



Dwell : A Housing Journey Accelerator Program

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Acknowledgements

The Housing Journeys Reimagined Solutions Lab is led by Blue Door Support Services in partnership with Habitat for Humanity Greater Toronto Area and SHS Consulting.

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Where we Started



Breaking Away from Traditional Housing Pathways

The rising cost of housing and lack of available rental options across urban regions in Canada like York Region has put strain on emergency housing systems, which are seeing longer shelter stays from people who cannot secure rental housing, as well as recurring cycles of homelessness when people are not able to maintain their housing.

The Lab Team consisting of **Blue Door**, in partnership with **Habitat for Humanity GTA**, and in collaboration with **SHS Consulting**, is looking to design, test, and implement a new supportive housing model that would offer residents more benefits than traditional rental housing—ones that are akin to homeownership.

This Lab aims to help young adults, families, and other groups obtain true housing stability and security of tenure through this new model that challenges our existing understanding of “rental” and “ownership” tenures.

The development and delivery of a radical new supportive affordable housing program requires working through three key dimensions of existing housing models:

Governance Model

Exploring new relationships and roles between different players involved in the housing model (e.g., residents, owner, service provider, property manager, funder) that result in more benefits for the residents than traditional rental arrangements

Finance Model

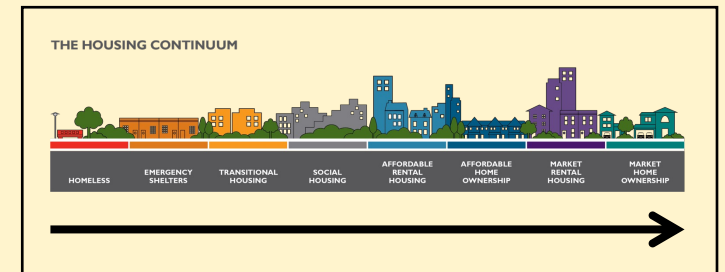
Exploring new ways for residents to earn “equity” throughout the course of their tenure, while ensuring long-term financial sustainability for the housing provider

Service Model

Exploring new ways to serve and support residents before and during their tenancy to create more positive housing experiences, reducing existing “pain points”

A New Journey

Conventional wisdom supports a “traditional” pathway to permanent housing, consisting of moving along the housing continuum from emergency shelter to transitional housing, and then to a form of rental housing.



This Lab seeks to envision a new journey, where we challenge the current pathway along the housing continuum. The **desired outcome** is to give people access to the **equity-building opportunities** that exist in the ownership real estate market, as well as the **sense of security and control** that come with being a homeowner.

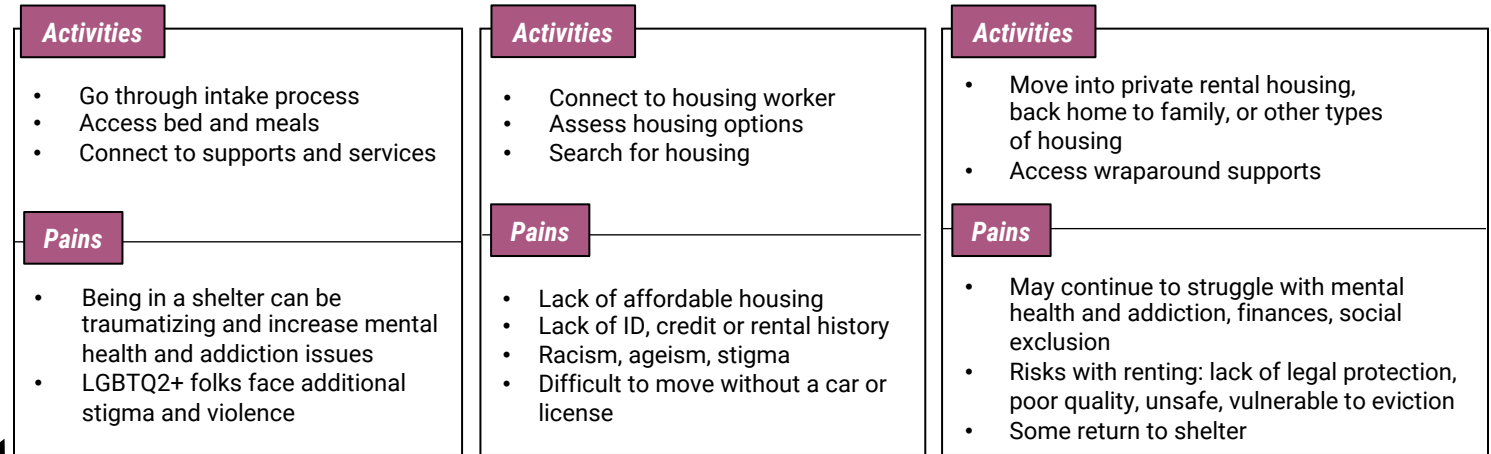
Current Housing Context

Unpacking the Existing Journey

The initial phases of the Lab were devoted to understanding the current housing context, particularly in York Region, where Blue Door is based, as well as the existing housing journeys and experiences of those seeking shelter and housing support services.

Learning from the experiences of Blue Door staff and current and former Blue Door clients, the Lab Team created a high-level journey map, showing a typical pathway of an individual first seeking support from Blue Door to accessing housing.

From speaking with staff and other subject matter experts, it was clear that larger systemic issues contributed to the challenges that individuals and family faced – from losing their housing in the first place to having difficulty finding safe, affordable, and suitable housing options to move to.



Systemic Issues

Precarious employment and housing: loss of housing due to job loss or crisis; widespread during COVID-19 pandemic)

Lack of investment in affordable housing, contributing to greater pressure of the emergency housing system

Lack of rental housing: in York Region, the rental housing supply is primarily secondary rental, with low vacancy rates)

Lack of affordable housing options for low-moderate income households: in York Region, there are few options for the bottom 40% of earners)

Intergenerational poverty and homelessness: rising housing costs make it difficult to break the cycle of poverty

Barriers and Enablers for a New Model

Creating a new housing model that circumvents traditional housing approaches comes with a number of challenges.

Challenging Orthodoxies

This Lab challenges orthodoxies (or commonly-held wisdom) and inequities embedded in the housing system, including:

- The idea that the solution to homelessness is always rental and that people must move in a linear way along the housing continuum, from emergency housing to transitional housing to community housing;
- The notion that there can be no equivalent equity- and wealth-building housing solutions for individuals who are of lower income or those who require supportive housing;
- The belief that people living in shelters will never elevate to homeownership status, especially in view of home prices today; and
- Purpose-built “supportive housing” that is affordable exists only in the rental tenure.

Barriers to Change

There are also barriers to creating a new affordable housing model that would offer people who have experienced homelessness a home with some of the benefits of homeownership, including:

- A culture of exclusivity around homeownership, where it is idealized and seen as a privilege that should not be accessible to all;
- Patronizing and discriminatory attitudes towards people who have been homeless – that they would not know how to manage equity or maintain their home;
- NIMBYism and resistance from the development industry against the inclusion of affordable, supportive housing in their communities and buildings; and
- Fear from funders and lenders to invest in innovation and provide sustained funding to implement ideas at scale.

The Lab Team sensed signals that now is the time to explore new, innovative housing solutions.

alternative forms of ownership

There is increasing interest and acceptance of shared ownership/equity models as the costs of buying a home continue to rise.

Housing First

There is greater interest in shifting to a “housing first” model, which focuses on enabling people to obtain housing, regardless of their situation.

inclusive communities

There is an increase in policies to increase the provision of affordable housing, such as inclusionary zoning

rapid housing solutions

Governments are investing in developing rapid permanent housing solutions, including building modular housing.

Desired Outcomes and Impact

Working Towards a Home for Everyone

In alignment with the National Housing Strategy, this Lab focuses on creating housing for those greatest in need through the design and implementation of a new affordable homeownership model with imbedded supports, that targets people currently living in emergency or transitional housing.

Challenging the notion that the solution to ending homelessness is always affordable rental, this Lab uses Housing First principles to work with people to create a housing option that they can call their own.

While our project most aligns with the NHC priority, **housing for those greatest in need**, the goals of the Lab are also related to creating a **balanced supply of housing**, and promoting **sustainable housing and communities**.



Pushing Boundaries

This Lab pushes boundaries of what housing options could be offered to people who are experiencing homelessness. For the majority of people who enter emergency housing in the Greater Toronto Area, it's a one-time occurrence. By offering an alternative option to rental housing that enables them to live in peace, security, and dignity, while having the opportunity to invest in their future, there is potential for greater social impact.

Reading this Report

This Solutions Lab report begins with a description of our **vision for the future**, co-developed with Blue Door and Habitat for Humanity GTA families and individuals, including the **success criteria** that define a new housing model in **Part 2**. Next, **Part 3** provides a detailed overview of the Dwell model, including how it works from desirability, feasibility, and viability perspectives. Finally, **Part 4** provides a way forward for implementing Dwell in York Region and scaling it to other jurisdictions.

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Our Vision for the Future



Establishing a Common Language

This Lab undertook an ambitious challenge—to create a new housing tenure model more aligned with people’s desires for building a safe, stable, and comfortable home. To do so, we set out to establish a common language around “home” and to dive deeper into what experiences, feelings, and outcomes people are looking for.

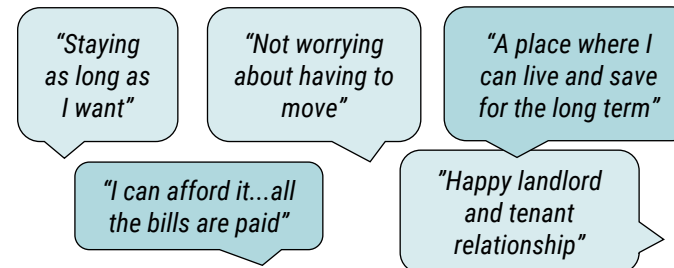
Safe, Stable, and Comfortable Housing

In an engagement activity with people with lived experience, the Lab Team asked participants what they saw as a safe, stable, and comfortable home. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) often uses the characteristics of **safe**, **stable**, and **comfortable** as key indicators of good housing outcomes, alongside affordability, suitability, and adequacy. This page includes some of the quotes we collected.

A safe home is...



A stable home is...



A comfortable home is...



Using Homeownership as a Starting Point

The Lab Team asked lived experts to imagine what an alternative form of homeownership might look like and mean for them. We intentionally started from a conversation about homeownership to unearth some of the assumptions and commonly-held narratives around traditional homeownership.

From this engagement, we identified commonalities in the participants' experiences and clustered them as patterns of **desired visions of the future**. These patterns highlight some of the distinct differences in expectations of homeownership and highlight the different ways participants imagined their most desirable future housing situations. These findings are summarized on the next few pages and in more detail in the Appendix of this report.

“ Yes, I think of being a homeowner all the time. I doubt myself often on whether it would be attainable.

- Lived Expert

What could “homeownership” mean in the future?

This page provides an overview of the desired visions of the future, as expressed by Blue Door and Habitat for Humanity GTA families and individuals. These findings are summarized in more detail in the Appendix of this report.

VISION 1 • Providing for One’s Family

This pattern consists of experiences and expectations of people who identified a future where homeownership **would benefit their family and children**, in particular.

They frequently identified homeownership as an input to a better life now and for the future for their families. Some of the common **desired outcomes** are:

- Having a safe and stable home for their children to grow up in and return to
- Building wealth and being able to pass the home down to their children so they can have a better life
- Having “status” in the community; being looked at differently
- Being able to modify the space to suit their family needs

VISION 2 • Freedom and Life Improvement

This pattern consists of experiences and expectations of people who identified a future where homeownership would help them feel a sense of freedom and accomplishment.

They frequently identified homeownership as an input to achieving further goals. Some of the common desired outcomes are:

- Being an “owner”; a sense of pride and accomplishment Gaining equity, investing in oneself, and building up to
- Improving quality of life
- Having freedom of one’s own space
- Having a sense of belonging and feeling grounded
- Having a foundation to achieve other goals – e.g. starting a business, going back to school, having a family

VISION 3 • Long-Term Home

This pattern consists of experiences and expectations of people who identified a future where homeownership would mean a sense of **long-term security**.

They frequently identified homeownership as an input to feeling assured that no one could take their home away. Some of the common **desired outcomes** are:

- Having a safe and stable home for the long-term; no time limit on duration of tenure
- Having some equity to fall back on in older years
- The pride of owning something
- Being able to personalize a space; do hobbies
- Being able to age in place



Informing a New Model




What principles should inform a new housing model?

Several key themes emerged across all the conversations that could serve to act as general principles to inform the initial design of the model, and that could also be used to shape ongoing service and operations approaches within the model.

- The need to be **responsive and reflexive**—building learning and reflection into the model
- The need to be **transparent** with information and **open** with communication
- The need for the model to be **flexible** to suit different resident needs and be adaptive to those needs over time—a range of services should be available
- Many people who experience homelessness have lacked control and agency in their past housing—there can be trauma; it is important for them to be **aware of their rights** and expectation to reduce fears of moving into a new place
- The need to maintain or **add to the level of available affordable housing stock** over time
- The need to consider **opt-in engagement**, where no one is forced to participate, and power relationships are clear, fair, and not solely related to the amount of financial stake in the project
- The need to have **long-term stability**—security of tenure is key to all four success criteria
- The need for **“feeling” of homeownership**—these are conditions for engagement and equity building and this is not necessarily tied to legal ownership of a physical space
- The need for **partnerships** and collaborative operating models with other programs and service providers
- The need to offer people **choices** and make them feel **respected** (e.g., not being watched by a landlord or having someone enter unexpectedly)
- In some cases, an equity stake may be related to control and agency (money = power!)

