

Work with municipalities to improve public housing standards to produce healthy ecological, social and subjective housing relations

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Barriers to Quality

Housing commodification incentivizes developers to build housing that appears to be of good quality for a limited period of time - while it is being sold (in the case of strata), or while it is being amortized (in the case of rental).



In a commodified housing market, **subsidized housing** cannot be seen to be of higher quality than market housing, so its **quality is tied to market housing**.



This system of housing provision creates long-term **ecological, social and subjective costs**.



Toronto

A 'staggering' 80,000 people and more were homeless in Ontario last year, new report finds

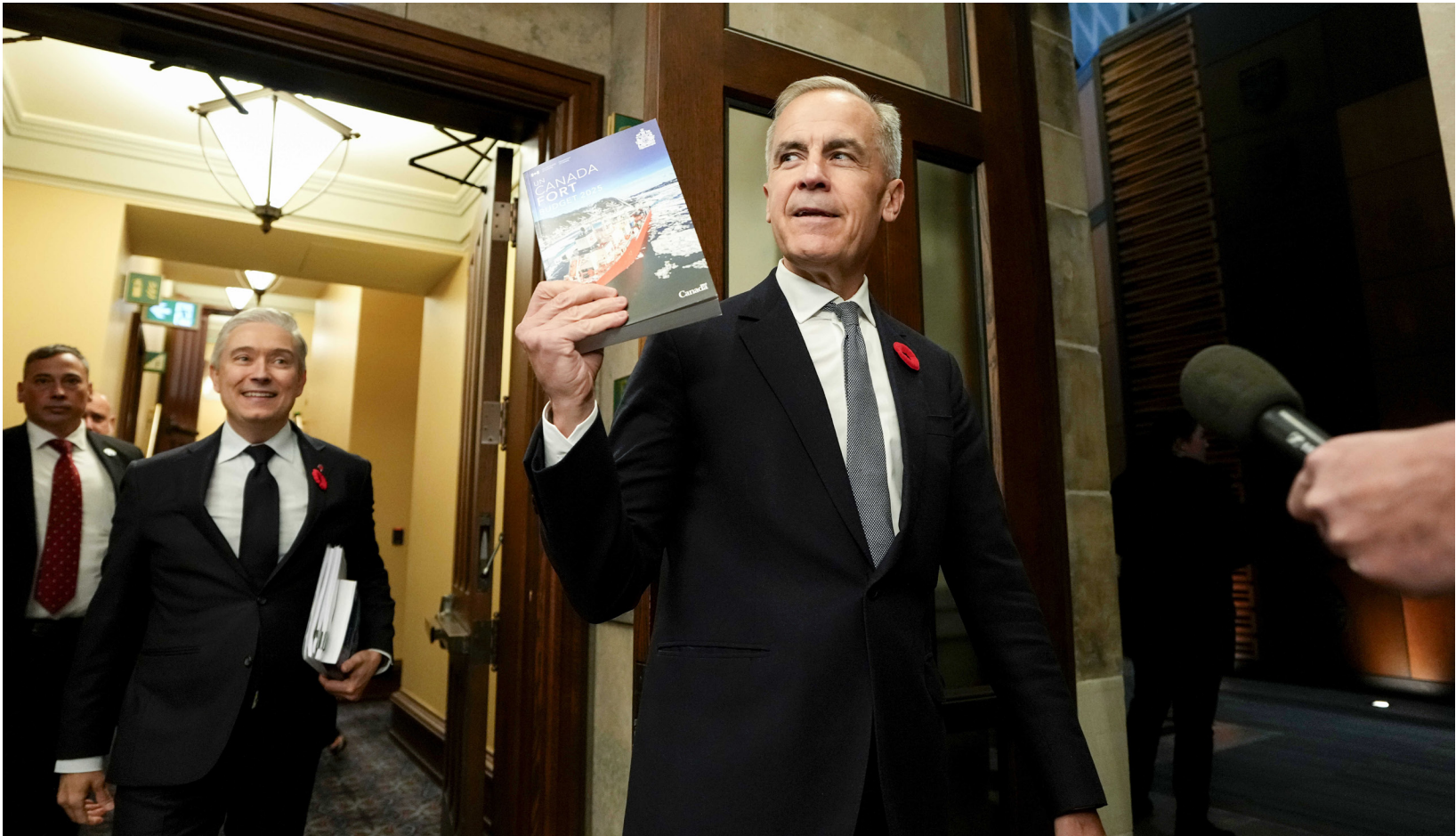
AMO says the groundbreaking report is believed to be the most accurate provincewide picture to date

Liam Casey · The Canadian Press · Posted: Jan 09, 2025 11:41 AM EST | Last Updated: January 9



