
  - “Discuss and come up with strategies that are put in place and practice and become the norm.”
  - “Recycle, reuse, reduce, compost, walk, carpool.”
  - “Eat together and encourage each other to prepare foods with local ingredients.”

Email jenny.godwin@cohousing-solutions.com to receive further details & survey insights.
Thank You!

QUESTIONS?

Jenny Godwin
CoHousing Solutions
jenny.godwin@cohousing-solutions.com

Bryan Bowen
Caddis
bryan@caddispc.com
Costs of Living in Cohousing

Angela Sanguinetti, PhD, BCBA
Director, Cohousing Research Network (CRN)

- Increasing the rigor and reach of cohousing research -
2017 Resident Survey

• Living in cohousing and did not take the survey?
  • Please find me after this session or contact CRN at the url below!

Welcome Cohouser!

This survey is part of a research study funded by the University of Vermont and sponsored by Cohousing Association of the United States (Coho/US) and Cohousing Research Network (CRN), with collaborators at University of North Carolina, Wilmington. The survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Your responses are saved after each page, so you may complete the survey over multiple visits if you wish, rather than all in one sitting, so long as you are using the same device and web browser. Questions focus on how cohousers feel about multi-generational living, in addition to many other aspects of the cohousing experience.

We request participation from only one member in your household, so please discuss with other members of your household who may have also received an invitation. Your participation is voluntary and your individual responses will be anonymous and confidential. You may skip any questions and discontinue your participation at any time without penalty; however, more complete participation will strengthen our findings.

To enter a raffle for $150, send an email to cohosurvey@gmail.com with "2017 Resident Survey" in the subject line.
20. Please describe how cohousing has impacted your household's cost of living, including any examples of situations where living in cohousing saved you money or incurred unexpected costs.
Higher housing costs

• Cohousing involves a higher rent payment than my last home
• HOA increases over the past 3 years have posed a significant burden on my household
• Cost of choosing unit considerably more than similar in surrounding area
• The property taxes are double what I paid for a single family house in the same city.
• The HOA fees have risen 15% each year I've lived in cohousing, as opposed to the 3-5% rise I was expecting.
Savings!
Sharing meals

• Our eating out expenses have been reduced too as we enjoy eating with neighbors and take turns hosting
• Shared bounty can save $$ at market
• We eat out less- since we have common dinner 2 times a week and often leftovers from those meals. I would guess we spend about 5% less over all
• Meals are fun and reasonably priced
Sharing stuff

• We have saved money through sharing all types of equipment & appliances
• Sharing of material resources is very helpful - snow shovels to washing machines to the roof and much more
• I buy less because I can borrow items
• We take advantage of shared assets (laundry) and trade lots of goods amongst families (e.g. kids hand-me-downs)
Sharing maintenance costs

• It has saved me a lot in repair and maintenance
• I don’t have to maintain washer, dryer, lawnmower
• Costs less because we share responsibility for maintaining community space
• The savings for reserve have helped minimize unexpected house repair and maintenance costs
Skill sharing

• Residents sign up to do much of the physical and administrative work and this keeps our HOA fees quite low

• Handyman help from community members

• We help each other in many ways such as a neighbor checking out a problem I am having before calling a professional and/or fixing it for me

• Community expertise also means less loss in useless purchased items or mistakes made in home projects because we can bounce ideas off other who have more experience and are willing to help

•
Support

• We spend less on childcare since we are often able to find a neighbor to watch our kids
• We give each other lots of rides, meals, plus lodging for visiting friends and relatives, pet sitting - thousands of little niceties that normally you would either have relatives provide or have to pay for someone to provide (taxi, hotel, meal delivery, etc, etc, etc)
• The guest space in this cohousing helped my family reduce the financial impact of a medical emergency by providing space for family and friends to stay while I needed in home care
Entertainment