What would define “success” in a new housing model?

From the synthesis of our conversations, four key themes emerged. These themes became the success criteria we used to design the Dwell model. This page provides an overview of how each of these success criteria impact the model.

		Design Implications		
	Description	Housing Model 	Financial Model 	Service Model 
Success Criteria 1 Permanence and Stability	For participants, this theme means having a place for the long-term rather than planning for the future and living somewhere where you can set clear goals for yourself and your family.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving people the option to stay in their home for as long as they desire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The developer should have a mission to provide permanence and stability through long-term affordability for residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that people have access to supports they need to help them maintain their home Flexible and adaptive to needs
Success Criteria 2 Building Equity	This theme meant different things to different lived expert participants. For some, the opportunity to make an investment that grows in value over time was important. For others, they spoke about building equity as a way of feeling their housing payments are “benefiting them” instead of paying off someone else’s mortgage.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Having residents’ housing payments feel “productive”, similar to an owner building equity in their home, either by offering equity, providing shares, or rebates for housing costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing access to financial planning and education for residents to maximize their benefit from the equity or rebate they receive
Success Criteria 3 Pride and Responsibility	For participants, pride and responsibility come through feeling truly at home somewhere they feel proud and having a sense of achievement and belonging from having your own place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offering a tenure or governance model that includes the resident in the process 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offering opportunities for residents to get involved in their building in different ways
Success Criteria 4 Control and Agency	This success criteria means feeling a sense of control over one’s tenure. This could come in the form of knowing that your landlord cannot evict you by selling their unit or taking it over for personal use. Having control and agency in this situation means being able to decide how long you want to stay in one place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving residents a voice in their home, including some decision-making authority Operating with clarity, transparency, and openness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The financial model does not assume unit turnover in the short-run; it allows residents to stay as long as they wish, with a controlled rent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving residents control over the supports and services they access in their home Offering different locations and unit types to choose from

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Dwell: A Housing Journey Accelerator Program

Reimagining Housing Journeys

Creating a Desirable, Feasible, and Viable Model

Starting from “Desirability”

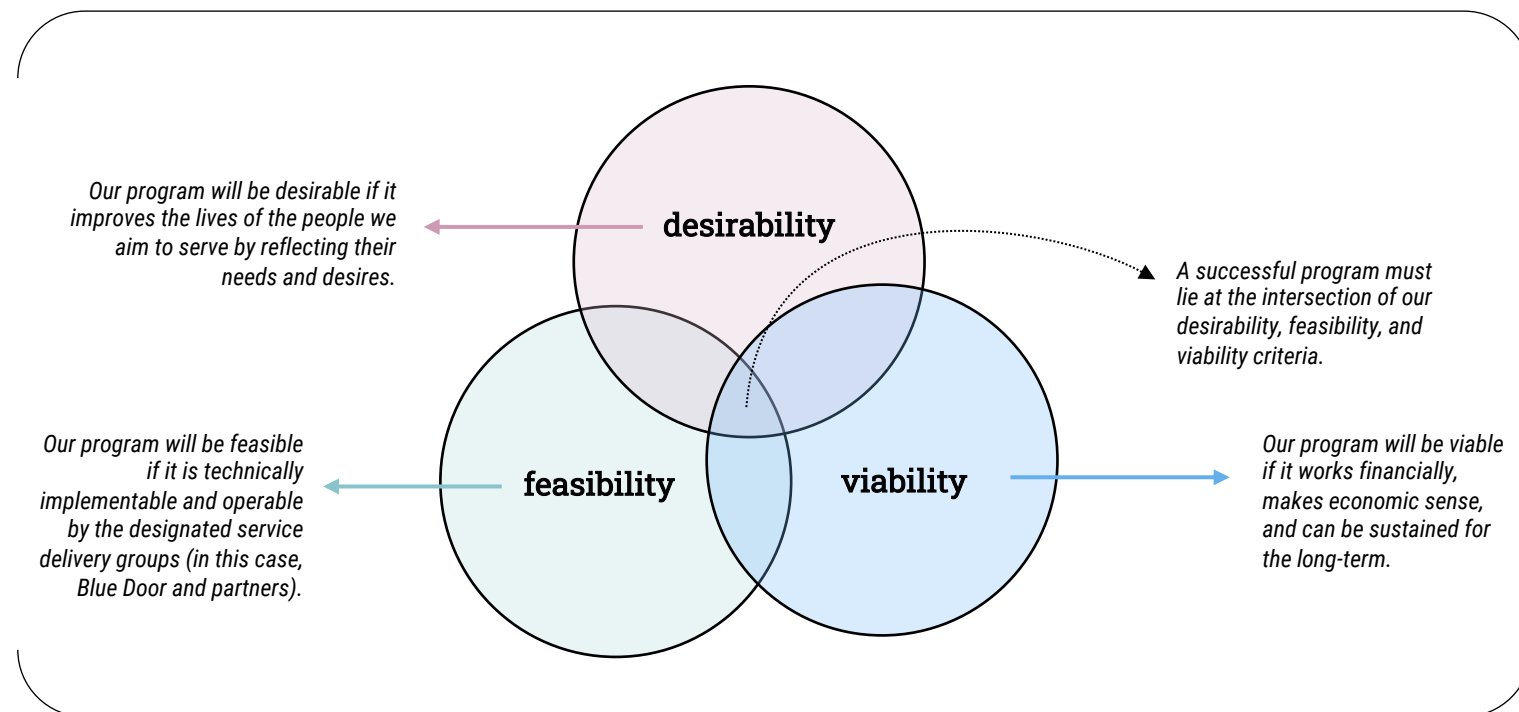
Through this Solutions Lab, we sought to create a new housing model that is **desirable** to the people we want to serve, **feasible** from the perspective of the organizations implementing the model (including the necessary capabilities and capacity to execute), and **viable** from a financial perspective.

We began this Solutions Lab journey by speaking with current Blue Door and Habitat for Humanity GTA clients and families to learn about what they might be looking for in a new housing tenure model. From there, we developed the four **success criteria** and **visions of the future**—two key inputs into the design process.

We developed several iterations of the Dwell model, testing our assumptions against the success criteria and visions for the future to ensure we were aligning our designs with what we heard from the people we aim to serve.

This Section

This section provides an overview of how the Dwell housing program works from each of the three lenses of desirability, feasibility, and viability.



A Desirable Housing Model for Existing Blue Door Clients

Dwell is a new social purpose housing program to lift people up.

Dwell is a new housing option that allows individuals experiencing homelessness to transition from shelters to a place that offers permanence and stability, the opportunity to build equity, a sense of pride and responsibility, and control and agency.

Dwell residents move into an apartment unit within a mid-to-high rise building. The rents are geared to 30% of the family's income, making the units affordable to a wide range of residents. Support services are also available on site, through Blue Door and other community partners.

Living at Dwell, is different from rental housing. Residents share in how the property is run and build savings through their rental payments, like a homeowner paying down their mortgage.

Dwell was born from a desire to give more people access to some of the benefits of traditional homeownership.

We sought to offer a new housing model that embodies four key criteria.

Permanence and Stability

Pride and Responsibility

Building Equity

Control and Agency

Who will Dwell serve?

The Dwell housing model has the potential to be a desirable, feasible, and viable housing model for a broad range of family types, household compositions, support needs, and income ranges. For the purposes of this initiative, three archetypal scenarios were developed based on the people Blue Door serves today.

These archetypes do not encompass every scenario and lived experience of people served by Blue Door, but act as a jumping off point for this first iteration of the Dwell model. The Lab Team drew inspiration from these archetypes and made every effort to design a desirable housing model with these hypothetical scenarios in mind.

In addition to showing up in the Dwell service model, these archetypes are reflected in the financial modelling undertaken in the section entitled *A Viable Real Estate Model for Development* and in the Appendix of this report.

ARCHETYPE 1 • Youth, unemployed but soon to be employed, looking for moderate wrap-around services

Imagine a young adult in their late-teens or early-twenties, who has become homeless following a relationship breakdown with their family. Currently, they live in a youth shelter and are trying to move on to independent housing, but they face barriers due to low income, lack of affordable rentals, and rental stigma against youth. The instability of their current living situation, their lack of formal education and training, as well as ongoing struggles with mental health makes it impossible to find and maintain a job. However, with the right supports and stable housing, they have the potential for a bright future. Right now, their priority is attaining a safe, stable home where they can learn to live independently in a place of their own. They hope to pursue education and training to improve their job prospects and start to build up savings as they plan for the future. Maybe they'll start a business, maybe they'll move to another city for school, or maybe they'll want to buy a home.

ARCHETYPE 2 • Single parent with one child, currently on social assistance

Imagine a single parent with a young child under the age of five, who has become homeless after leaving an abusive relationship. The parent grew up themselves in a low-income family, living in social housing. Now, the cycle of poverty is repeating with their own child, as they moved from place to place – bad rentals, staying temporarily with family and friends – before arriving at a family shelter. It's been difficult, as a single parent, to take care of their child, while maintaining a job. They had previously worked in the service industry, but the frequent moves and lack of childcare made it impossible for them to keep working. If they could attain stable housing and have access to childcare supports, they hope to go back to work. Their goal is to provide a safe, stable home for their child and get their career back on track. They dream of a future where they can own their own home – providing a safe place for their kid to always return to and ending the generational poverty.

ARCHETYPE 3 • Couple with three children, both parents employed at minimum wage

Imagine a family with two parents and three children, who have become homeless after being evicted from their rental home. The parents are immigrants to Canada, where discrimination and lack of recognition of their education from abroad means they are only able to obtain minimum wage jobs. Having a large family and limited income has made it extremely hard finding housing that's suitable for their household size. The only places they could afford were apartments in poor condition, with adversarial landlords that were always checking up on them and threatening eviction. When they were finally forced to leave their home, there was nowhere for them to go, causing the family to temporarily land in a shelter. The family wants to move to their own place as quickly as possible, but they cannot afford market rents and social housing waitlists are long. If they can find stable housing within their budget and build up savings, their goal is to enter the housing market someday, granting the family the most security and the kids a better life.

How does Dwell compare to other existing housing models?

The inspiration for this model came from a desire to offer a new tenure model allowing residents to build equity or savings, like typical homeowners. Through our Solutions Lab conversations and desk research, we identified elements of other existing tenure models we might borrow from to create this new model.

The table on this page compares the Dwell program to other existing housing models and identifies how Dwell’s components match up to models such as affordable rental, supportive, co-operative, Habitat ownership, market rental, and market ownership housing.

Borrowing from Other Models

This model most resembles a combination of co-operative rental housing and Habitat for Humanity GTA homeownership. While Dwell residents do not officially own their unit, their security of tenure is maintained like it would be in co-operative or affordable rental housing. Like Habitat ownership and co-operative housing, they have access to opportunities for involvement in their building. In addition, support services go beyond traditional Habitat ownership and include more fulsome support options, as typically provided in a supportive housing environment.

	Dwell Housing Program	Borrowing elements from...					
		Non-Market Housing				Market Housing	
		Affordable rental housing	Supportive housing	Co-operative housing	Habitat GTA Ownership	Market rental housing	Market homeownership
The Housing Provider: Who is the owner and operator of the housing?	The housing is owned and operated by a socially-minded housing provider with a goal of providing housing to people and households who cannot afford market prices.	×	×	×	×		
Tenure: What kind of arrangement does the resident have with the housing provider?	Dwell residents are members of a co-operative housing organization, similar to a traditional rental co-operative.			×			
Affordability: How is the cost of living in the unit determined?	Multiple affordability thresholds are provided, including based on 30% of household income (geared-to-income), at 80% of median market rent, and at market rate.	×			×		
Eligibility: Who is eligible to live in the home?	The non-market (affordable) units are means tested.	×	×	×	×		
Equity: Where do the residents’ housing payments go?	Housing payments go towards supporting the capital and operating costs associated with the housing. Once those costs are accounted for, residents have access to rebates instead of “equity.”			×	×		×
Resident Involvement: In what way are residents involved in their building?	Residents are involved in some decision-making, committees, and programming in their building to share ownership and responsibility for maintaining a great place to live.			×	×		×
Support Services: What support services are available to residents?	Residents have access to supports available on-site. They also have access to pre-move-in educational modules and training to learn about life at Dwell and how they can get involved in their community.		×		×		

What are the benefits to Dwell residents?

A primary objective of the Dwell program is to provide future residents with a housing option that is not available today. The model offers a new form of tenure where residents can experience a **permanence and stability**, a sense of **pride and responsibility**, **build equity**, and have **control and agency** over their home.

As part of this exercise, the Lab Team unpacked the elements that make up a housing model (e.g., the developer, owner, and operator, services, equity, finance, tenure, affordability, and eligibility). We investigated how decisions around these components could impact the four desired success criteria.

This page provides an overview of how the model might achieve these success criteria for future residents.

Permanence and Stability

The Dwell model promotes permanence and stability through working solely with **socially-minded developers** who aim to provide permanent long-term affordable housing for residents. Units have a range of **affordability thresholds**, to meet the needs of households with low-to-moderate incomes. There is **no end date** to the household's tenure at Dwell. Support services are available to residents to help maintain their long-term tenancy and growth at Dwell.

Pride and Responsibility

The Dwell governance model was specifically designed to infuse a sense of pride and responsibility. Dwell residents will be members of a **co-operative housing organization**, where they will be encouraged to get involved in their building and take on initiatives to animate the space and maintain the social fabric of the building. As opposed to a typical rental agreement, the **co-operative membership** gives residents an enhanced "stake" in their building to build in the sense of pride and "ownership" in one's home.