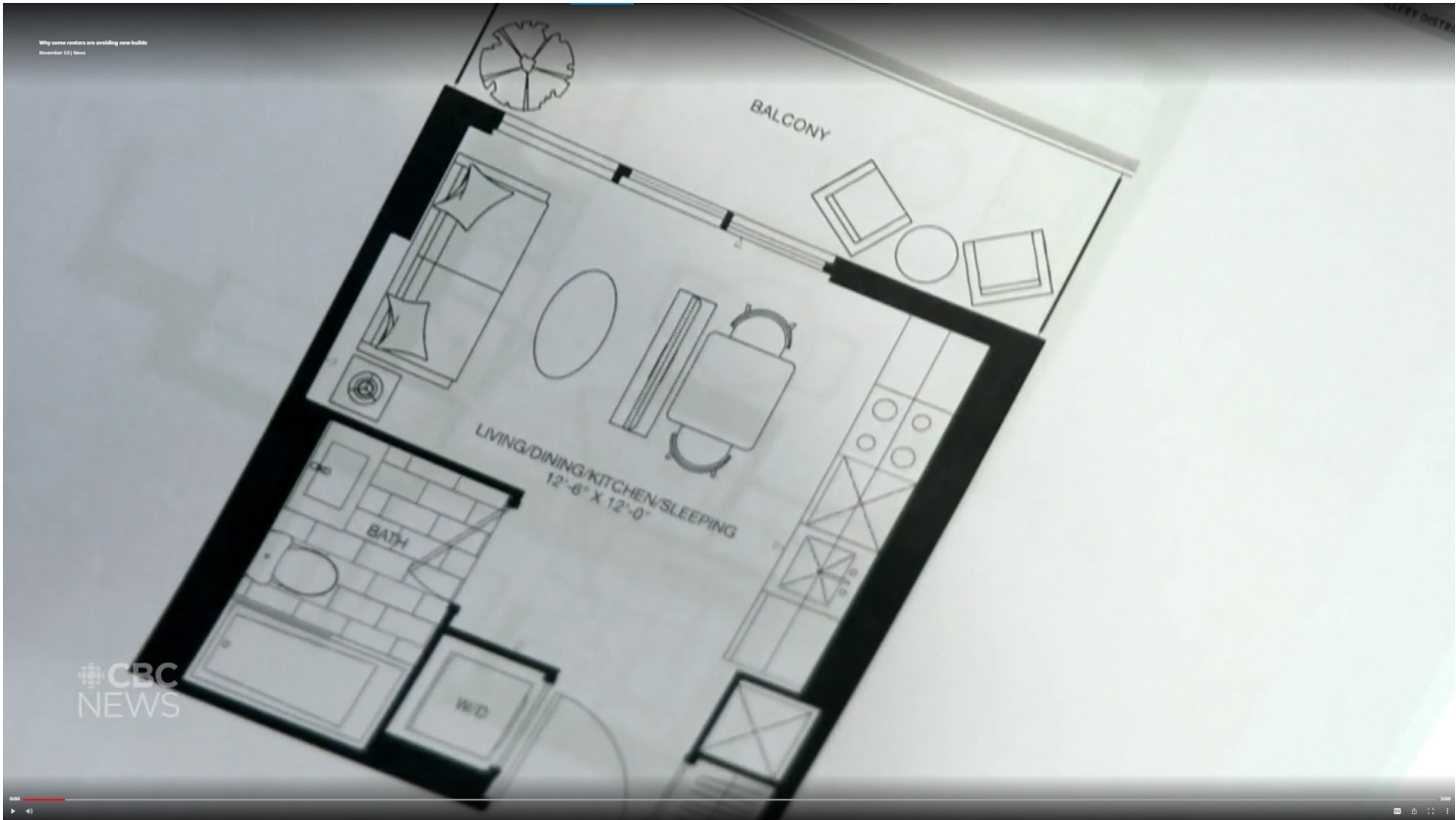
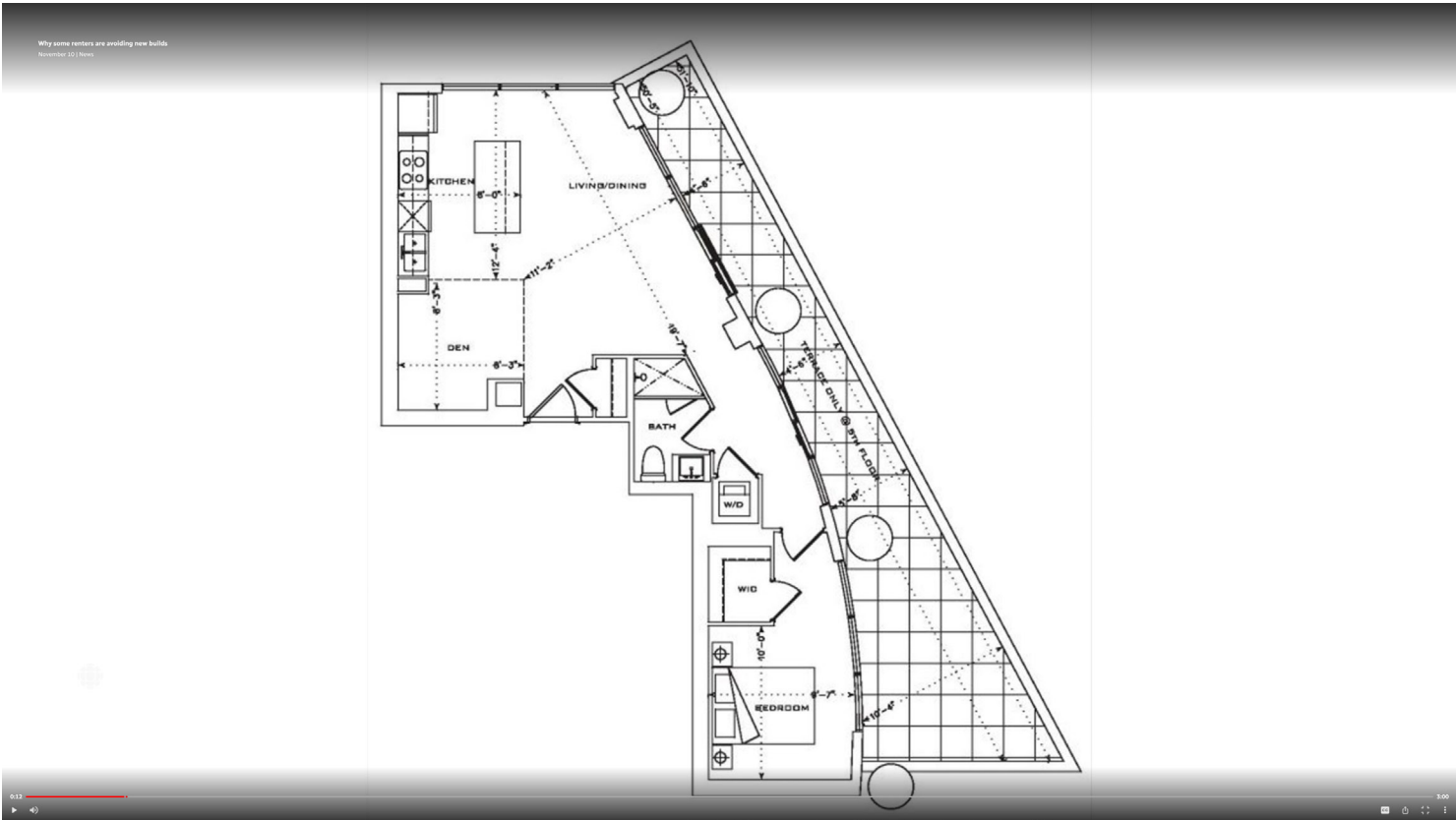
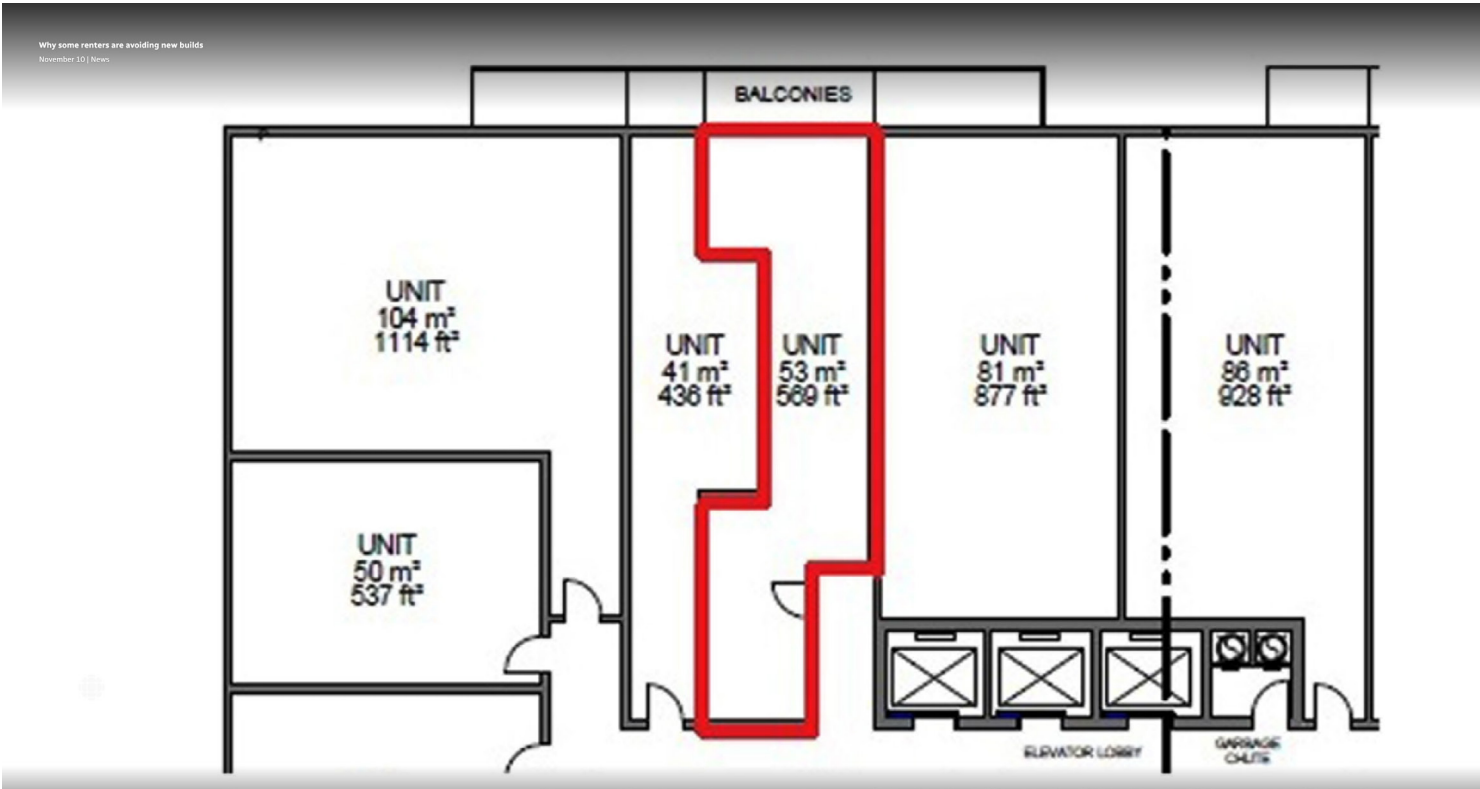
Federal budget falls short on housing affordability, experts say