- Activities and events that take place in the common house that are free which I would pay additional money for if I lived somewhere else
- We go out less since there is a lot going on here
- Our entertainment expenses are reduced because fun and games are more readily available in the community
- We share internet service as a community, which only costs our family $10/month
- It has save tons on child-entertainment category
Transportation

• I drive way less, around 3,000 miles per year
• The location of our cohousing community affords us great mobility without having to rely on our car.
• I have saved money by borrowing a car instead of renting one
• We were able to get rid of our cars and bike only. We borrow a car from a neighbor for long trips about 12 times a year
• We give each other rides esp for elders so they avoid needing transport service
Utilities

• Our well, which we pooled resources to get, saves us a lot on irrigation for plants
• We negotiated lower rates for solar installation
• Our geothermal system has meant substantially lower utility bills
• Our central heating & water system, and our very tight construction, save a huge amount
• Our utility bills are about 1/4 what others pay
• Our cost of running the building is less than running our former house
Worth the costs

• Cost is higher but shared funds supply social events that would not happen in non-cohousing situations
• And you can't put a price on new friendships
• Meals and cultural activities cost more because more abundant
• The rent in my cohousing unit is higher than the rent of my single family home but the opportunities for real social connection, group meals, political action, sharing of tools, sharing of services, sharing of wisdom and experience, etc. more than make up for that difference
COST OF LIVING IN COHOUSING
COST OF LIVING IN COHOUSING

Pay Now
Pay Forward
Pay Less
PAY NOW

Condo dues collected this year, to be spent this year, or in an anticipated future.
SURVEY METHOD

We asked a broad range of cohousing communities to send us the documents presented for consensus at the annual budget meeting.
REPLIES

• 20 communities, 611 units.
• Largest = 41; smallest = 20.
• Good mix of urban, suburban and rural.
• Mostly intergenerational, some senior.

Good enough for simple averages, not good enough for disaggregation and cross-tabs.
How Communities Think About Money

- Budget by Committee
- Budget by Function
- Budget by Zone
- Budget by Priority
- Budget Categories
Budget by Function

- Misc Admin
  - Misc supplies
  - Computer & programs
- Mgt Company Fee
  - Accounting & bookkeeping
  - Managing vendors
- Routine Services
  - Groundskeeping
  - Cleaning
  - Snow plowing
  - Routine repairs
- Maintenance
  - Ugly surprises
- Utilities
  - Gas / Elec / W&S
  - Internet
- Insurance
  - All kinds...

Mostly managed by a central finance committee.
Budget by Zone

- Common House
  - Utilities, insurance
    - Cleaning
    - Meals & supplies
  - Pool & Hot Tub
  - Farm
  - Workshop & Outbuildings
  - Forest & Trails
Budget by Priority

"Fixed"
- utilities, insurance
- maintenance

"Discretionary"
- improvements
- consensus training
Budget Categories

- Administration
  - self-performed professional contracts
- Maintenance
  - self-performed trade contracts
  - utilities
- Operations
  - insurance
  - replacement reserve
  - contingencies
- Savings
  - child care
  - betterments
  - consensus training
  - donations to Coho/US ...
- Cohousing
  - (rentals)
  - (solar panels)

The Procrustean Bed of this study...
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

SELF-PERFORMED: Annual fees and taxes; misc supplies and reprographics; computer and programs. Occasional legal and accounting services, as needed.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES: Paid bookkeeper; property management company.
Administrative Budget

Per unit, for 20 communities

A4 Pfsnl
A1 Self-admin
MAINTENANCE COSTS

SELF-PERFORMED: Tools and equipment, materials and supplies. Includes yard work and gardening supplies, plant materials. Plus “call the plumber.”

TRADE SERVICES: Seasonal and annual contracts, like cleaning company! Or, paid groundskeeping, snow plowing, window washing, life safety …
"OPERATING" COSTS

UTILITIES: Basic gas/oil, electric, water and sewer. Maybe Internet, septic, water well, other specialty. Solar panels as offset income?