Building Equity

The opportunity to build equity, savings, or earn a rebate from housing payments is a critical component of this model. This allows residents' housing payments to feel "productive", similar to an owner building equity in their home. Through this model, Dwell residents **earn a rebate** on their housing costs. While residents do not benefit from their unit's appreciation in value, this appreciation allows Dwell to continue to serve more future residents and build new buildings.

Control and Agency

Dwell residents have control and agency over their space. There is no end date to their tenure, so they can feel stable in their home. Since Dwell residents are members of the co-operative, they have the opportunity to vote on some building issues and decisions, allowing for more participation in decision-making.

Life After Dwell

Leaving the Program

Since Dwell does not limit how long people can reside in the program, people will move out and exit the program only when they choose to do so.

Should Dwell residents choose to leave the program at a **milestone tenancy year or later** (three years for youth or five years for families), they can “cash out” their rental rebate. This process is similar to a homeowner selling their property and cashing out their equity. If the resident remains at Dwell, their rental rebate continues to accumulate over the course of their tenancy.

Leading up to resident move-out, Dwell residents would have access to supports, training, and services to help plan for next steps when it comes to their next housing situation and financial plan, which they can take advantage of if desired.

The amount of rebate the Dwell resident receives upon move-out depends on how long the person or household has lived in Dwell and the amount of rent they contributed over their tenure. With their rental rebate, people have absolute freedom and choice over how their money is used. Dwell aims to provide people with a minimum amount of \$10,000 through the rebate and matching from social purpose investors.

Based on the minimum rebate, the funds could be used to move on to a different market or non-market housing option. For instance, the funds could be used for:

- **Housing expenses**, such as first and last months’ rent, closing costs on a Habitat for Humanity home, a partial down payment on a future home, or moving costs
- **Personal expenses**, such as a major purchase (e.g., vehicle), education or training, or starting a business
- **Savings and investments**, such as an emergency fund, retirement savings, savings for children’s education, or other types of investments

Choosing Dwell

Just like homeownership may not be the tenure type that works for everyone, Dwell may not be the option of choice for all.

First, Dwell incorporates a cooperative housing model, meaning residents are part of the governance and oversight of their building.

Second, the Dwell model prioritized the success criteria of **permanence and stability**, creating a place where people can put down roots (similar to someone buying a home). In incorporating this permanence, the financial modelling shown later in this report assumed households moving into Dwell were seeking a tenure of at least three years for youth and five years for older individuals and families. The longer tenure allows Dwell residents to **build equity** which was another key success criteria for people.

A Feasible Housing Model for Implementation

Dwell amplifies the capabilities and capacities of existing non-profit housing providers and support service agencies, providing them with an opportunity to scale their housing offerings to more permanent options for the people they serve.

The Dwell model brings residents, a non-profit landowner or consortium of non-profit organizations, a residents' membership association, a property manager, support service providers, and funders together to provide a new housing tenure option for individuals and families with low incomes.

This section outlines how the Dwell **service model** works from the “back of stage” perspective (what the organizations running the program see and do) and from the “front of stage” perspective (what applicants and selected residents see and do). The **governance model** describes how the various players come together to deliver the Dwell housing program—how services and buildings are overseen and how decisions are made.

The following key players are involved in Dwell. Their roles and contributions are described further in this section.

Residents

Residents' Membership Association

Non-Profit Landowner

Property Manager

Support Service Provider

Funders

The Service Model

The Dwell Experience

This section outlines the program experience from beginning to end from the perspective of applicants and selected residents.

The experience is divided into four phases:

- The **awareness** phase covers the initial communications and dissemination of the new housing opportunity—this is when future applicants become aware of the opportunity.

- The **application** phase includes all activities related to applying for housing and selecting future residents for move-in.
- The **residency** phase supports future residents in their move-in in and creates the conditions for them to get settled into their new home and establish a safe, secure, and stable living situation.
- Finally, the **move on** phase explores what happens when the resident decides to move on and leave their home for another living arrangement.

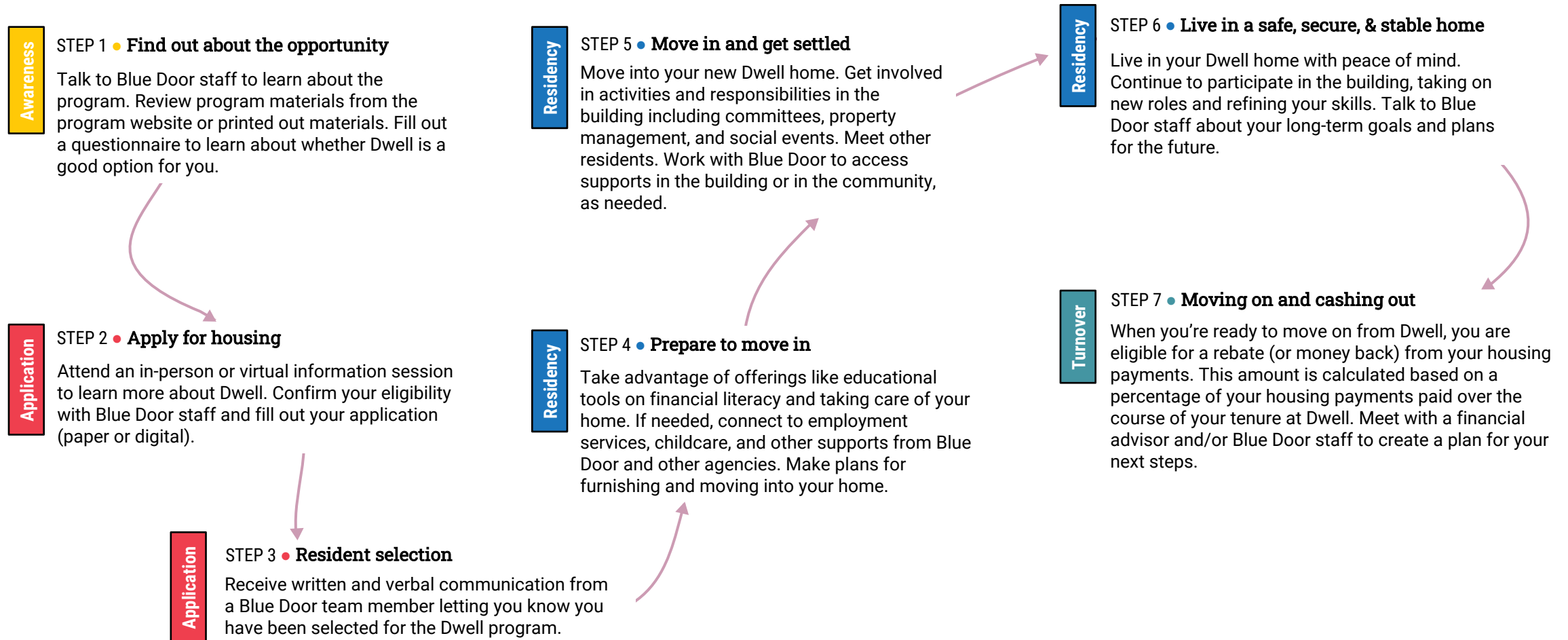
Service Model Blueprint

A detailed version of the service model can be found in the Appendix of this report.

Phase	Awareness	Application		Residency			Turnover
Description	Finding out about the opportunity	Applying for housing	Resident selection	Preparing to move in	Moving in and getting settled	Living in a safe, secure, and stable home	Moving on and cashing out
Timeline	Year -1	Year 0	Year 0	Year 0	Year 1	Year 1+	Year 5+

How does Dwell work for residents?

Dwell offers a different housing experience, aimed at creating a great onboarding experience for residents and long-term pride and stability in their home. This page provides a high-level overview of the what residents will experience at each phase of the process.



The Governance Model

Who is involved in Dwell?

This page provides an overview of the six principal players in Dwell, their roles, contributions, and to whom they are accountable. Included below are a few notes about two important players.

Residents' Membership Association

The **residents' membership association** plays a unique role in this model and contributes to the sense of **pride and responsibility** and **control and agency** for Dwell residents. This association is incorporated as a co-operative and the residents' rights are protected through co-operative legislation.

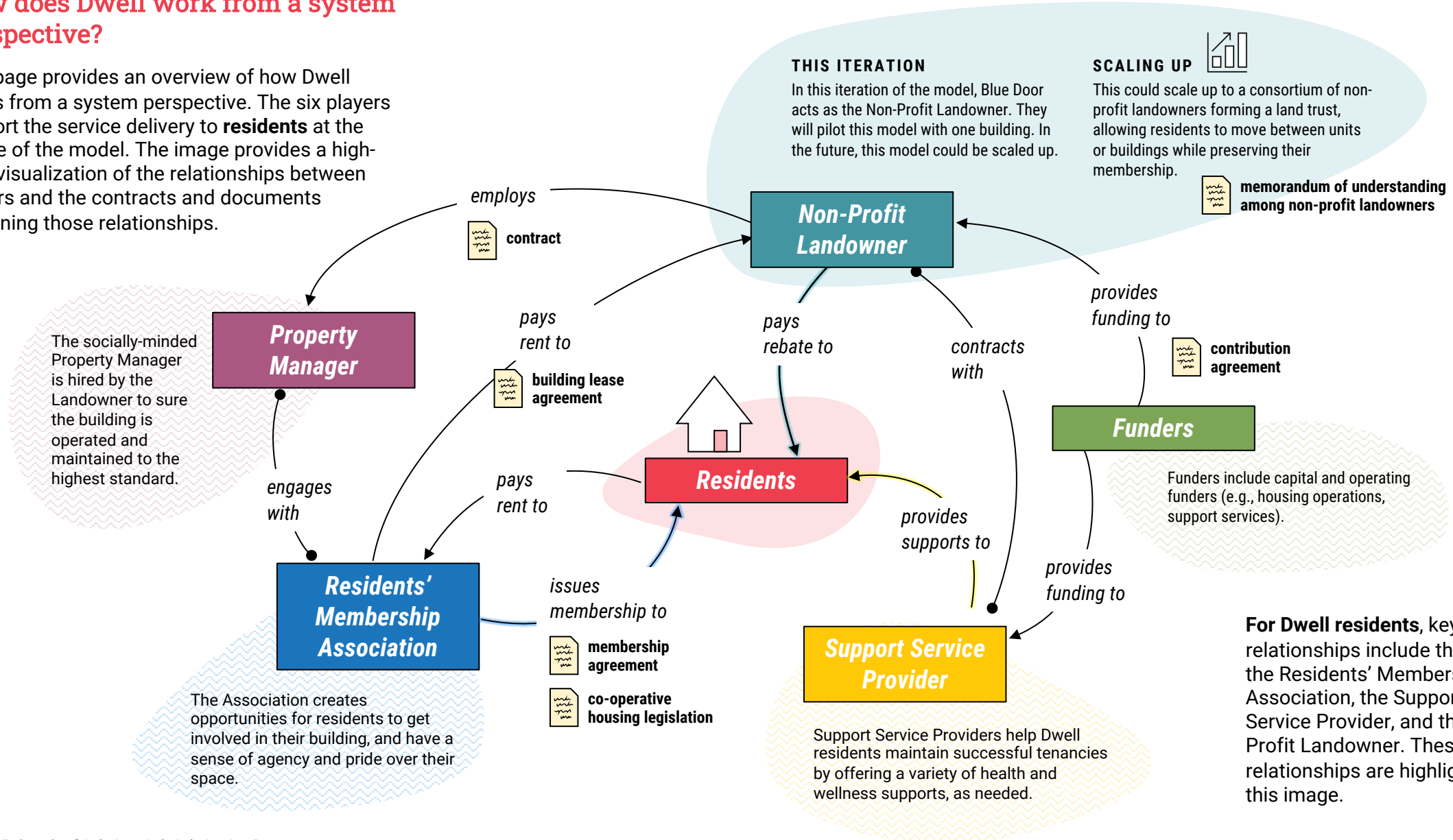
Non-Profit Landowner

For the purposes of this governance model, this document assumes Blue Door as the non-profit landowner, with the opportunity to scale this initiative to a consortium of non-profit organizations who could form a land trust. This approach is described in more detail in subsequent sections.

Player	Role	Contribution	Accountability
Residents	Dwell residents live in their home. They take care of it and can participate in programming and activities in their building.	Residents contribute their monthly housing fees to the Residents' Membership Association.	Residents are accountable to the Residents' Membership Association, in accordance with their tenancy agreement.
Residents' Membership Association	The Residents' Membership Association is the organization that enters into a lease agreement with the landowner. The Association liaises with the building's Property Manager to ensure the building is kept in good condition.	The Association pays rent to the landowner so its members can maintain their tenancy at Dwell.	The Association is accountable to the Dwell Residents (who are all members of the Association), and to the landowner with whom they have a long-term building lease.
Non-Profit Landowner	The Non-Profit Landowner can be either one organization or a consortium of organizations that own the land and building where Dwell residents live. These organizations have a mission and mandate to provide affordable housing in their communities.	The Landowner(s) are responsible for creating the housing (acquiring and developing land), establishing the Residents' Membership Association for each building, hiring the Property Manager, connecting tenants to Support Service Providers, and managing funds.	The Landowner(s) are accountable to their funders (e.g., capital funders and service funders) and to the Residents' Membership Association.
Property Manager	The socially-minded Property Manager is hired by the Landowner to make sure the building is operated and maintained to the highest standard.	The Property Manager operates with upmost professionalism and understanding of the needs and experiences of Dwell residents.	The Property Manager is accountable to the Landowner (through a contract) and to the Residents' Membership Association.
Support Service Provider	The Support Service Provider provides supports to residents, as needed. Supports could be provided by local community agencies or the Landowner (where applicable).	Support Service Providers help Dwell residents maintain successful tenancies by offering a variety of health and wellness supports, as needed.	Support Service Providers are accountable to the Landowner, with whom they have a contract. They are also accountable to their funders.
Funders	Funders include capital funders and service funders. These groups include governments, philanthropists, and others.	Funders contribute equity and debt to bring the Dwell developments to a reality.	Funders work directly with the Landowner. They are accountable to taxpayers and donors.

