Cohousing Now!
What Cohousing Means To You

Cohousing is...

... a challenging task, with pitfalls (and perseverance), with laughter and hugs (or nods and drawing into oneself), with food and nurturing (or caution and health concerns), with a good measure of comfort and, especially, community.

... after parenting, the single greatest personal growth opportunity.

... a collaborative way of living that fosters connectedness, increases social capital for their residents, and creates opportunities for more conscious use of social, natural and man-made resources. A more sustainable way of living.

... a meaningful, growthful way to live.

... a paradigm-changing life experience.

... a village of mutually supportive people, sharing work and fun and care.
... a wonderful way to age in community! It is far better than any other option I've explored.

... both momentous and ordinary.

... a way for us to be the best person we can be.

... the hope to recreate thriving neighborhoods where people consent to practice enriching one another's life more than most of today's neighborhoods.

... the best future for many people, they just don't know it yet.

... a combination of commune and condominium, family and small town, where the quality of living is satisfying and sustainable.

... lots of fun and a great way to live!

... the future of living in harmony with others for a sustainable life!

... community living today with yesterday's values.

... to create authentic community and avoid isolation in a fractured world.

... fun, cooperative, friendly, challenging, supportive, thrifty, sometimes annoying but I love it!

... knowing your neighbors and continuing to deal with them even after a conflict.

... a journey...an adventure...caring and sharing...challenging...inspiring...THE FUTURE!

(responses collected and shared by Karin of Wild Sage Cohousing who says ...
"Cohousing is my life. Seriously...I live it, I work it, I believe in it."
This regional cohousing conference is for:

- People that want to learn about cohousing, how to create it, how to live it
- Those that are forming a cohousing community, whether you're just starting or already building
- Residents who currently live in a cohousing community
- Architects, developers, planners or other professionals interested in creating communities

For more information, click here to register, click here

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In case you haven't heard yet, next year's National Cohousing Conference is already gearing up. We have a website (click here) where we're excited to announce our keynote will be Courtney Martin.

We have a little about the theme of the conference, 'Community for the Health of It' and the tracks on the About page.

The 2019 National Cohousing Conference team is excited to invite you to submit a proposal to present, facilitate or moderate at the Portland, Oregon Conference. We welcome both experienced presenters and newcomers to submit: (click here).

If interested in becoming a sponsor for what we anticipate to be a well attended national conference click here.

If interested in volunteering in pre-conference prep or day-of activities, please contact karincohous@gmail.com

Be sure to mark your calendars for May 30 to June 2, 2019, and share this with anyone you know who may be interested!

Cohousing Blogs

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3BR 2BA townhome for sale by original owner

Beautiful Home In Stunning Prescott Arizona

FIRST COHOUSING IN CONNECTICUT BUILDING NOW!
The concept of a "walk-able community' is appealing to many. However, to plan residential homes with walk-able access to stores, banks, parks, etc. is challenging. The typical suburban subdivision is car rather than walker friendly. Few have homes that are walk-able to supermarkets and shopping malls. The very economics of supermarkets and shopping malls encourages large facilities which must service customers over a much larger area than is accessible on foot.

Wolf Creek Lodge is an exception. Thanks to Katie McCamant we are on a piece of land very close to two significant shopping areas. These areas serve a car driving customer base over a wide area. Wolf Creek Lodgers who arrive on foot are a peculiar species. "Can I help carry this to your car?" "Actually I'm walking!"

Let's look at some Google satellite images. Below is an area of Grass Valley. A typical suburban subdivision. Looks to me that to get anywhere you need a car.
Below is a view of Wolf Creek Lodge (in the red box) and areas to the north. There are definitely places you can walk to. The Raley's Super Market is the anchor store but you can also find a gym, several restaurants, a coffee shop, bank and more. Notice also Wolf Creek to the left meandering through the trees.