SALMAAN FAROOQUI >
PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 10, 2025
UPDATED YESTERDAY



'A literal shoe box': Why some Toronto renters are avoiding new builds

Naama Weingarten · CBC News · Nov 10, 2025



Chosen Action: Political



1

Work with municipalities to improve public housing standards to produce healthy housing connections.

1.1

Analyze policies, legislation, regulations, and standards to analyze their effectiveness in promoting housing quality.

1.2

Create and adapt public housing standards based on the perspectives of housing residents, as a way of raising the standard of multi-unit residential buildings in both the public and the private sector.

Examples of Housing Design Guidelines Across Canada



Table 1: List of Reviewed Standards

Issuing Social Housing Entity	Shorthand	Reference
Alberta Social Housing Corporation	Alberta	Alberta Social Housing Coporation, Seniors and Housing, Government of Alberta, 2020. Design and Technical Guidelines.
BC Housing	BC	BC Housing, 2019. Design Guidelines and Construction Standards.
Manitoba Housing	Manitoba	Manitoba Housing, 2017. Design Guidelines for Multi-unit Affordable and Social Housing.
Société d’habitation du Québec	Québec	Société d’habitation du Québec, 2021. Guide de construction: Guide d’élaboration et de réalisation des projets - Annexe 5.
City of Toronto, Affordable Housing Office	Toronto	City of Toronto, Affordable Housing Office, 2015. Affordable Rental Housing Design Guidelines.
Waterloo Region Housing	Waterloo Region	Waterloo Region Housing, 2019. Affordable Housing Design Guidelines.

Healthy Housing Connections Represented in National Housing Policies

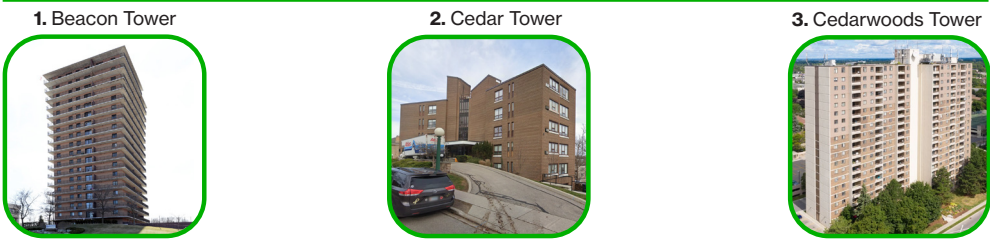
Table 18: Variable Categorization According to Assessment in Studied Policies