How does Dwell work from a system perspective?

This page provides an overview of how Dwell works from a system perspective. The six players support the service delivery to **residents** at the centre of the model. The image provides a high-level visualization of the relationships between players and the contracts and documents governing those relationships.



A Viable Real Estate Model for Development

For the Dwell model to be realized, a viable real estate model is required. This new housing model uses a traditional non-profit development approach, incorporating philanthropic and public funds to acquire or build the units, with a combination of rental revenue and operating subsidies to run the building.

This section provides a high-level overview of the financial modelling undertaken for this initiative, including how we infused our success criteria into the model, our assumptions, and an optimal rental rebate scenario.

We use the term “*rental rebates*” throughout this section. This term refers to the funds that Dwell residents receive when moving out after a milestone year. The rebate is an integral component of the Dwell model, mimicking a homeowner “cashing out their equity” when they sell their home.

For tax reasons, these funds should be considered as a rebate on the Dwell resident’s rent, and thus should not be construed as income, profit sharing, equity, or any other type of compensation.

The Financial Model

Our First Iteration

Through this financial modelling, the Housing Journeys team set out to demonstrate a viable financial model—to represent one of many scenarios in which a non-profit landowner could build a new building and incorporate the Dwell program.

This approach is not the only one that could be viable. There are a wide range of variables and levers an interested housing or service provider could play with to create a proforma that works for their specific initiative. Without testing the hundreds of permutations, this document presents one option based on the three **Archetypes** created to reflect the people Blue Door currently serves.

What made our financial modelling process different was a laser focus on our four success criteria. In our experience, it is easy for the viability testing to happen separate from conversations about desirability. The Housing Journeys team made every effort to infuse these principles into our modelling every step of the way.

Infusing the Success Criteria

This model considered the four success criteria in the following ways:

Permanence and Stability

The model assumes a non-profit landowner and developer with a mission to provide permanence and stability. The proforma assumes perpetual affordability for residents—the units do not convert to market rate after a certain time horizon.

Building Equity

After the milestone tenancy year (3 years for youth and 5 years for individuals and families), the household earns a minimum of \$10,000 in rental rebates as “equity” they can take out should they decide to move on from Dwell. The rental rebate is calculated as a percentage of their rent paid.

Control and Agency

The financial model does not assume unit turnover in the short-run like transitional housing but allows residents to stay as long as they wish, with a controlled rent.

Designing for the People we Serve

ARCHETYPE 1 • Youth, unemployed but soon to be employed, looking for moderate wrap-around services

The model shown in this section was designed with a young person in mind. This scenario imagines a person living in a Blue Door youth shelter, seeking to move on to independent housing. They face barriers due to low income, lack of affordable rentals, and rental stigma against youth.

The table on the next page provides an overview of our assumptions for this young person’s income and housing costs over time. We assume once the young person is settled, they are able to secure part-time employment at minimum wage. Over the course of their tenure at Dwell, they secure full-time employment and modest pay increases.

At Dwell, they pay 30% of their income on rent, with a portion of their rent going to building up their rental rebate pool.

In this section, we chose to show financial modelling for Archetype 1, as this Dwell resident would require the deepest level of affordability and subsidy to make the numbers “work.” The Housing Journeys team is proud to offer Dwell to those earning a below-minimum-wage income.

Our Assumptions

With any financial modelling exercise, a series of assumptions (with varying levels of certainty) are made to illustrate what is possible. The proforma model for **Archetype 1** assumes the following:

Location and Built Form

Newmarket, Ontario: The model assumes a new development in Newmarket, Ontario (York Region). This is a property Blue Door currently owns.

Fourteen (14) units: The building would be a 14-unit building with a mix of two- and three-bedroom units.

Neighbourhood: The Housing Journeys team prioritizes transit-oriented neighbourhoods, within one kilometre of public transit, groceries, green space, and other community services.

Capital Budget

Contributions: We assumed...

- A fully-funded project with a program such as the Rapid Housing Initiative
- No financing required
- Land at no cost
- Municipal waivers for development charges, property taxes, and parkland dedication

Operating Budget

Residential revenues as a portion of household income: We assume the young person secures part-time employment at minimum wage. Over the course of their tenure at Dwell, they secure full-time employment and modest pay increases. They pay 30% of their income on rent. The following table shows their income and housing payments over time.

Use of rent supplements: The model assumes a top-up to 80% of the median market rent (MMR) through rent supplements. For residents requiring a deeper subsidy, additional subsidies can be layered on.

Table: Assumed Household Incomes and Associated Housing Payments

Year	Household Income	Housing Payment
1	\$16,000	\$400
2	\$27,766	\$695
3	\$29,455	\$736
4	\$31,222	\$781
5	\$33,095	\$827

No debt: This is a fully-funded project with no debt service payments.

Support service model: Please note that this modelling provides an overview of the feasibility of the real estate model. The support service model and funding will be considered separately from the capital and operating costs associated with the building.

Table: Assumed Operating Expenses

Residential Operating Expenses	Total for the 14-Unit Building	Unit/Year
Maintenance (salaries, materials, and services)	\$42,000	\$3,000
Utilities (heat, electricity, water, sewer)	\$14,980	\$1,070
Property management fee	\$6,818	\$487
Other admin materials and services	\$14,000	\$1,000
Insurance	\$3,780	\$270
Property tax	\$ -	\$ -
HST	\$2,548	\$182
Capital replacement reserve	\$10,943	\$782
Operational contingency	\$2,653	\$190
Total expenses	\$97,722	\$6,980
Net operating income (NOI)	\$63,205	\$4,515

Optimal Rental Rebate Scenario

The following table provides a snapshot of the potential Dwell resident rental rebates at **20% of rent paid** at the three- to ten-year marks. The surplus is calculated assuming all Dwell residents leave in the same year (the most conservative scenario), however Dwell residents will leave on their own accord.

		Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Rents paid	Total rent paid per unit	\$35,353	\$47,732	\$60,420	\$73,426	\$86,756	\$100,420	\$114,425	\$128,781
	Total rent collected (14 Dwell households)	\$494,951	\$668,252	\$845,886	\$1,027,961	\$1,214,587	\$1,405,879	\$1,601,953	\$1,802,929
	Rolling end of year surplus	\$194,394	\$262,459	\$332,226	\$403,736	\$477,034	\$552,165	\$629,174	\$708,108

Rebates to Dwell residents	Rental rebate paid out per Dwell household	\$7,070	\$9,546	\$12,084	\$14,685	\$17,351	\$20,084	\$22,885	\$25,756
	Total rental rebates paid out (14 Dwell households)	\$98,980	\$133,644	\$169,176	\$205,590	\$242,914	\$281,176	\$320,390	\$360,584
	Surplus if all Dwell residents chose to leave in the same year	\$95,404	\$128,808	\$163,048	\$198,144	\$234,117	\$270,989	\$308,784	\$347,523

This model shows one possible rental rebate option. For instance, a 10% rental rebate scenario using this project’s assumptions would result in a \$6,042 rental rebate at Year 5, which could be matched by philanthropic contributions to bring the total rebate up to \$10,000.

The previous section, **Life After Dwell**, describes some of the potential ways Dwell residents may choose to use their rental rebate.

Notes on our Modelling

In addition to the assumptions outlined on the previous slide, the Housing Journeys team plans to reach out to potential fund-matching partners who may have an interest in contributing to the Dwell resident rental rebate. For instance, financial services organizations may be interested in becoming partners in the program, matching the funds Blue Door provides to organizations as a charitable donation in exchange for the opportunity to provide financial planning services to Dwell residents.

Finally, we understand this financial modelling may not result in a feasible and viable model in all housing markets or in situations where the housing provider does not already own land or cannot acquire land at \$0 or a low cost.

In situations where the capital costs may be higher, we set a goal of generating a Dwell resident rental rebate of \$5,000, with the intention of seeking out an additional \$5,000 in matched funds for a total of \$10,000 in Dwell rental rebates per household in Year 5.

4

Implementing Dwell

Roadmap

A Networked Model

The Dwell Pilot

This page provides a breakdown of the steps required for Blue Door and Habitat Humanity GTA to launch the Dwell Pilot. Checkmarks indicate a task already complete or underway.

Solution Readiness Level	Launching the Dwell Pilot	Blue Door x Habitat for Humanity GTA Pilot
<p>Major Milestones</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Short-Run (1 to 12 months)</i></p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div data-bbox="377 404 568 582"> <p>Milestone 1 Site for the pilot is identified and secured (e.g., existing or acquired site).</p> </div> <div data-bbox="593 404 963 525"> <p>Milestone 2 Development partners or internal capabilities (e.g., Development Manager) for pilot development are secured.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="988 404 1192 554"> <p>Milestone 4 The Dwell Pilot is launched and Dwell residents move in.</p> </div> </div> <div data-bbox="593 532 963 654"> <p>Milestone 3 Funding (capital and operating) to launch the pilot phase is secured from a range of funders.</p> </div>	<p>Blue Door will be the support service provider for the pilot. Habitat for Humanity GTA will be the builder for the pilot. The connection to the co-operative housing sector is underway and still to be established.</p> <p>Potential sites for investigation and research were identified: a site in Toronto, a site in Newmarket, and the site of an existing Blue Door INNclusion Program for LGBTQ2S folks.</p> <p>Between Blue Door and Habitat for Humanity GTA, six potential development opportunities have been identified for youth, families, LGBTQ2S, and individuals across several communities in the GTA.</p>
<p>Key Actors and Capabilities</p> <p><i>Actions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and fill staffing needs for Dwell program recruitment and uptake <i>[If needed]</i> Hire development consulting expertise to complement internal capabilities to undertake the development project Hire a professional property manager or management firm for the new development Engage with a cooperative housing sector partner to establish the Residents' Membership Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blue Door will be the support service provider for the pilot. Blue Door will also be the Property Manager for the pilot through its Construct program. Habitat for Humanity GTA will be the builder for the pilot. The connection to the co-operative housing sector is underway and still to be established. The Housing Journeys team made connections with Community Affordable Housing Solutions (CAHS) land trust and will continue conversations around potential ways to scale Dwell to other housing providers What other partners or collaborators should we involve to enhance Dwell?
<p>Research and Evaluation</p> <p><i>Actions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine the governance model, including conducting additional legal research, as necessary Undertake community engagement specific to the new site, including going back to Blue Door clients to fine-tune the model Prepare a business plan and feasibility study for the specific site Develop an evaluation framework to evaluate the success of this pilot phase, based on the Dwell success criteria already developed Develop a theory of change or logic model to be used to align operating partners in service delivery Design and build the project (including planning and approvals) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In addition to the identified sites, consider the potential for application in scattered sites (individual units) or a floor within a condominium apartment building Connect with existing collaborators and colleagues to continue the site search in other communities (e.g., Durham Region) Question to explore: Is the residents' association model adding value for Dwell residents or does it create a layer of unnecessary complication? Question to explore: Is five years (three years for youth) a timeline that makes sense for Dwell residents (at which point they could cash out)? Question to explore: What is the range of support services that must be provided through Dwell? Are there additional supports that should be provided by another organization? Question to explore: How might Dwell complement the other transitional housing offerings provided by Blue Door?
<p>Policy and Resources</p> <p><i>Actions</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop communications and recruitment materials to disseminate information about this new model Develop visual onboarding materials to communicate the move-in, rental rebate, next steps after Dwell, and overall experience to new residents Pitch this model with potential funders (government and non-government) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development funding: The Dwell funding "ask" will be to fund the capital and operating elements of the pilot stage The Dwell team intends to apply for future National Housing Strategy or Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Innovation funding to scale this model. Resident equity funding: The Housing Journeys team will reach out to financial institutions to match resident "equity" cash-out at the five-year mark, to bring the cash-out to \$10,000.

Roadmap to a Scaled-Up Solution

This page provides an overview of the proposed work plan from a real-world demonstration (the Dwell Pilot) to a scaled-up solution in the long-run.