Now let's look east. Again Wolf Creek Lodge is in the red box.
Here we see the SPD super market. A more local experience than Raley's but both are good. A five minute walk can get you a roasted chicken if you need something quickly for the potluck. (Don't tell - I try to suggest I cook them myself.)

Also here are pizza shops, Kmart, a fish and chip shop, Baskin Robbins (194 steps from the lodge), a donut shop (also has smoothies and sandwiches), the "Afternoon Deli", a Chinese Restaurant and much more.

Do you live in a walkable community? Can you walk to a variety of stores, banks, coffee shops, restaurants, gyms and places to enjoy a stroll?

You do? lucky you! Then get out and walk, build relationships with community members, meet people in the larger neighborhood, support and shop local, enjoy your feet on the ground and the community you live in.

Don't Give Up The Dream, It Just Might Pay Off
by Betty Grant, Oakleigh Meadow Cohousing

The seed of cohousing along the Willamette River in Eugene was planted in 2011. Oakleigh Meadow, LLC incorporated in 2012. With design & architectural plans in our pocket and membership interest growing solidly into the double digits, we were jazzed! OMC’s Planned unit Development application to the city of Eugene was approved in late 2013 and we anticipated breaking ground by September 2014. Then the clock got turned back.

Neighbors - who early on had been actively involved when the
original owners reached out to the neighborhood to ask "How can we use this meadow to enhance community?", who showed up to help clear the meadow of invasive blackberries, who enjoyed our marketing picnics on the land - decided, NO - too much for our quiet neighborhood.

The next 5 years were arduous. "Legal-ise" nearly strangled the life out of our cohousing dream. In the delay, many wonderful members moved on and those who remained have struggled to stay positive and get the work done. But, nature often requires seeds to lay dormant. Seven years from inception and 3 trips later to the Oregon Court of Appeals, OMC is at a turning point. The appeal itself (vs. procedural points which kept us in the legal spiral) was finally ruled insubstantial and OMC has the green light to proceed. And so we will!

OMC is ecstatic to be moving forward and re-growing our ranks so that we can begin sharing our wonderful location on the Willamette River, inviting all members and neighbors - past, present and future - to come together on the land for meals, frivolity and friendship.

So, hang in there developing community. We are glad we did! We love Eugene. And we love the community that comes with cohousing.

Living in Community

Cohousing communities are residential living arrangements organized around common space, shared meals, and group activities.

Neighbors help each other with everything from childcare to home maintenance.

Each unit is self-contained, so you can balance your need for solitary time with the joy of group experiences.

click here to read the full article published in Business Insider

How America Lives: Creative Housing Options for Boomers, Veterans, Millennials and More by Paula Spencer Scott
Why Cohousing?
By Barbara Sanders, Germantown Commons

Why would anyone choose to live in a cohousing community? After all, living so close to people can be challenging. I have close friends who think my husband and I are a bit whacked that we moved into Germantown Commons 3 years ago. Why would we (or you) do that?

We might all agree with the impressiveness of a multigenerational community that believes in sustainable living, composting, compassionate communication, diversity of all sorts, social justice, and caring about one another. But, when you consider living in a cohousing community, there is more to life than just these wonderful values. In fact, some of what brings us together can also pull us apart at times.

Many of us grew up in families, even good ones like mine. And, perhaps that helped me imagine what a cohousing community is like. But, not really. In a modern American family, parents or guardians make most of the decisions for the family, even though they may seek input from the children. Not so in cohousing. Therefore, what our experience has taught us may not appear to be that useful when making consensus decisions with our peers, other community members that have as much a stake in decisions as we do. No more hierarchy, more equality.

After all, we each buy our own condos, participate in the work of the community, and we spend much time and energy helping make our policies and procedures as streamlined and effective as possible.

But, you might say that there are always personality conflicts in every group. Exactly! Conflict does occur along with shared responsibilities, fun and enjoyment of ourselves and one another.