	Well-Represented	Incomplete / Poorly As- sessed	Underrepresented
Ecological Milieu	Embodied Carbon		
	Operational Carbon		
		Adequacy	
		Thermal Comfort	
	Air Quality		
	Water Use and Quality		
	Visual Comfort		
		Ecological Connectivity	
			Urban Connectivity
Social Relations	Suitability		
		Sociability	
			Governance
			Cultural Adequacy
		Safety	
Subjective Agency	Privacy		
			Resident Agency
	Accessibility		
			Security of Tenure*
			Affordability*
			Wealth
			Labor Conditions

Case Studies

1960-1979

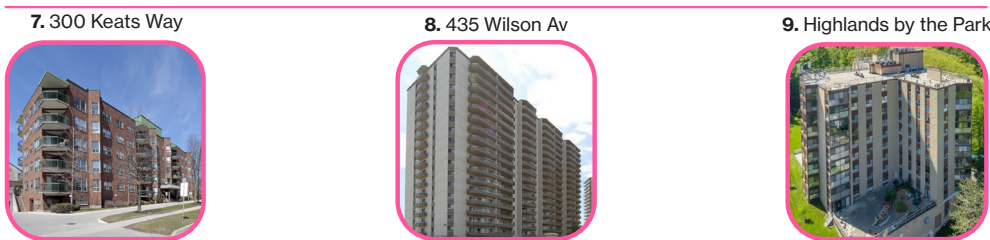
Market □



Non-Market ○



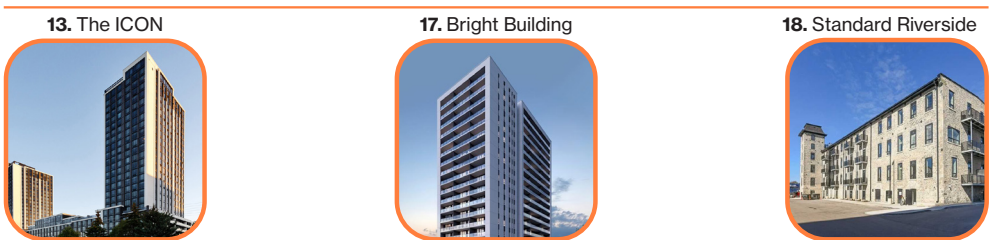
Market □



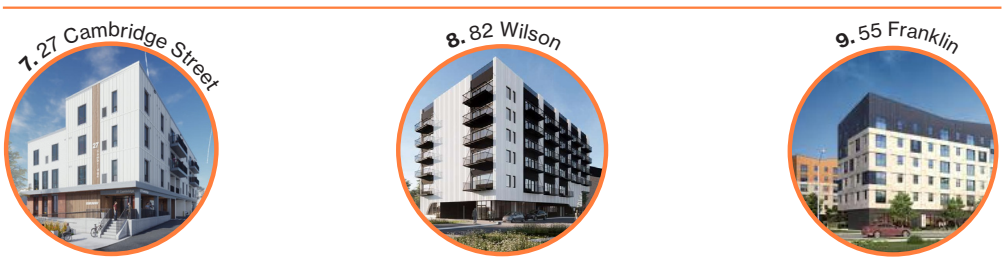
Non-Market ○



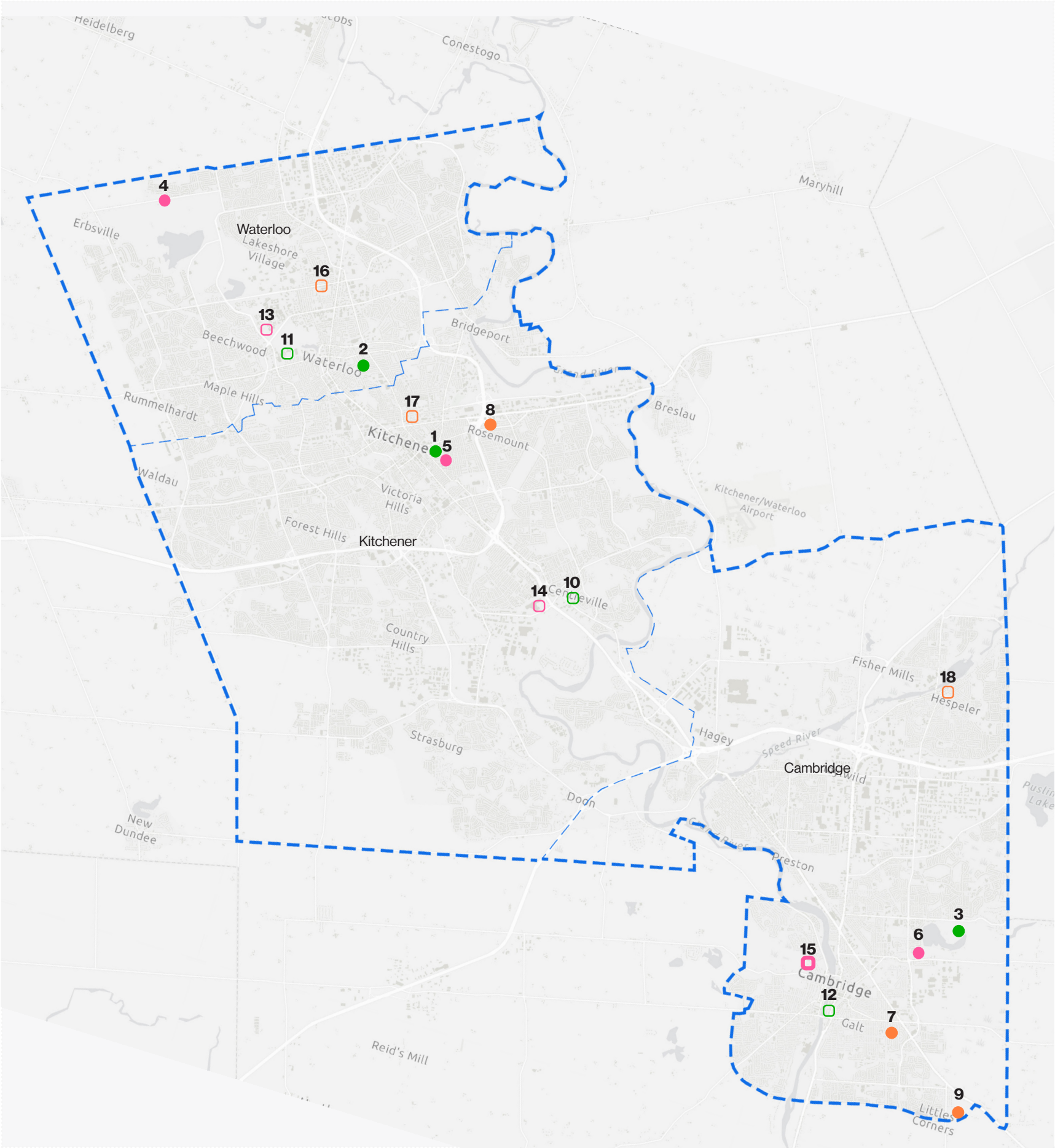
Market □



Non-Market ○

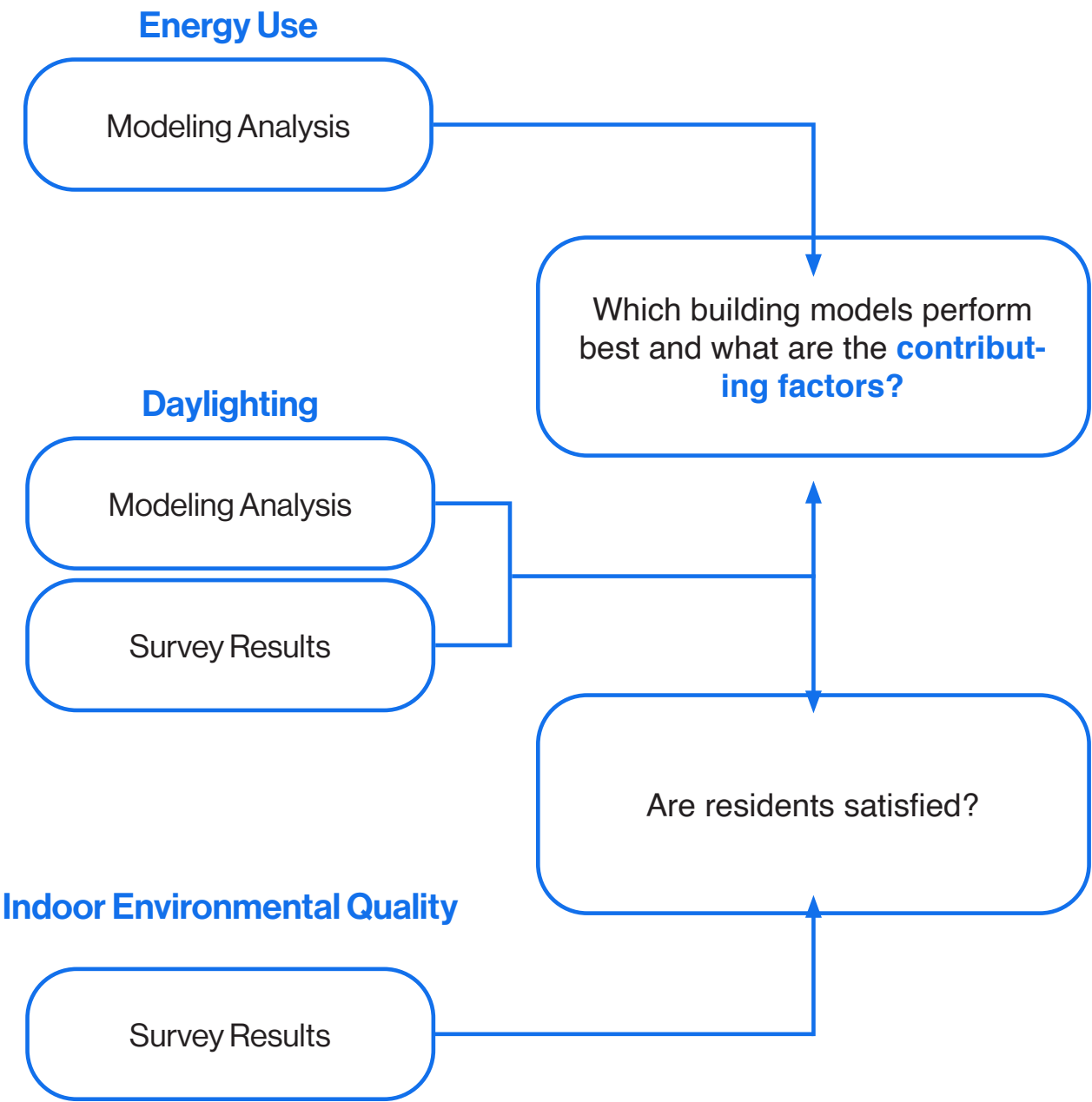
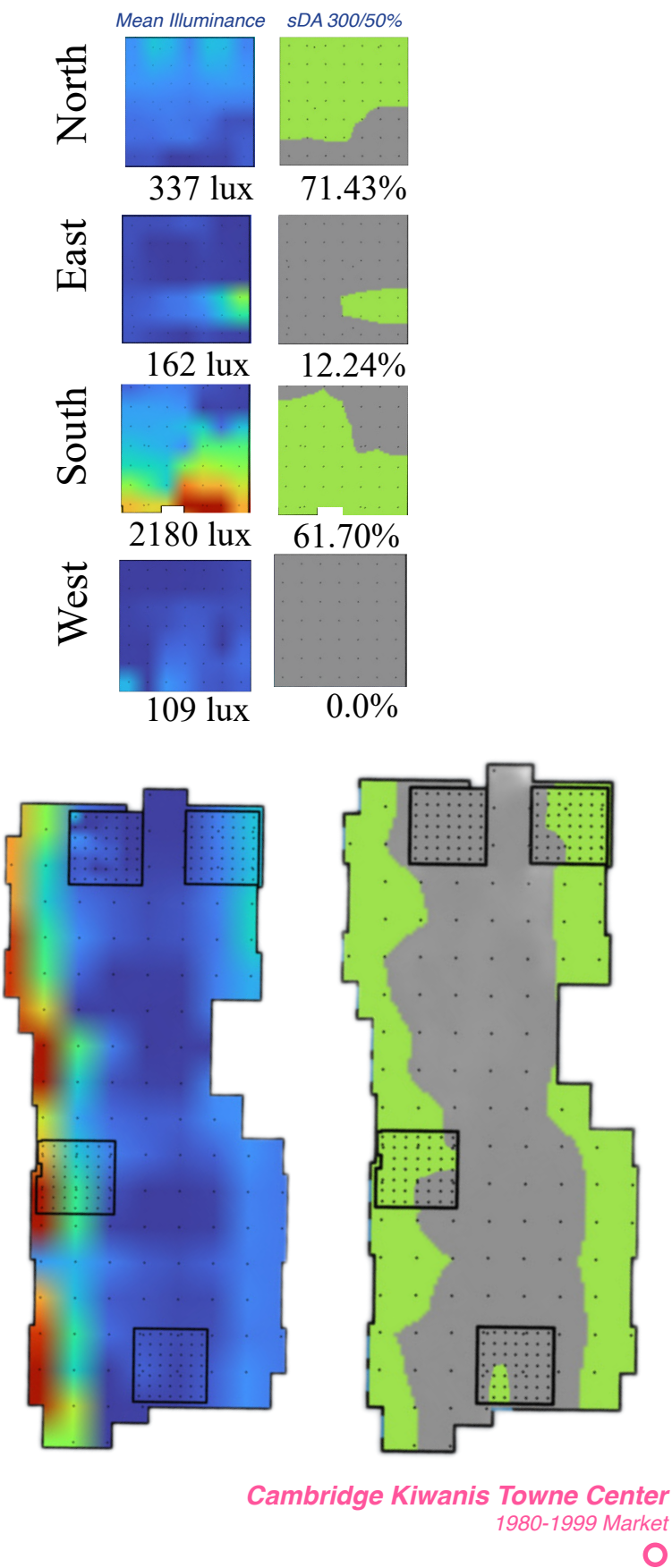