Solution Readiness Level	Launching the Dwell Pilot		Evaluating the Pilot and Moving to Scaling		Scaled Up Solution		
	Short-Run (1 to 12 months)		Medium-Run (12 to 18 months)		Long-Run (18+ months)		
Major Milestones	Milestone 1 Site for the pilot is identified and secured (e.g., existing or acquired site).	Milestone 2 Development partners or internal capabilities (e.g., Development Manager) for pilot development are secured. Milestone 3 Funding (capital and operating) to launch the pilot phase is secured from a range of funders.	Milestone 4 The Dwell Pilot is launched and Dwell residents move in.	Milestone 5 An evaluation framework to measure the impact of the pilot is established.	Milestone 6 The pilot is evaluated and recommendations for improvements are implemented.	Milestone 7 Additional housing, property management, and financial partners for scaling are established	Milestone 8 A pipeline of development opportunities is established, spanning all of the development pathways
Key Actors and Capabilities Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and fill staffing needs for Dwell program recruitment and uptake <i>[If needed]</i> Hire development consulting expertise to complement internal capabilities to undertake the development project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hire a professional property manager or management firm for the new development Engage with a cooperative housing sector partner to establish the Residents' Membership Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate potential staffing requirements needed for scaling up in the long-run Continue the conversation with the co-operative housing sector and local land trusts to develop collaborative relationships for scaling Dwell 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build partnerships with other potential support service providers or organizations that can enhance the living environment and success criteria for residents (e.g., programming, neighbourhood initiatives, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure a land trust partner Secure other non-profit housing provider partners who can help scale Dwell to a network of organizations and housing options 		
Research and Evaluation Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refine the governance model, including conducting additional legal research, as necessary Undertake community engagement specific to the new site, including going back to Blue Door clients to fine-tune the model Prepare a business plan and feasibility study for the specific site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an evaluation framework to evaluate the success of this pilot phase, based on the Dwell success criteria already developed Develop a theory of change or logic model to be used to align operating partners in service delivery Design and build the project (including planning and approvals) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an operating framework or service delivery guide based on the Dwell success criteria to inform the scaling of this model, so others can replicate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and evaluate other scaling options via different housing expansion pathways (e.g., land trust, scattered sites, acquisition, new builds, renovation of existing, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct research on other potential geographies, partners, or similar groups who might support the scaling of Dwell Undertake continual improvement and evaluation based on the evaluation framework 		
Policy and Resources Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop communications and recruitment materials to disseminate information about this new model Develop visual onboarding materials to communicate the move-in, rental rebate, next steps after Dwell, and overall experience to new residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pitch this model with potential funders (government and non-government) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a tool or approach to introduce new resident associations or affiliations with the co-operative housing sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a framework for creating the Residents' Membership Association that can be used by others to scale this model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce educational and communications materials for potential housing provider partners and co-operative housing associations 		

Scaling the Model

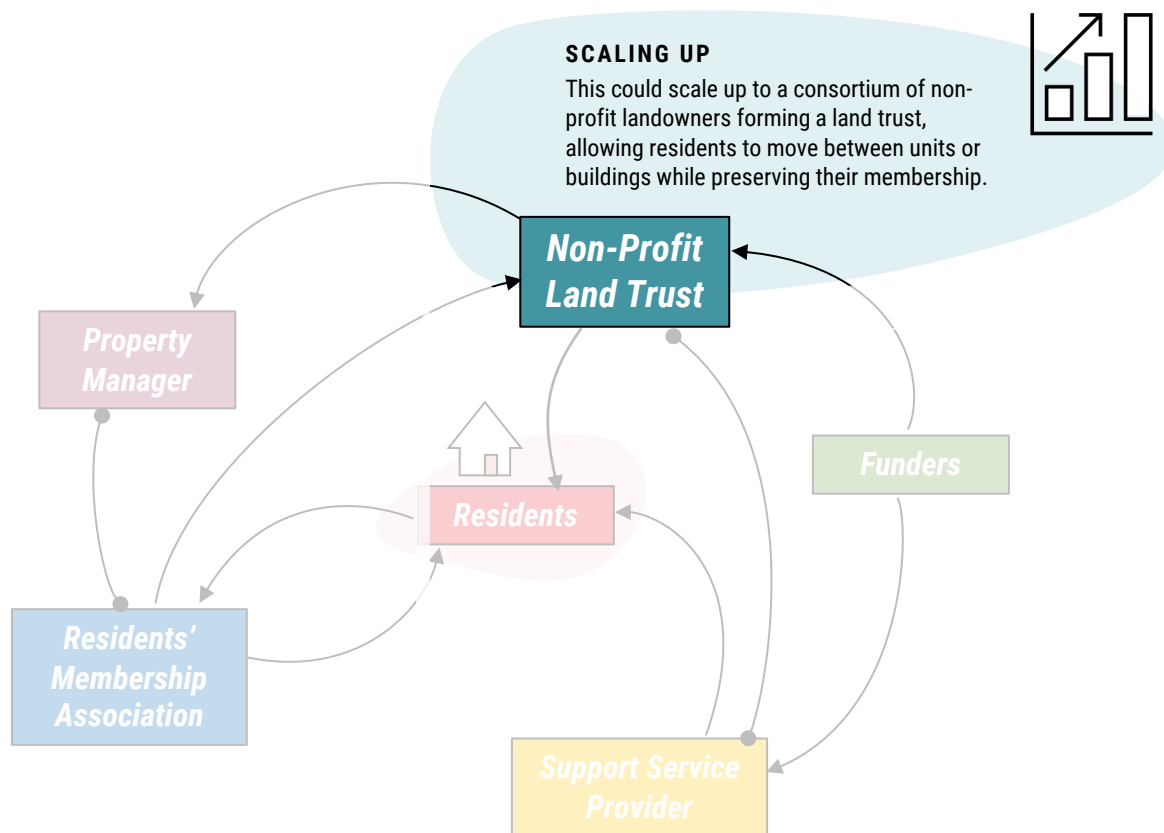
A Networked Approach

During our Housing Journeys team engagement sessions, the team worked on developing a plan for scaling the Dwell model beyond this group, to consider a “networked approach” across multiple housing providers.

This scaled-up iteration of Dwell could result in a non-profit land trust (such as Community Affordable Housing Solutions (CAHS)) or another land trust owning buildings or scattered units, which could all be part of Dwell. The residents of these units could be members of affiliate co-operative organizations.

In addition to the land trust model, there may be other organizations such as conservation authorities with land and heritage homes residing on those lands looking to be part of this model. Housing providers or non-profit land trusts could seek to acquire these properties. Finally, inclusionary zoning policies expanding to communities across Canada could be leveraged for this model.

The Housing Journeys team believes that maintaining affordable housing in our communities requires service providers to be more proactive in acquiring and developing these units ourselves, especially given the increasing financialization of housing and the rising costs of private market rentals. We are eager to help reverse this trend in the loss of affordable housing units through this scaled-up approach.



Moving Forward

Desired Impact

The idea of giving Dwell residents a rental rebate at the end of their tenure came from a desire to address the widening gap between renters and homeowners, who receive a payout of equity when they sell and move out of their home.

While the amount offered by Dwell may seem inconsequential compared to the potential equity gained through homeownership, as we have seen with cash transfer experiments like the *New Leaf Project* in Vancouver, having a sum of money to fall back on can make a huge difference for those experiencing housing and other economic challenges. In the spring of 2018, the Foundations for Social Change gave \$7500 to participants experiencing recent homelessness in the Vancouver area. Over the course of a year, researchers measured a variety of positive outcomes, including more rapid attainment of stable housing and improved food security compared to individuals who did not receive a cash transfer¹.

Where Dwell differs from this initiative is that instead of giving people this amount up front, while they are experiencing housing need, the program first offers people a home to stay and get settled in, with supports and deeply affordable rents. With this base, we see the potential for people to overcome challenges, increase their income over time, and improve their quality of life.

When people leave the program, we hope the rebate they receive can be used for more than fulfilling basic needs: for things that could further advance their personal goals or bring peace and security to their lives. The ambition of this model is to not only help people stay housed and afloat, but see them thrive, with choice and freedom in their lives. We believe that access to affordable, adequate housing, along with means of financial security will create a strong foundation to permanently end precarious living for folks and prevent cycles of homelessness.

In the early phases of this project, the Lab Team engaged with lived experts, many of whom were experiencing homelessness at the time we spoke to them. For many people staying in shelters, we heard that it was difficult for them to plan for the future, to think beyond immediate circumstances. However, that did not stop people, of varied ages and backgrounds, from having dreams and ambitions of their ideal lives.

We hope for Dwell to be a part of supporting people on their journeys forward—towards future life experiences they may not even feel are possible today.

¹Foundations for Social Change, Taking Bold Action on Homelessness, 2021.

Reflections and Lessons Learned

The Housing Journeys Reimagined team went through an ever-evolving 18-month process together to create a model and roadmap for implementing Dwell, a new housing tenure model. The team agrees that nothing good comes easily—we worked hard and continued at building Dwell into a solution that can be adopted widely as a housing program or new development model across several different settings and for a wide range of populations.

This section provides an overview of some of our reflections on the process and lessons learned.

The Solutions Lab Process

- **Virtual meetings:** Perhaps one of the main challenges or limitations with the project was the inability to meet in person for the majority of the project. The energy and stronger brainstorming and communication generated through in-person meetings may have helped us earlier on in the process to capture the different expertise brought to the table to navigate towards the Dwell model.

- **Hybrid meeting models:** For future collaboration, the Housing Journeys team could look into more hybrid working meeting models. For instance, we could work in small groups in our organizations' office spaces so that some of those benefits of working in the same space are gained.

Building Dwell

- **Building the model with a target population in mind:** A key to the success of this approach was our desire to not give up on our target population—we were challenged on numerous occasions to produce a model that would be equity-generating and yet serve our most vulnerable.
- **An opportunity for scaling:** We believe we created a strong programmatic model that can be applied in a number of settings, including for some of our most vulnerable. The challenge will remain with non-profit housing and support service providers to think innovatively about securing and acquiring properties and identifying partners who can help deliver this model.

- **Hearing from lived experts early on:** an important lesson for the team was the importance of being client-centred. We established the key success criteria for Dwell early on through connections with people with lived experience and were able to bring those principles into every discussion. The success criteria helped the team stay grounded in the future visions people hoped to experience through the program, especially when the team was brainstorming at a very high conceptual level.
- **Working with a broader stakeholder base:** Lastly, we believe it is important for these projects to involve stakeholders and potential partners early on since they will only work with their input and buy-in. For instance, we gained a lot from the interactions with our Advisory Committee and others. We will continue to undertake external validation with our Dwell model before moving into the pilot implementation.

Next Steps

At Blue Door we are looking towards the next steps of launching the Dwell Pilot to continue the important work that has begun to build independence and housing stability

5

Appendix



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How are rents set?

A: The Dwell model assumes residents pay 30% of their incomes on rent. As of now, the financial modelling makes it feasible to offer rent at 30% of income for someone earning \$16,000 per year (equivalent to part-time employment at minimum wage; equal to \$400 per month in rent).

Q: Is the rental rebate commensurate with rent paid?

A: Yes. The rental rebate is calculated as a percentage of rent paid. The modelling shown in this report assumes residents receive a rebate equal to 20% of their rent paid.

Q: Who is eligible to participate in Dwell?

A: In addition to means testing, Dwell residents should be interested in participating in a cooperative housing model and looking for a permanent, stable home for at least three years for youth or five years for older individuals and families.

Q: What is the rental rebate “for”?

A: Dwell residents can use the rebate for whatever they choose. This could include paying off debts, large purchases (e.g., a vehicle or post-secondary education), first and last month’s rent in a new home, furniture, etc. We do not dictate how residents use the funds.

Q: Is Dwell envisioned for new development projects, redeveloped projects, or existing buildings?

A: Dwell could work in all of these circumstances! Our financial modelling assumed a fully-funded (no debt) new building on a site Blue Door already owns.

Q: In the case where a Dwell resident receives social assistance, how do social assistance agencies treat the rental rebate participants receive?

A: Since the cashback Dwell residents receive is considered a “rebate”, it is not counted as income for social assistance or tax purposes.

Q: Could this model reach even deeper affordability levels?

A: Of course! For this iteration, we did not consider other opportunities such as adding on an additional housing benefit or deeper rent supplement.

Q: What kinds of support services are offered through Dwell?

A: We hope to provide the support services the first Dwell residents are seeking—we hope to iron out the details through our Dwell Pilot.

Q: Is \$10,000 enough to make a difference in someone’s housing situation in the long term?

A: Based on universal basic income pilots and research we have consulted we expect the rental rebate to have a positive impact. It is important to remember that not only do Dwell residents leave with the cash in their pockets, but the other positive side-effects of living in a safe, stable, and affordable home for five years, where they had control and agency over their space and hopefully built a sense of pride and responsibility in their home and cooperative community.

Detailed Financial Modelling

This section provides an overview of the additional detailed financial modelling for Archetypes 1, 2, and 3.

ARCHETYPE 1 • Youth, unemployed but soon to be employed, looking for moderate wrap-around services

Some of the key assumptions for this archetype include:

- **Building:** 14 studio and shared living units located on a property already owned by Blue Door, in Newmarket, Ontario
- **Contributions:** funding from a program similar to the Rapid Housing Initiative
- **Rents:** residents pay \$400 (affordable to a household earning \$16,000 per year) at Year 1 on move-in and then their household incomes increase by approximately 6% every year, resulting in the ability to afford \$827 in rent by Year 5
- **Features:** accessibility and sustainability features meet minimum National Housing Co-Investment Fund guidelines

Pro-Forma

Preliminary Year 1 to 5 Proforma					
Revenue	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Residential Revenues	\$ 168,000.00	\$ 172,200.00	\$ 176,505.00	\$ 180,917.63	\$ 185,440.57
Additional Income	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Potential Gross Income (PGI)	\$ 168,000.00	\$ 172,200.00	\$ 176,505.00	\$ 180,917.63	\$ 185,440.57
Vacancy Loss : Residential Revenues	\$ (4,552.80)	\$ (4,666.62)	\$ (4,783.29)	\$ (4,902.87)	\$ (5,025.44)
Vacancy Loss : Bad Debts	\$ (2,520.00)	\$ (2,583.00)	\$ (2,647.58)	\$ (2,713.76)	\$ (2,781.61)
Vacancy Loss : Others	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Vacancy Loss	\$ (7,072.80)	\$ (7,249.62)	\$ (7,430.86)	\$ (7,616.63)	\$ (7,807.05)
Effective Gross Income (EGI)	\$ 160,927.20	\$ 164,950.38	\$ 169,074.14	\$ 173,300.99	\$ 177,633.52
Operating Expenses	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Capital Replacement Reserve	\$ 10,943.05	\$ 11,216.63	\$ 11,497.04	\$ 11,784.47	\$ 12,079.08
Operational Contingency	\$ 2,653.28	\$ 2,719.61	\$ 2,787.60	\$ 2,857.29	\$ 2,928.72
Total Expenses	\$ 97,722.33	\$ 100,165.39	\$ 102,669.52	\$ 105,236.26	\$ 107,867.17
Total Expenses as % of EGI	60.72%	60.72%	60.72%	60.72%	60.72%
Total Expenses as % of PGI	58.17%	58.17%	58.17%	58.17%	58.17%
Res. Net Operating Income (NOI)	\$ 63,204.87	\$ 64,784.99	\$ 66,404.62	\$ 68,064.73	\$ 69,766.35
Annual Debt Payment	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Debt Coverage Ratio (DCR)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cash Flow / Surplus	\$ 63,204.87	\$ 64,784.99	\$ 66,404.62	\$ 68,064.73	\$ 69,766.35
Asset Value	\$ 1,099,215.14	\$ 1,126,695.52	\$ 1,154,862.90	\$ 1,183,734.48	\$ 1,213,327.84

Growth in Residential Revenue (Per Year)	2.50%
Growth in Expenses (Per Year)	2.50%

Total Accumulated Replacement Reserve	\$ 10,943.05	\$ 22,159.68	\$ 33,656.72	\$ 45,441.18	\$ 57,520.26
Total Ending Surplus	\$ 63,204.87	\$ 127,989.86	\$ 194,394.48	\$ 262,459.21	\$ 332,225.56
Ending Reserve and Surplus	\$ 74,147.92	\$ 150,149.54	\$ 228,051.20	\$ 307,900.40	\$ 389,745.83

ARCHETYPE 1 • Youth, unemployed but soon to be employed, looking for moderate wrap-around services

Rental Rebate Scenario

The following table provides a snapshot of the potential Dwell resident rental rebates at **20% of rent paid** at the three- to ten-year marks. The surplus is calculated assuming all Dwell residents leave in the same year (the most conservative scenario), however Dwell residents will leave on their own accord.