So, if you like living in your private space, your own home with your own property, cohousing may not be for you. I, myself, loved living in several of my family’s private homes with our fenced in backyards for the dogs. I liked the amount of space we had where our 3 member family could stretch out and enjoy privacy and togetherness without too much hassle.

However, when we think about cooperative living and actually embark on the cohousing path, there are lots of variables to consider. Yes, it is great that we don't have to own our own lawn mowers or every kind of cookware necessary. It is wonderful when we are cooking that we have 25 other homes nearby where we can ask for eggs or spices to complete our meals. We enjoy a 2600 square foot Common House which we co-own, where we can cook with...
each other and enjoy meals and parties together - when we choose to do so. Respecting each other's privacy is extremely important and we try not to make up stories about people who seem standoffish or too domineering.

We all enjoy our separate lives, but we no longer have to drive across town to have coffee or a drink with a friend. We meet each other's families and get to know best those people we enjoy the most. At times, community business meetings can be a bit stressful, but I think of cohousing living like this: it is similar to getting involved in an intimate relationship, which hopefully contains some joy and excitement as well as comfort - and sometimes conflict, which we attempt to work through.

How lovely it is to walk my dog every morning and see a couple of neighbors outdoors when I open my courtyard door! Seeing a smile, getting a hug, or even a brush off at times, works for me. If I want more privacy, I leave by another door where there are fewer eyes and neighbors.

Why live in cohousing? Because we want to. Because we want to challenge ourselves, to grow more healthy and find ways to live together in community with some unlike ourselves, to learn how to be compassionate even when someone's behavior is annoying. To get to know people on a deeper level than I ever got to know any of my past neighbors over many years. To have people around if I am sick, upset or just plain ole lonely, and to learn about people from other types of backgrounds than my own, finding them fascinating and often loveable.

If you are like me and interested in cohousing, I advise you to do what my husband and I did even though our process took a long time. When Germantown Commons was forming, designing, financing, and building this lovely community, we often joke that we “flirted” with this community for a year. The next year, we “dated” them, getting to know some of them better, participating in potlucks and meetings. And, then the third year, we "married" them.

I sometimes wonder if we will grow old in this community, and like with any relationship, I have learned more about myself than I sometimes care to know. My weaknesses and strengths are more apparent than ever before. But, if not growing and developing, what is there to life? You will have to answer that question for yourself!

Coho/US Notes
CohoUS is very excited about our latest project, the updating of our website. You will see the final product when we roll it out in 2019. In the meantime we want to share our progress.

One of the most common comments we hear about the current website is that there is a lot of great information there, but it is very difficult to find what you are looking for. Our first step for the new website was to design a structure that will keep all the great information and organize it in a way that makes it easier to use, all while creating a clean, modern look. We're excited about the new structure which includes dozens of new pages about topics of interest from common meals to capital reserves. Each page will include both curated information, all the basics and a solid overview of the topic noting a variety of perspectives, and a less curated section where all cohousers are welcome to add their stories and their expertise to the conversation. Whether you are looking for a quick reference or a deep dive into all that is known, you'll be able to find what you are looking for quickly and easily.

We want to encourage ongoing participation in the most successful parts of the website. The directory will be updated with a new look and some new features, but will retain the great information already available. Communities and professionals will continue to be able to share about homes and services available through classified ads and sponsorships. We'll continue to welcome blogs posts and will add more opportunities to provide feedback and updates to website content.

We are in the process of gathering high quality photos of all things cohousing. At this point we have a pretty good library of general coho photos. We would be very interested in more photos that depict diversity, especially color diversity. As we focus on specific pages or topics, we'll reach out through cohousing-L with specific requests. If you have professional quality photos to offer, please email them to Karen Gimnig at karencohous@gmail.com and include photo credit and community name.

Please note that we will credit photographers, but are not offering payment.

Cohousing Directory Metrics
Established Communities = 166
---Completed = 149
---Building = 17

Forming** = 144

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