INSURANCE: Property, casualty, and liability.
Utilities / Insurance Budget

Per unit, for 20 communities

A6 Utilities
A5 Insurance
"COHOUSING" COSTS
"COHOUSING" COSTS

CULTURAL / LIFESTYLE: Consensus training; the annual retreat; celebrations; child care; donations to Coho/US.
“COHOUSING” COSTS

CULTURAL / LIFESTYLE: Consensus training; the annual retreat; celebrations; child care; donations to CoHoUS.

BETTERMENTS: Improvement projects like a new greenhouse, or adding solar panels. (May appear as earmarked savings, or current, or debt service to a previous loan.)
SAVINGS

RESERVE FOR THE EXPECTED (CAPITAL REPLACEMENTS): E.g., new roof ten years away.
SAVINGS

RESERVE FOR THE EXPECTED (CAPITAL REPLACEMENTS): E.g., new roof ten years away.

CONTINGENCY FOR THE UNEXPECTED (UGLY SURPRISES): Premature failure, flooding, meteor strike, etc.
CULTURAL / LIFESTYLE

+

BETTERMENTS

+

SAVINGS
CULTURAL
+
BETTERMENTS
+
SAVINGS
=
THE DISCRETIONARY BUDGET
SUMMARY

All communities, all budgeted costs, all in together.
Mean Condo/HOA Fee

“Average” Annual Fee: Appx $3K-$5K per unit.

Per unit, for 20 communities
# Living in Cohousing • Annual Dues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Communities</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean, Min and Max per Unit</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ / unit</td>
<td>% total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANOPS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1 Self-admin</td>
<td>$165</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2 Self-maintain</td>
<td>$535</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3 Trade Contracts</td>
<td>$443</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4 Prfsnl Contracts</td>
<td>$139</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5 Insurance</td>
<td>$492</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6 Utilities</td>
<td>$1,069</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COHO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C1 Cultural</td>
<td>$177</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2 Betterments</td>
<td>$96</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAVE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1 Savings</td>
<td>$1,456</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2 Contingency</td>
<td>$82</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNC</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U1 Offset Income</td>
<td>($274)</td>
<td>(6.2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This selection set represents ALL the communities responding to CRN’s request for information. It includes a broad range of community types and sizes, but due to the nature of the sampling, no claim is made about how “representative” this subset is. In fact, it’s safe to say that cohousing is widely diverse in both magnitude of annual dues, and how to think about money.
WHY SO MUCH DIFFERENCE?
WHY SO MUCH DIFFERENCE?

1. Variation in how little, or much, is owned in common.
WHY SO MUCH DIFFERENCE?

1. Variation in how little, or how much, is owned in common.
2. Variation in how little, or how much, is self-performed (as opposed to hired out).
WHY SO MUCH DIFFERENCE?

1. Variation in how little, or much, is owned in common.
2. Variation in how little, or how much, is self-performed (as opposed to hired out).

No right way or wrong way. It’s about ownership model, values and lifestyle choices.
Is cohousing cheaper than "regular" housing?
HOUSING COST COMPARISON

30% of gross income

- Property Taxes
- Insurance
- Utilities (G/E/W+S)
- Mortgage or Rent

SINGLE FAMILY OR RENTAL

COHOU5 • CRN • MAY 2017
Is cohousing cheaper than “regular” housing?
Is a trip to Europe cheaper than a new car?
Is a trip to Europe cheaper than a new car?

1. Depends on the trip.
2. Depends on the car.
Is a trip to Europe cheaper than a new car?

1. Depends on the trip.
2. Depends on the car.
3. Why ask the question?
Is a trip to Europe cheaper than a new car?

1. Depends on the trip.
2. Depends on the car.
3. Why ask the question?

Cohousing is not cheaper. Cohousing not more expensive. It’s just different.
? Does it offer the lifestyle and mix of benefits you want?

? Can you make it fit your personal household budget?