This model shows one possible rental rebate option. For instance, a 10% rental rebate scenario using this project’s assumptions would result in a \$6,042 rental rebate at Year 5, which could be matched by philanthropic contributions to bring the total rebate up to \$10,000.

		Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Rents paid	Total rent paid per unit	\$35,353	\$47,732	\$60,420	\$73,426	\$86,756	\$100,420	\$114,425	\$128,781
	Total rent collected (14 Dwell households)	\$494,951	\$668,252	\$845,886	\$1,027,961	\$1,214,587	\$1,405,879	\$1,601,953	\$1,802,929
	Rolling end of year surplus	\$194,394	\$262,459	\$332,226	\$403,736	\$477,034	\$552,165	\$629,174	\$708,108

Rebates to Dwell residents	Rental rebate paid out per Dwell household	\$7,070	\$9,546	\$12,084	\$14,685	\$17,351	\$20,084	\$22,885	\$25,756
	Total rental rebates paid out (14 Dwell households)	\$98,980	\$133,644	\$169,176	\$205,590	\$242,914	\$281,176	\$320,390	\$360,584
	Surplus if all Dwell residents chose to leave in the same year	\$95,404	\$128,808	\$163,048	\$198,144	\$234,117	\$270,989	\$308,784	\$347,523

Pro-Forma

ARCHETYPE 2 • Single parent with one child, currently on social assistance

Some of the key assumptions for this archetype include:

- **Building:** 13 two- and three-bedroom units located on a property already owned by Blue Door, in Newmarket, Ontario
- **Contributions:** funding from a program similar to the Rapid Housing Initiative and the National Housing Co-Investment Fund
- **Rents:** residents pay \$600 (affordable to a household earning \$24,000 per year) at Year 1 on move-in and then their household incomes increase by approximately 4% every year, resulting in the ability to afford \$1,371 in rent by Year 5
- **Features:** accessibility and sustainability features meet minimum National Housing Co-Investment Fund guidelines

Preliminary Year 1 to 5 Proforma					
Revenue	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Residential Revenues	\$ 168,000.00	\$ 174,720.00	\$ 181,708.80	\$ 188,977.15	\$ 196,536.24
Additional Income	\$ 8,867.20	\$ 9,221.89	\$ 9,590.76	\$ 9,974.39	\$ 10,373.37
Potential Gross Income (PGI)	\$ 176,867.20	\$ 183,941.89	\$ 191,299.56	\$ 198,951.55	\$ 206,909.61
Vacancy Loss : Residential Revenues	\$ (4,552.80)	\$ (4,734.91)	\$ (4,924.31)	\$ (5,121.28)	\$ (5,326.13)
Vacancy Loss : Bad Debts	\$ (2,653.01)	\$ (2,759.13)	\$ (2,869.49)	\$ (2,984.27)	\$ (3,103.64)
Vacancy Loss : Others	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Vacancy Loss	\$ (7,205.81)	\$ (7,494.04)	\$ (7,793.80)	\$ (8,105.55)	\$ (8,429.78)
Effective Gross Income (EGI)	\$ 169,661.39	\$ 176,447.85	\$ 183,505.76	\$ 190,845.99	\$ 198,479.83
Operating Expenses	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Capital Replacement Reserve	\$ 11,536.97	\$ 11,825.40	\$ 12,121.03	\$ 12,424.06	\$ 12,734.66
Operational Contingency	\$ 2,653.28	\$ 2,719.61	\$ 2,787.60	\$ 2,857.29	\$ 2,928.72
Total Expenses	\$ 98,316.25	\$ 100,774.16	\$ 103,293.52	\$ 105,875.85	\$ 108,522.75
Total Expenses as % of EGI	57.95%	57.11%	56.29%	55.48%	54.68%
Total Expenses as % of PGI	55.59%	54.79%	54.00%	53.22%	52.45%
Res. Net Operating Income (NOI)	\$ 71,345.14	\$ 75,673.69	\$ 80,212.25	\$ 84,970.14	\$ 89,957.08
Annual Debt Payment	\$ 64,851.42	\$ 64,851.42	\$ 64,851.42	\$ 64,851.42	\$ 64,851.42
Debt Coverage Ratio (DCR)	1.10	1.17	1.24	1.31	1.39
Cash Flow / Surplus	\$ 6,493.72	\$ 10,822.27	\$ 15,360.83	\$ 20,118.72	\$ 25,105.67
Asset Value	\$ 1,240,785.00	\$ 1,316,064.12	\$ 1,394,995.59	\$ 1,477,741.55	\$ 1,564,471.00

Growth in Residential Revenue (Per Year)	4.00%
Growth in Expenses (Per Year)	2.50%

Total Accumulated Replacement Reserve	\$ 11,536.97	\$ 23,362.37	\$ 35,483.41	\$ 47,907.47	\$ 60,642.13
Total Ending Surplus	\$ 6,493.72	\$ 17,315.99	\$ 32,676.82	\$ 52,795.55	\$ 77,901.21
Ending Reserve and Surplus	\$ 18,030.70	\$ 40,678.37	\$ 68,160.23	\$ 100,703.01	\$ 138,543.34

ARCHETYPE 2 • **Single parent with one child, currently on social assistance**

Rental Rebate Scenario

The following table provides a snapshot of the potential Dwell resident rental rebates at **8% of rent paid** at the five- to ten-year marks. The surplus is calculated assuming all Dwell residents leave in the same year (the most conservative scenario), however Dwell residents will leave on their own accord. For this archetype, this percentage rental rebate was the highest percentage that was financially feasible given the other assumptions in this model.

		Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Rents paid	Total rent paid per unit	\$70,688	\$86,566	\$103,080	\$120,254	\$138,115	\$156,690
	Total rent collected (14 Dwell households)	\$918,941	\$1,125,360	\$1,340,036	\$1,563,298	\$1,795,492	\$2,036,973
	Rolling end of year surplus	\$77,901	\$108,233	\$144,041	\$185,585	\$233,138	\$286,984

Rebates to Dwell residents	Rental rebate paid out per Dwell household	\$5,655	\$6,925	\$8,246	\$9,620	\$11,049	\$12,535
	Total rental rebates paid out (13 Dwell households)	\$73,515	\$90,029	\$107,203	\$125,064	\$143,639	\$162,958
	Surplus if all Dwell residents chose to leave in the same year	\$4,386	\$18,204	\$36,838	\$60,521	\$89,499	\$124,026

This model shows one possible rental rebate option.

For instance, if residents were able to wait until Year 7 to be eligible for the rental rebate, the Dwell model could provide rental rebates of 10% of rent paid or equal to \$10,308 at Year 7.

Pro-Forma

ARCHETYPE 3 • Couple with three children, both parents employed at minimum wage

Some of the key assumptions for this archetype include:

- **Building:** 13 two- and three-bedroom units located on a property already owned by Blue Door, in Newmarket, Ontario
- **Contributions:** funding from a program similar to the Rapid Housing Initiative and the National Housing Co-Investment Fund
- **Rents:** residents pay \$1,196 at Year 1 on move-in and then their household incomes increase by approximately 3% every year, resulting in the ability to afford \$2,100 in rent by Year 5
- **Features:** accessibility and sustainability features meet minimum National Housing Co-Investment Fund guidelines

Preliminary Year 1 to 5 Proforma					
Revenue	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Residential Revenues	\$ 168,000.00	\$ 173,040.00	\$ 178,231.20	\$ 183,578.14	\$ 189,085.48
Additional Income	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Potential Gross Income (PGI)	\$ 168,000.00	\$ 173,040.00	\$ 178,231.20	\$ 183,578.14	\$ 189,085.48
Vacancy Loss : Residential Revenues	\$ (4,552.80)	\$ (4,689.38)	\$ (4,830.07)	\$ (4,974.97)	\$ (5,124.22)
Vacancy Loss : Bad Debts	\$ (2,520.00)	\$ (2,595.60)	\$ (2,673.47)	\$ (2,753.67)	\$ (2,836.28)
Vacancy Loss : Others	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Vacancy Loss	\$ (7,072.80)	\$ (7,284.98)	\$ (7,503.53)	\$ (7,728.64)	\$ (7,960.50)
Effective Gross Income (EGI)	\$ 160,927.20	\$ 165,755.02	\$ 170,727.67	\$ 175,849.50	\$ 181,124.98
Operating Expenses	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Capital Replacement Reserve	\$ 10,943.05	\$ 11,216.63	\$ 11,497.04	\$ 11,784.47	\$ 12,079.08
Operational Contingency	\$ 2,653.28	\$ 2,719.61	\$ 2,787.60	\$ 2,857.29	\$ 2,928.72
Total Expenses	\$ 97,722.33	\$ 100,165.39	\$ 102,669.52	\$ 105,236.26	\$ 107,867.17
Total Expenses as % of EGI	60.72%	60.43%	60.14%	59.84%	59.55%
Total Expenses as % of PGI	58.17%	57.89%	57.60%	57.33%	57.05%
Res. Net Operating Income (NOI)	\$ 63,204.87	\$ 65,589.63	\$ 68,058.14	\$ 70,613.24	\$ 73,257.81
Annual Debt Payment	\$ 57,457.11	\$ 57,457.11	\$ 57,457.11	\$ 57,457.11	\$ 57,457.11
Debt Coverage Ratio (DCR)	1.10	1.14	1.18	1.23	1.28
Cash Flow / Surplus	\$ 5,747.76	\$ 8,132.52	\$ 10,601.04	\$ 13,156.13	\$ 15,800.71
Asset Value	\$ 1,099,215.14	\$ 1,140,689.19	\$ 1,183,619.89	\$ 1,228,056.28	\$ 1,274,048.94

Growth in Residential Revenue (Per Yr)	3.00%
Growth in Expenses (Per Yr)	2.50%

Total Accumulated Replacement Reserve	\$ 10,943.05	\$ 22,159.68	\$ 33,656.72	\$ 45,441.18	\$ 57,520.26
Total Ending Surplus	\$ 5,747.76	\$ 13,880.29	\$ 24,481.32	\$ 37,637.45	\$ 53,438.16
Ending Reserve and Surplus	\$ 16,690.81	\$ 36,039.96	\$ 58,138.04	\$ 83,078.64	\$ 110,958.43

ARCHETYPE 3 • Couple with three children, both parents employed at minimum wage

Rental Rebate Scenario

The following table provides a snapshot of the potential Dwell resident rental rebates at **6% of rent paid** at the five- to ten-year marks. The surplus is calculated assuming all Dwell residents leave in the same year (the most conservative scenario), however Dwell residents will leave on their own accord.

		Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Rents paid	Total rent paid per unit	\$65,722	\$80,073	\$94,854	\$110,078	\$125,760	\$141,912
	Total rent collected (14 Dwell households)	\$854,384	\$1,040,943	\$1,233,099	\$1,431,019	\$1,634,877	\$1,844,850
	Rolling end of year surplus	\$53,438	\$71,976	\$93,346	\$117,648	\$144,984	\$175,458

Rebates to Dwell residents	Rental rebate paid out per Dwell household	\$3,943	\$4,804	\$5,691	\$6,605	\$7,546	\$8,515
	Total rental rebates paid out (13 Dwell households)	\$51,263.06	\$62,456.59	\$73,985.92	\$85,861.12	\$98,092.59	\$110,691.00
	Surplus if all Dwell residents chose to leave in the same year	\$2,175	\$9,519	\$19,360	\$31,787	\$46,891	\$64,767

This model shows one possible rental rebate option.

For instance, if residents were able to wait until Year 9 to be eligible for the rental rebate, the Dwell model could provide rental rebates of 8% of rent paid or equal to \$10,061 at Year 7.