2000-Present



Environmental Analysis

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Types of Recommendations:

Design Priorities

Factors which require increased attention in design (such as balcony width and unit aspect ratio in daylighting)

Minimum Values

Specific values for various design choices (such as minimum wall R-value of R-28)

Maintenance

Recommend a regular audit of existing buildings for retrofit measures

Dwelling Floor Plan Analysis

For Rethinking Regional Housing Standards

Suitability

Is there enough space for all occupants?

Analyzing layout, footprint and circulation.

Practicality & Adaptability

What can or can't an occupant perform in their dwelling?

Analyzing space function, and convertible openings.

Subdivision & Daylight

How is the dwelling divided and what spaces are positioned close to light?

Analyzing daylight adjacency, openness and zones.

Studio		1 BDRM		2 BDRM		3 BDRM	
Zone Type	Zonal Diagram	Zone Type	Zonal Diagram	Zone Type	Zonal Diagram	Zone Type	Zonal Diagram
Beacon Tower 1960-1979 Market □		(3x4) Square Corner Unit		(3x5) Very Wide Corner Unit		(3x5) Wide Corner Unit	
Fairview Mennonite Homes 1960-1979 Non-Market ○	(3x2) Slim Corner Unit		(2x2) Wide Corner Unit				
Highlands by the Park 1980-1999 Market □				(2x5) Wide Corner Unit		(2x4) Deep Wing Unit	
Cambridge Kiwanis Towne Center 1980-1999 Non-Market ○		(2x2) Deep Side Unit		(3x3) Square Corner Unit			
The Bright Building 2000-Present Market □	(2x4) Square Side Unit		(2x2) Slim Side Unit		(2x4) Deep Corner Unit		
55 Franklin 2000-Present Non-Market ○		(2x2) Slim Side Unit		(3x2) Broad Side Unit			

Residential-to-Residential (R2R) Adaptability Index

For Rethinking Regional Housing Standards

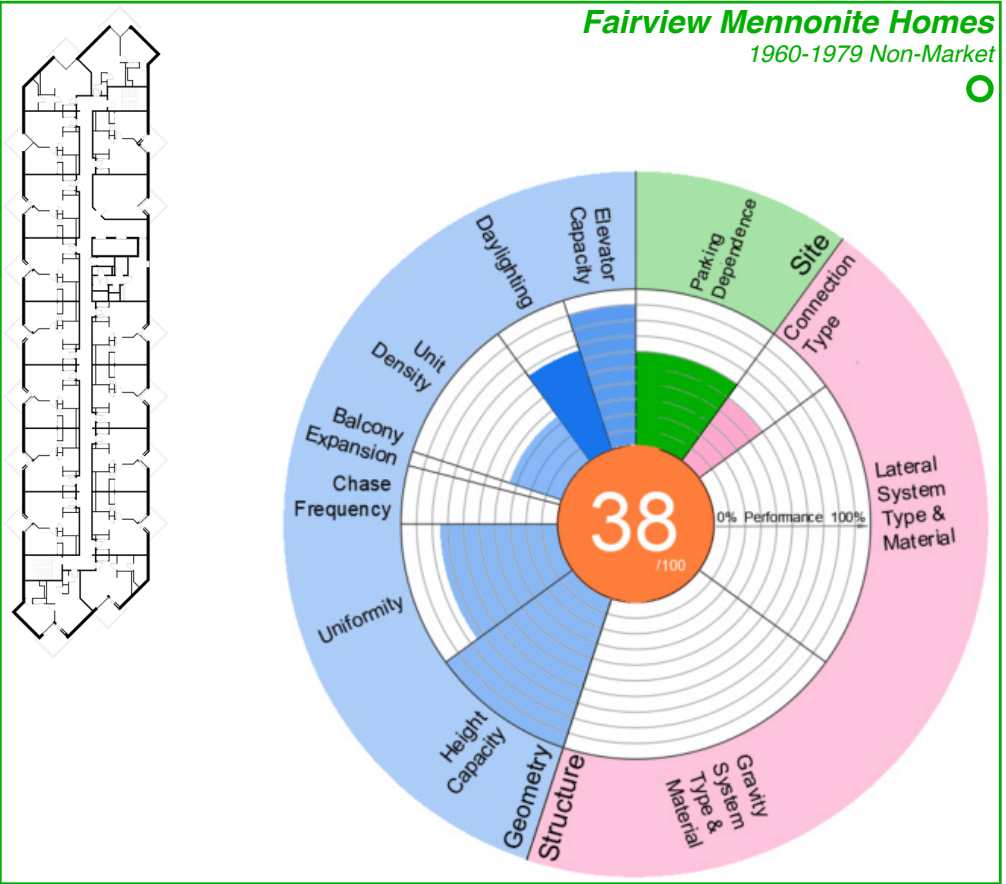
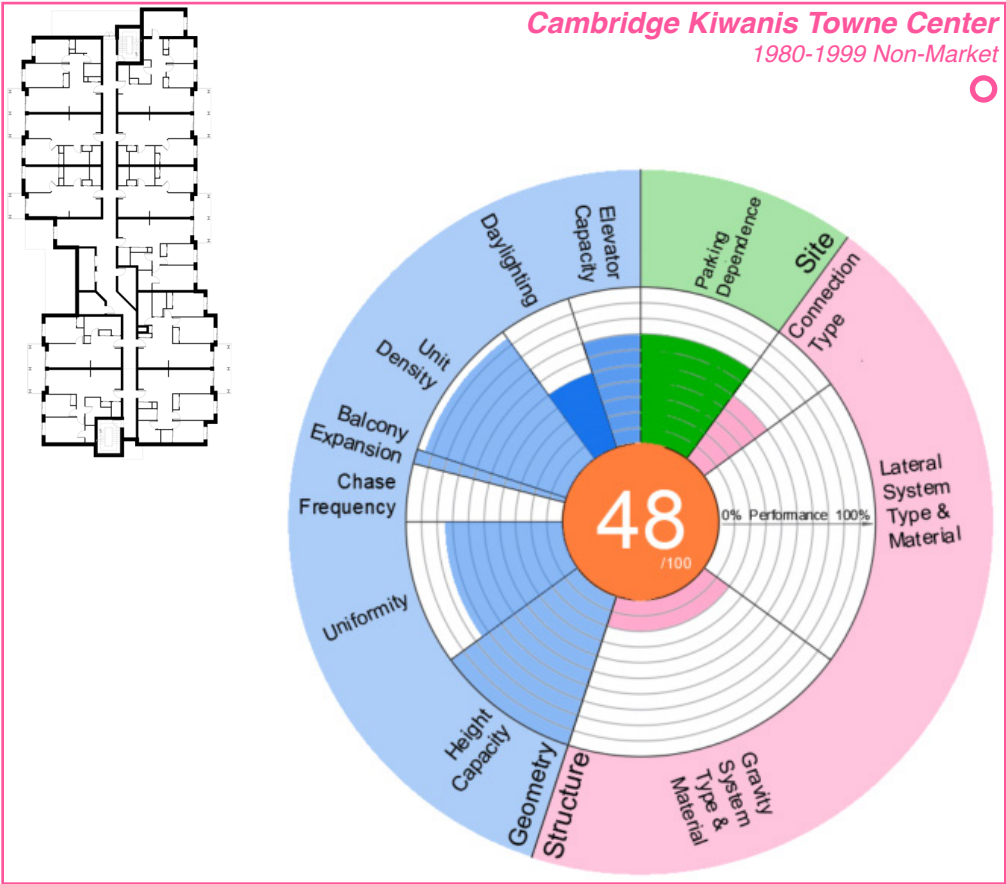
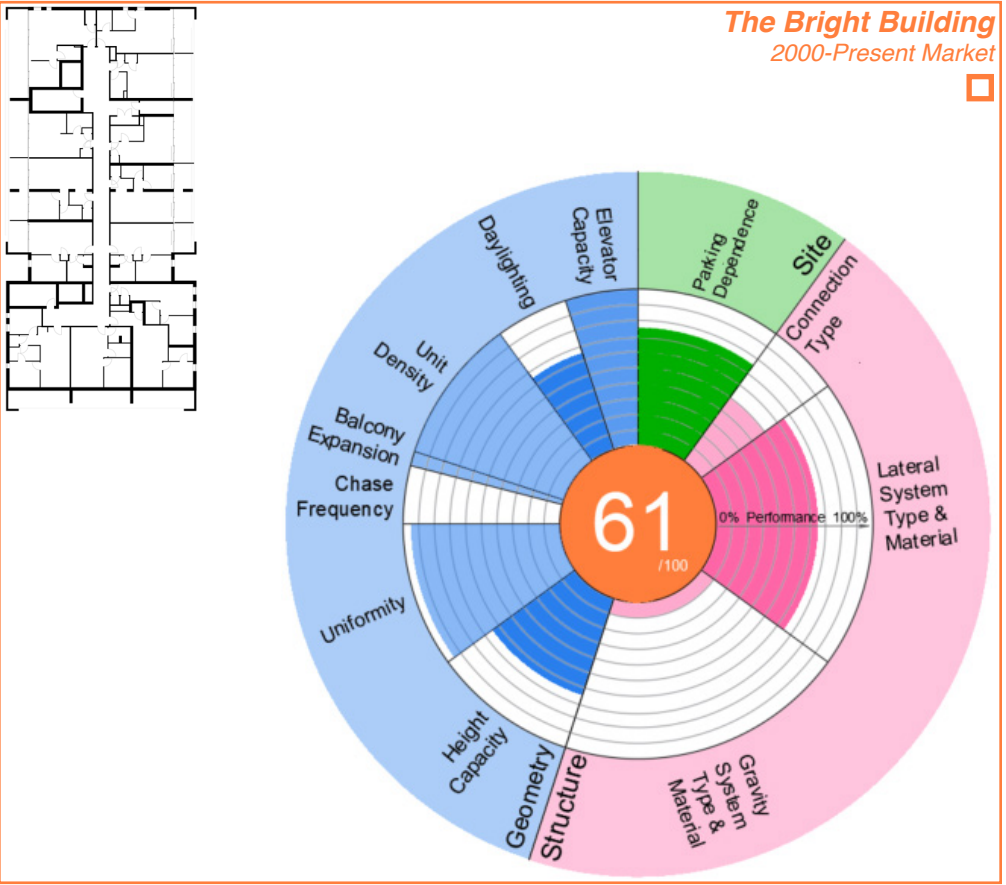
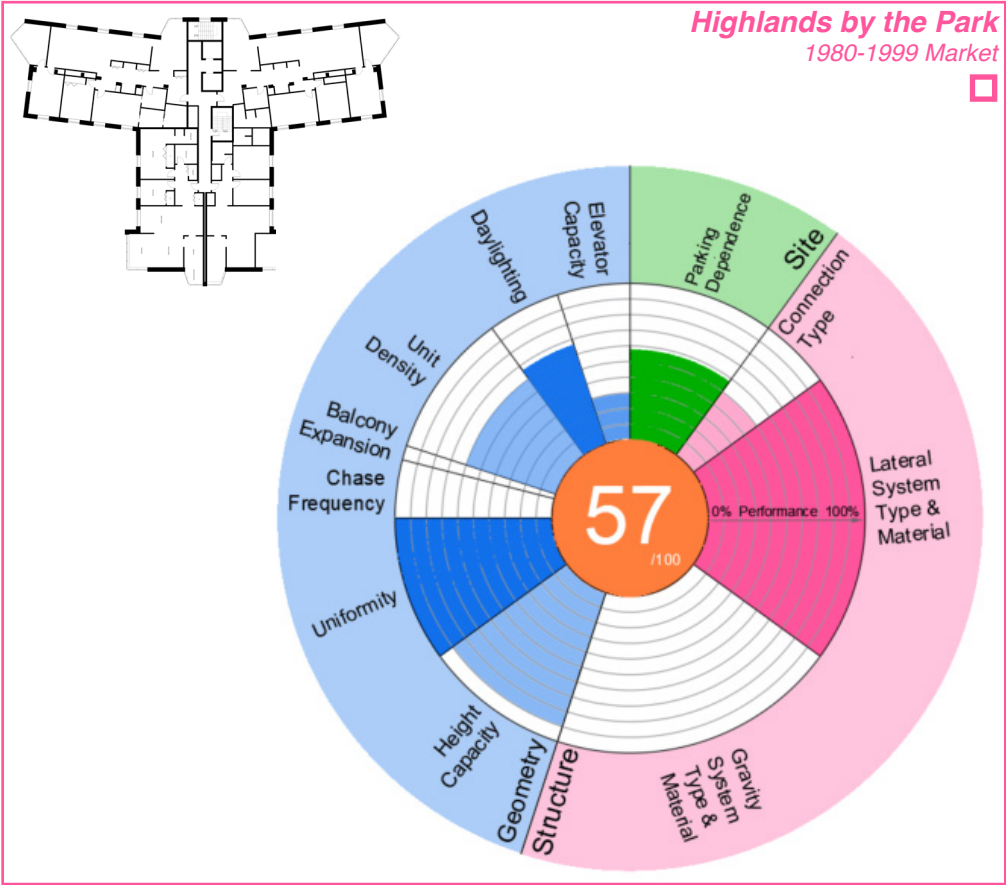
What is an adaptability index?