The Lab Plan

	Discovery			Development		Prototype		Roadmap	
Purpose	Frame the problem we are trying to solve, by spending time with people with lived experience to map out the current housing journey experience.			Begin the ideation process, providing Lab participants with tools and approaches to mapping some of their ideas.		Bring the solutions and ideas to life, for participants and other stakeholders to interact with the ideas and provide feedback.		Evaluate the ideas and build a plan for realizing the most promising ones.	
Inquiries	For whom should we design this model? What are the desired outcomes of this model (or "success criteria") that are shared between prospective clients, the Lab Team, and other system stakeholders?			What does the "desirable" journey to "home ownership" (or an alternative of ownership) look and feel like for potential clients, Blue Door staff, funders, and the community?		What does a "viable" and "feasible" model look like for Blue Door staff, funders, and other external partners?		What will it take to scale and replicate this model?	
Time	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	
Activities	Advisory Committee Meeting #1	Key Informant Interviews	Lived Experience Research	Advisory Committee Meeting #2	Solution Development Conversations (1)	Solution Development Conversations (2)	Advisory Committee Meeting #3	Prototyping Workshop	Advisory Committee Meeting #4
Outputs	Reframed challenge question; criteria for success; understanding current needs; and identifying opportunities			Desirable future housing journeys; mock-up of potential future models		Second iteration of mock-ups of potential solutions for testing and evaluation		Implementation plan	

Stakeholders involved:

Lab Advisors

Lab Participants

Synthesis Process

From Raw Data to Pattern Finding

This section provides an overview of the synthesis process undertaken to develop the **three patterns of desired visions of homeownership** and the **four success criteria** for a new model.

From the raw qualitative data shared by participants, the Lab Team transcribed and coded the booklet and interview contents to identify feedback related to:

- The person’s past housing journey or lived experience
- A suggested design element provided by the participant
- A potential barrier or enabler of housing success
- System-level trends observed

The Lab team also coded the data based on whether the feedback provided would impact the **housing model** (built form), the **housing program** (finance or tenure model), or the **service and support model**.

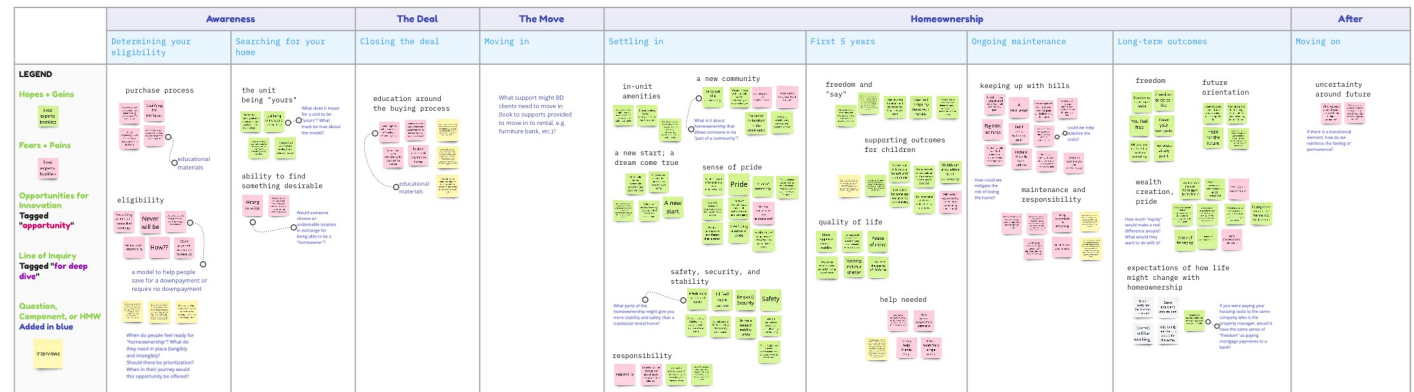
Visions of Homeownership

From this initial coding process, the Lab Team mapped the data related to people’s past housing journeys and lived experiences and future desired onto both reflective (reporting on the past) housing journey maps and prospective (hopes for the future) journey maps.

From this process, similar experiences and desires were clustered (also known as affinity clustering or mapping) to generate the **three patterns of desired visions of homeownership**.

Success Criteria

Like the process for developing the visions of homeownership, once the three patterns were identified, the Lab Team combed through the journey maps to identify the higher-order categories of “what success would look like” for the individuals seeking homeownership. From this process, **four success criteria** to support the design of a new model were identified.



This image provides a snapshot of one round of raw data clustering based on an individual’s lived or expected experience of a homeownership journey.

Vision 1: Providing for One's Family

This pattern consists of experiences and expectations of people who identified a future where homeownership **would benefit their family and children**, in particular.

They frequently identified homeownership as an input to a better life now and for the future for their families. Some of the common **desired outcomes** are:

- Having a safe and stable home for their children to grow up in and return to
- Building wealth and being able to pass the home down to their children so they can have a better life
- Having “status” in the community; being looked at differently
- Being able to modify the space to suit their family needs

Desired Features

- Single-family home
- Backyard
- Lots of space
- Kid-friendly area
- Close to schools, parks, transportation
- Welcoming and diverse neighbourhood

Common Experiences

The following is a list of some of the common experiences of those who spoke about this vision for the future:

- One or more adults in home are employed
- At least one child/teenager in family
- Frequent moves
- Difficult landlord relationships; rental stigma
- Difficult to find and afford appropriate housing for family size
- Limited access to affordable housing
- Generational poverty

Common Challenges

The following is a list of some of the common anticipated barriers or challenges expressed by those who spoke about this vision for the future:

- Unable to save for a down payment
- Worries of poor credit history
- Lack records for cash income
- Competitive housing market with rising prices
- Fear of being unable to keep up with bills and affording expenses
- Concern with how children will adjust to new community

I want a place to be there for my kids. Always.

- Lived Expert

”



Vision 2: Freedom and Life Improvement

This pattern consists of experiences and expectations of people who identified a future where homeownership would help them feel a sense of freedom and accomplishment.

They frequently identified homeownership as an input to achieving further goals. Some of the common desired outcomes are:

- Being an “owner”; a sense of pride and accomplishment Gaining equity, investing in oneself, and building up to
- Improving quality of life
- Having freedom of one’s own space
- Having a sense of belonging and feeling grounded
- Having a foundation to achieve other goals – e.g. starting a business, going back to school, having a family

Desired Features

- House or a multi-residential building; open to alternative forms
- Private
- A quiet, peaceful neighbourhood

Common Experiences

The following is a list of some of the common experiences of those who spoke about this vision for the future:

- Single individual; no dependents
- Some discharged from an institution into homelessness (e.g., hospitals, corrections)
- Some are youth or younger adults
- Difficulty maintaining work (e.g., due to health issues); receiving social assistance
- Difficult landlord relationships; rental stigma
- Limited access to affordable housing
- Generational poverty

Common Challenges

The following is a list of some of the common anticipated barriers or challenges expressed by those who spoke about this vision for the future:

- Unable to save for a down payment
- Worries of poor credit history
- Fear of being unable to keep up with bills and affording expenses
- Fear of losing source of income
- Fear of losing investment

“

Once I own a home, I would be able to save or put money into other areas of my life.

- Lived Expert

Vision 3: Long-Term Home

This pattern consists of experiences and expectations of people who identified a future where homeownership would mean a sense of **long-term security**.

They frequently identified homeownership as an input to feeling assured that no one could take their home away. Some of the common **desired outcomes** are:

- Having a safe and stable home for the long-term; no time limit on duration of tenure
- Having some equity to fall back on in older years
- The pride of owning something
- Being able to personalize a space; do hobbies
- Being able to age in place

Desired Features

- House or a multi-residential building; open to alternative forms (e.g., tiny house, co-housing)
- Accessible
- Backyard/garden
- Private
- Warm and cozy

Common Experiences

The following is a list of some of the common experiences of those who spoke about this vision for the future:

- Single individual; no dependents (children grown)
- Some are older individuals
- Difficulty maintaining work (e.g., due to health issues); receiving social assistance
- Limited access to affordable housing
- Lack of social support and network
- May have owned a home or lived in stable housing previously

Common Challenges

The following is a list of some of the common anticipated barriers or challenges expressed by those who spoke about this vision for the future:

- Lack of savings
- Worries of poor credit history
- Decreasing purchasing power; costs go up while income remains the same
- Fear of being unable to keep up with bills and affording expenses
- Fear of isolation

“

I just want a roof over my head that I know would be mine and no one could take it from me as long as I'm on this earth.

- Lived Expert

Departure Points for a New Tenure Model

Departure points are used in design processes to ground the Lab Team by providing a launch point to consider as we create a new model or experience. These departure points to help us develop a new tenure model emerged from a process of mapping the existing components of tenure models ranging from traditional market homeownership to non-market (subsidized) rental housing. The points of departure exist within six categories, across the creation, operation, and turnover of the housing option.

	<i>How the housing is created</i>	<i>How the housing is run</i>				<i>How the housing is turned over to the next resident</i>
	CREATION	OPERATION				TURNOVER
The Model	The type of developer involved (private**, non-profit, government*)	The type housing operator (private**, non-profit, government*)				
Tenure		The tenure type	Documentation required to secure the resident's tenure	The "end date" or term of the resident's tenure		Approach to resident turnover
Risk and Finance	The stakeholder taking on the development risk	The stakeholder taking on the long-term mortgage risk	Source of the mortgage financing	Second mortgage or other debt financing involved	Mitigation of arrears and defaults	Approach to replacing existing residents and assuming revenue loss
Affordability and Eligibility	The homes that can be part of the model (built form, location, etc.)	The affordability target or threshold	Resident eligibility requirements			Resident eligibility requirements after the first resident vacates
Equity	Developer equity for financial viability	Resident downpayment requirement	Stakeholders entitled to equity and approach to building equity			Entitlements to the property's appreciation in value
Property and Support Services		Property maintenance responsibility	Positioning of the property management and resident oversight	Governance of the asset	Additional supports integrated into the model for resident success	Responsibility for preparing unit for next resident

*Government developers and operators could include Housing York Inc., Toronto Community Housing, CreateTO, or other municipal housing corporations.

** Private developers could include both development corporations and private individuals.

Permanence and Stability

What it Means

The theme of **permanence and stability** came up across almost all the lived experts' booklet respondents and interviews. For participants, this theme means:

- Having a place for the long-term rather than planning for the future
- Living somewhere where you can set clear goals for yourself and your family
- Having something permanent that you can pass on to your kids
- Being in a safe area that you would want to stay in
- Living somewhere where the home will not be sold while you are living there
- Having a home that is eventually paid for—eliminating the feeling of not having somewhere to live

Putting down roots—
knowing you can have a
plan to achieve your goals.

”



When you own a
home and it's paid for,
there's never a feeling
of not having
somewhere to live.

— Housing Journeys Reimagined Lived Experts

What it Could Look Like

A place that is **permanent and stable** could take on my forms. Participants described some of the following characteristics that could help achieve this outcome of a new housing model:

Length of Tenure

Participants expressed permanence and stability means being able to stay somewhere for a long period of time. This time period differed depending on the person's vision for the future and their current life circumstances. However, the most common responses we received were **“somewhere longer than 4 to 5 years”, “want to be good for a decade”, and “would want something for the next 20 to 30 years”**.

Many respondents with children stated that they would want the home to be permanent enough that they could pass it down to their children so they would be set up for success.

The Feeling of “Paying it Off”

The idea of reaching an end point where you have “paid it off” (mortgage, membership fee, etc.) seemed important to create the sense of permanence.

Limiting the Chance of Housing Precarity

Many booklet participants shared past stories of housing precarity—where their tenure was threatened either due to eviction or changes to the terms of their tenure.

The following design characteristics for a new model could limit a household's experiences of housing precarity:

- **Life changes** should not impact the permanence of your home (i.e., compared to experiences of people getting married and their income subsidy going away)
- **Asset limits** should not impact someone's tenure—participants experienced instances of being forced to move to market rent units in subsidized housing
- **Affordability thresholds** should be set so that people have a little extra money every month so they can stay in the same place for a long time

”
Nobody can
take from you
what you own.

Permanence and Stability

What it Should Consider

Past Experiences

Lived expert participants shared the **past housing experiences** that help shape their desires for a home that is permanent and stable.

These experiences include being evicted when the landlord sells their house, being worried about asset limits in subsidized housing, and feeling like renting is “always temporary”.

The booklet and interview process also highlighted the importance of an emphasis on **safety, comfort, and stability**, as many lived experts have not had this in their housing for years (or maybe ever).

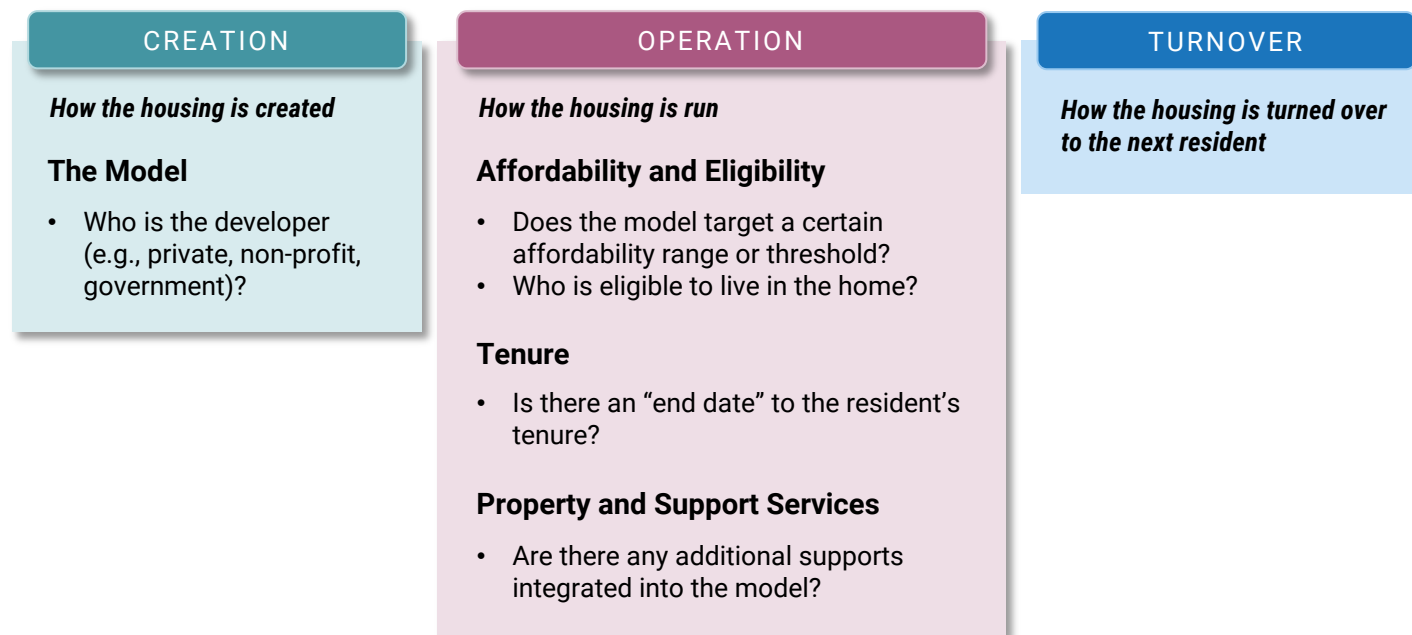
Potential Barriers

The new tenure model should consider the following potential barriers someone may face to permanence and stability:

- Recurring health issues making it difficult to maintain housing
- “Checks” required to be eligible (e.g., credit, past landlord references) can present further challenges

Departure Points for a New Model

The following graphic provides some departure points for creating a new model that provides **permanence and stability** for residents.



I just want a roof over my head that I know would be mine and no one could take it from me as long as I'm on this earth.



Building Equity

What it Means

The theme of **building equity** meant different things to different lived expert participants. For some, the opportunity to make an investment that grows in value over time was important. For others, they spoke about building equity as a way of feeling their housing payments are “benefiting them” instead of paying off someone else’s mortgage. For participants, this theme means:

Benefiting from wealth creation

- Having pride in paying towards myself rather than someone else
- Knowing that even if housing costs are higher, the money is for me not the landlord (versus rent, which is just spending money that does not come back to help you in the long-run)
- Feeling like I made a good investment
- When you make changes and upgrades, the money is going back into your home
- Being able to sell the house when you want and recuperate the equity

What it Could Look Like

Each person’s desired goals for a new tenure model could impact the size and other characteristics of the equity they build. Here are some of the goals people expressed when it came to building equity:

Setting my kids up for the future

- Creating a future inheritance for my kids to stop the cycle of poverty
- Being able to pass the home along to your children to make their lives better

Breaking the cycle of poverty

- Help people get out of the cycle of ‘not saving’
- Would be nice to save up enough money to start a business in 10 years
- Having financial independence

Saving for retirement

- Building equity could help someone retire comfortably
- Good to have some equity to fall back on in old age

Moving on to market housing

- Would want to benefit people so they can move out on their own
- Building credit
- Having enough money saved up for first and last month’s rent is hard enough, let alone finding somewhere affordable

“

It [paying off your mortgage] would be like when I paid off my car—felt so good!

”

I’ve seen the benefits of other people gaining from real estate appreciation.

— Housing Journeys Reimagined Lived Expert

Building Equity

What it Should Consider

We asked lived expert interview participants to tell us about what the equity-building component of a new tenure model could look like. They shared the following considerations:

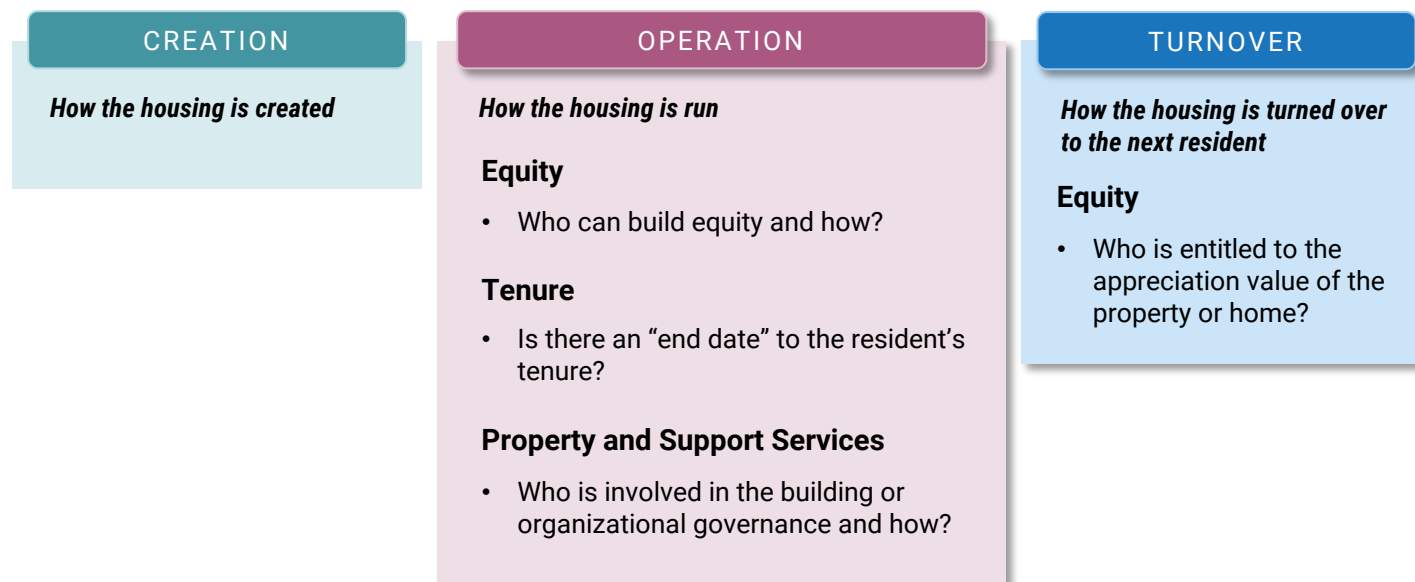
Considerations for equity-building

- There should not be asset or savings limits—these prohibit social mobility
- There could be a hybrid approach for people who want to save but do not want to become “homeowners” in the traditional sense
- People would need to realize financial gains from the model (e.g., whether it is owning a share in a building or owning a unit in a traditional sense)
- Future residents would want to know where their money is going and how it is being used or saved

“
If the equity is too low, it may feel like getting first and last month's rent back.”

Departure Points for a New Model

The following graphic provides some departure points for creating a new model that provides the opportunity for residents to **build equity**.



Pride and Responsibility

What it Means

The theme of **sense of pride and responsibility** showed up across several participant booklets and interviews. Participants described what it means to have a sense of pride. This includes:

- Feeling truly at home somewhere I feel proud
- Having a sense of achievement and belonging from having your own place
- Feeling like a housing dream has come true; a self-esteem boost
- Peace of mind knowing you have a place of your own

Pride knowing it is “yours”

Many participants expressed a desire for pride in one’s home, knowing that it is “theirs”. This could show up in their ability to show their home to their loved ones and friends and say, “this is my house!”.

In addition, like paying off a car payment or student loan, paying off the debt they have in their home could create a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction of owning something.

One participant noted that owning a share in a building (versus your own unit) could also create a sense of pride, knowing that you have a bigger role in the building itself. This idea will be explored further in this Lab.

What it Could Look Like

Participants described creating a sense of pride in one’s home by both taking responsibility for your home and having access to a good home.

Taking responsibility for your home

- Have to hold people who damage the building to account (pay for the damages)
- Take pictures before move-in to keep people accountable
- Security deposit could be involved
- Would want to be somewhere where people pick up garbage and keep things tidy

Living in a good home

Several participants noted that a sense of pride in one’s home not only comes from having some sort of ownership or ‘stake’ in the home, but living in a place that is nice, of good quality, and in a safe area.

This theme could also include having access to in-unit amenities such as laundry and a dishwasher.

Potential supports desired

We asked Blue Door and Habitat families and clients about what potential supports they may require in their journeys to homeownership.

Participants shared that it would be helpful if courses on home maintenance were offered so people can learn how to do simple home repairs, identify and diagnose problems in their homes, and know when to call a professional.

”

Would want the place to be nice—many low-income people [like me] have lived in areas that are not well-maintained.

— Housing Journeys Reimagined Lived Expert

Sense of Pride and Responsibility

“

When you know others who own homes, you ask yourself, “Why can’t I? Am I lesser?”

Owning would mean grounding, freedom, and pride of ownership.

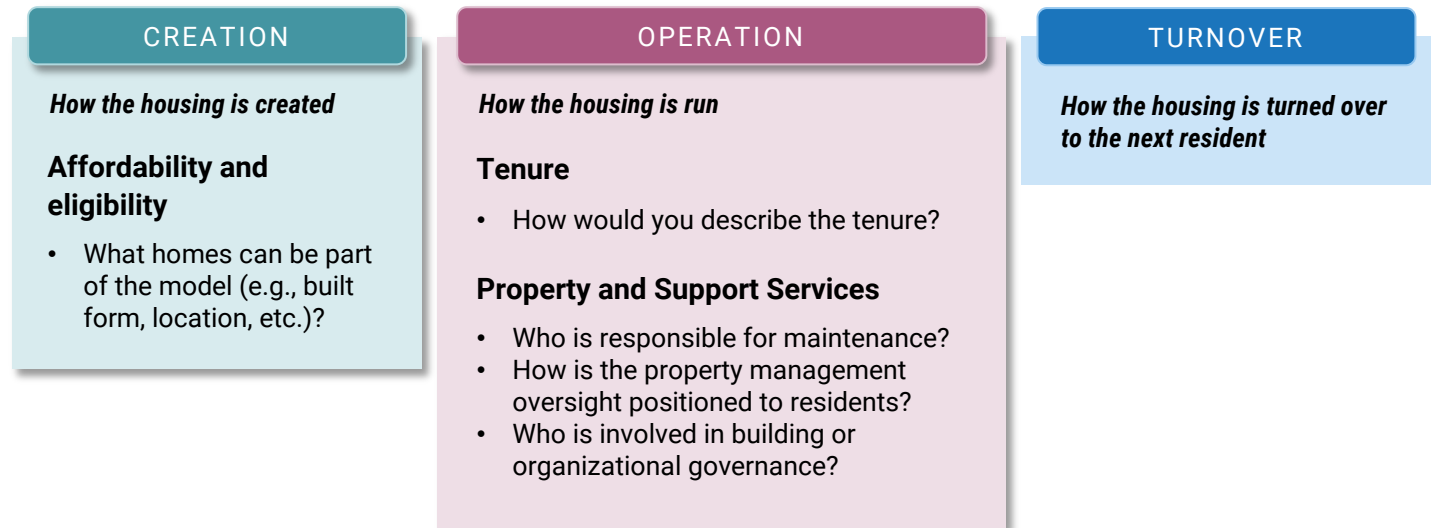
”

“
Living in subsidized housing, it never felt like our “own” home.

– Housing Journeys Reimagined Lived Expert

Departure Points for a New Model

The following graphic provides some departure points for creating a new model that provides the residents with a **sense of pride and responsibility**.



Control and Agency

What it Means

Having **control and agency** over one's place was a recurring theme and criteria for success in the Lab research to date. Participants described this notion in the following ways:

- It is important to have freedom and “say” over your home
- Control and agency could come in the form of being allowed to bring your own furniture, decorate a home the way you like, and make other changes to “make it feel like home” without permission
- Being allowed to have pets
- Being able to make your own food
- Knowing that your friends or family can come and go without restrictions or stay with you in your home

Similar to the theme of **permanence and stability**, this success criteria means feeling a sense of control over one's tenure. This could come in the form of knowing that your landlord cannot evict you by selling their unit or taking it over for personal use. Having control and agency in this situation means being able to decide how long you want to stay in one place.

What it Could Look Like

Participants described a feeling of control and agency by describing what the management, supervision, and general oversight of the home could look and feel like.

Management and supervision

The approach to property management, inspections, and other forms of building supervision could create or inhibit a sense of control and agency in one's home. Participants shared the following considerations:

- A home would not feel like it is mine if someone was checking in frequently
- Depending on the restrictions associated with the tenure (e.g., pets, visitors, renovations, etc.), this could also limit someone's control and agency over a space

Having a property manager involved could still be a promising avenue and provide people with a sense of control, agency, and ownership, if done with intention. It would be important to have any rules, inspections requirements, or other property management details in writing so it is clear and transparent to the people living there.

Accountability

Despite the feedback around wanting to have full control and agency over a space, several participants expressed an interest in there being ways to keep each other in a building accountable to the maintenance and upkeep of the space.

For instance, making sure people are held accountable for damages to their unit and having ways for people to pay for damages.

Control and Agency

What it Should Consider

Past Experiences

Lived expert participants shared the **past housing experiences** that shape their desires for a home where they have control and agency. These past experiences include:

- Living in subsidized housing where significant information is required about how and where you are spending your money—this removes control and agency from the person
- Experience with lots of rules in subsidized housing, making it not feel like “your space” when so many activities have to be approved by a property manager
- Experience having to leave a rental situation when a landlord sells the property or wants to take the unit back for personal use

Departure Points for a New Model

The following graphic provides some departure points for creating a new model that provides **control and agency** for residents.