An evaluation tool to assess a building’s design for its ability to easily support renovation and alterations that would allow unit size and configuration to fluctuate over the lifespan of the building.

Uses

- Public rental housing can plan for generations of users

Market Case Studies



1960-1979

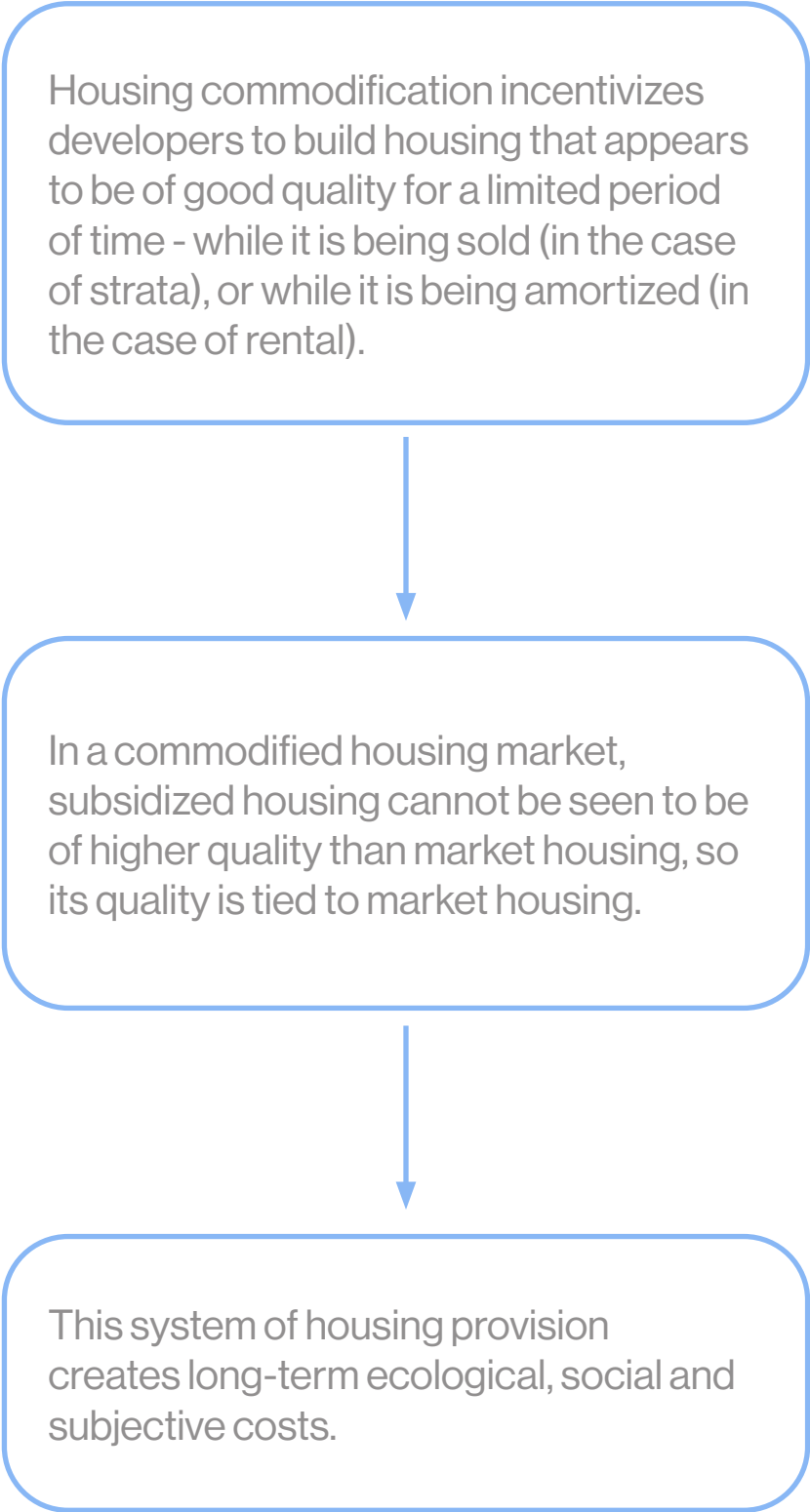
1980-1999

2000-Present

Non-Market Case Studies

Action Impact:

Barriers to Quality



De-commodified Quality:

