



## Cohousing —eNews—

### Exploring Cohousing: The Impact and Potential for Growth

By: Heidi Berggren and Neil Planchon, [Cohousing Research Network](#)

Cohousing, a mode of living that fosters personal connections, societal cohesion, and environmental stewardship, holds significant promise for addressing modern-day challenges.



Despite its benefits, the widespread adoption of cohousing remains limited. Cohousing research is a part of the effort to help cohousing grow and improve.

**The Significance of Cohousing:** Cohousing offers a unique solution to societal isolation, providing residents with a supportive community where individuals can thrive. Research indicates that cohousing fosters stronger social connections, improved mental well-being, and a greater sense of belonging. Moreover, cohousing promotes environmental sustainability through shared resources and reduced ecological footprints.

**The Role of the Cohousing Research Network (CRN):** At the forefront of cohousing research is the Cohousing Research Network (CRN), a diverse group of academics dedicated to advancing knowledge in this field. Through rigorous research and analysis, CRN seeks to elucidate the impacts of cohousing on residents' lives and wider societal dynamics. From conducting surveys to publishing findings in academic journals, CRN plays a vital role in generating empirical evidence to support the growth of cohousing communities.

**CRN's Ongoing Survey:** One of CRN's current projects involves a comprehensive longitudinal survey aimed at understanding the effects of cohousing on residents' lives and the broader social impact of cohousing communities. This five-year panel survey of U.S. communities and forming groups, now in its second phase, is a pioneering effort.

**Collaboration with Stanford:** CRN has provided data to a Stanford University research team that is exploring the possibilities of affordable cohousing in San Mateo County, California. This collaboration underscores CRN's commitment to

bridging research and practice, facilitating evidence-based solutions for sustainable community development.

**Examples of CRN's Impact:** CRN's research efforts have garnered attention from media outlets such as the New York Times and the Financial Times, underscoring the relevance and significance of cohousing research in contemporary discourse. By sharing data and insights with academics, journalists, and community members, CRN contributes to a deeper understanding of cohousing's potential to promote social equity and environmental justice.

**Engagement and Opportunities:** As CRN embarks on its latest longitudinal study, there are numerous opportunities for individuals to engage with cohousing research. Besides presentations at the national cohousing conference in Denver in August, CRN is working on creating reports for the survey, data visualizations, and virtual events to enable researchers to present findings and offer Q&A time. CRN welcomes new faces and ideas, inviting all interested parties to join the conversation and shape the future of cohousing research. Please get in touch with us; we'd love your support! You can contact us at [connect@cohousingresearchnetwork.org](mailto:connect@cohousingresearchnetwork.org). We look forward to hearing from you.

Cohousing represents a compelling model for fostering community, enhancing well-being, and promoting sustainability. Through the dedicated efforts of organizations like the Cohousing Research Network, the momentum behind cohousing continues to grow. By leveraging research insights and engaging stakeholders, we can unlock the full potential of cohousing as a catalyst for positive social change. Join us in exploring the possibilities of cohousing and building a more connected, sustainable future.

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**\*REMINDER \***

***PLEASE FILL OUT AND SUBMIT YOUR PHASE 2 COHOUSING RESEARCH NETWORK SURVEY***

The success of this 5-year longitudinal panel study depends on your participation in EACH AND EVERY YEAR'S survey. Please contribute to this effort, which is aimed at helping the larger cohousing movement, by checking your email inbox for the most recent reminder/survey link sent on Thursday, March 28. You got this email ONLY IF you have not done the survey.

A big thank you to those who have completed their surveys!  
-Graciously, Heidi and the rest of the Cohousing Research Network  
(please email me with any questions at: [hberggren@umassd.edu](mailto:hberggren@umassd.edu))

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# SPRING 2024

## PROGRAM SERIES

FEBRUARY - MAY



Learn how to develop and build better communities, gain new skills, and connect with other members of the cohousing community!

FREE AND DISCOUNTED FOR COHOUS MEMBERS



Join us this spring for a series of events and trainings on the topics most often requested by the cohousing community!

**Members** remember to log in to your **Cohousing Institute** account to apply your discount. If you're logged in and your community has renewed their membership, your discounts will be automatically applied at checkout!

**Non-members** consider becoming a partner for \$150 to access upcoming programs as well as a library of over 200 on-demand recordings, learn more [here](#).

Group discounts are available for our multi-week trainings and our need-based scholarship application is always open to everyone. [Apply here!](#)

If you have any questions about how to register for an event, set up your Cohousing Institute account, or take advantage of a group discount, please reach out to [cohousingassociationofus@gmail.com](mailto:cohousingassociationofus@gmail.com).

- [Starting an Aging in Community Conversation](#), Wednesday, April 10 at 6:30pm MT
- [The Art of Calling In and Calling Out](#), Wednesday, April 17 at 5pm MT
- [Work and Participation as We Age: Myths & Realities](#), Tuesday, April 30 at 5pm MT
- [Accountability and Harm in Communities](#), Wednesday, May 8 at 6:30pm MT

[Learn More](#)



## Save the Date: National Open House Weekend, May 3-5

Join cohousing communities across the country as they open their doors to neighbors and friends from their surrounding communities. This is our chance to share the story of cohousing – who we are, how we live, and why we love this way of life. The weekend will feature a variety of virtual and in-person events from communities across the country, as well as several gatherings of national and regional groups.

Register your community's event with the CohoUS community and access the Open House Toolkit [here](#).

See our growing list of National Cohousing Open House Weekend events [here](#).



## National Cohousing Conference Registration is now open!

In 2024, we return to our Colorado roots (did you know CohoUS began as the Rocky Mountain Cohousing Network?) and reconnect with what brings us together in the first place: an experience of deep connection and belonging.

The 2024 National Cohousing Conference will take place August 2 - 4 and feature over 48 breakout sessions.

Pre-conference intensives and bus tours will take place on August 1st and 2nd.

Learn more about the conference and register [here](#).



CohoUS members receive an additional \$100 discount! To take advantage of this discount, you must be logged in and your account must be registered as a member. Reach out to us at [cohousingassociationofus@gmail.com](mailto:cohousingassociationofus@gmail.com) if you have questions!



## Mutual Support in Senior Cohousing

The issue inevitably comes up — how, when and to what extent do we help our neighbors? People move into cohousing in a spirit of togetherness, camaraderie and caring for one another. But what exactly does that mean? Doing a favor for a neighbor? Helping them out with meals or chores when they are ill or temporarily incapacitated? What about doing their weekly shopping when they are no longer mobile? Where do communities draw the line between what's reasonable and what is not?

[Read the Full Article](#)

## Upcoming events

April 10 — Starting an Aging in Community Conversation; CohoUS Seniors in Cohousing Committee; 5–6:30 p.m. MT; \$45; [more information and registration](#).

April 10 — [The Commons](#), a free monthly gathering for the cohousing curious and experts, too; 10 a.m. MT; repeats on the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month.

April 20 — Seniors in Cohousing Q&A, an informal facilitated conversation for those who are interested in senior cohousing and/or senior living in intergenerational cohousing; 10 a.m. MT; repeats on the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month; [register here](#). Once registered, you'll receive an email before the meeting with a link to join the call on Zoom.

April 30 — Work and Participation as we Age: Myths & Realities; CohoUS Seniors in Cohousing Committee; 5–6:30 p.m. MT; \$45; [more information and registration](#).

In addition, the Foundation for Intentional Community (FIC) offers a wide range of on-demand and rerun online courses. Check them out [here](#).

## Save the date!

Coho US's 2024 National Cohousing Conference will take place Aug. 2–4 in Denver, CO. Early bird registration will start in early 2024. Come join this gathering of community builders, seekers and cohousing professionals who are committed to a more connected, sustainable and democratic future.

This year's themes will include:

- Diversity, equity and justice in cohousing
- Innovation in pursuit of affordability
- Environmental sustainability
- Designing and fostering spaces of belonging
- Practical skills for the life cycle of a community
- Intergenerational connection & aging in community

The conference will offer two sessions related to aging (date/time TBD pending conference schedule):

- Mutual Support Approaches: Exploring co-care, co-healing, and other ways to support each other.
- Why Senior Cohousing? The benefits and challenges of senior vs. multi-generational communities.

Sign up to receive conference updates [here](#).

## Member Article

### Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Lots to Learn! By: Cohousing ABQ

It turns out that building a community, especially from scratch, is harder work than many of us imagined. There are myriad pieces to think about, discuss, plan for. Finding people who are interested in joining the initial effort, drafting values and goals to make sure everyone is aligned on the fundamentals of what the community will be, finding the land, finding money to purchase the land, planning the outline of the buildings and gardens, endless



(yes, truly endless) discussions about interior spaces, finding a builder and/or developer, securing financing, finding enough additional people that it becomes financially possible to proceed...

The exciting news is, we at Cohousing ABQ are so, so close! We have land, we have 20 households who have financially bought in, we have a developer and builder, and we have a social construct on how to make decisions together. We have been through conflicts, and come out stronger on the other side. Our dream of a beautiful little community next to the Rio Grande River in Albuquerque, NM is becoming reality.

However, there is one big elephant in our zoom room. And that is that in spite of our stated commitment to diversity, we are coming up short for our vision in this area. While we represent a range of ages, cultural and religious backgrounds, and have varying developmental (or cognitive) and physical abilities, we have much less economic diversity, gender diversity, and racial diversity than we had envisioned. We are now entirely white and have only a few LGBTQ members—and, to state the obvious, with our costs having risen 30% during the pandemic and sources of outside funding for low-income housing unavailable, and many of our existing residents struggling to fit the unit prices into our budgets, we won't be in a position to offer units at less than the cost to build them—and our costs are expensive compared to other housing in Albuquerque.

As we have contemplated what to do, it has become clear that we are just at the beginning of our journey in understanding how to achieve our desire for a truly welcoming community. When we asked former members who are BIPOC to review our updated messaging about welcoming diversity, we found some woeful gaps in our own understanding and perspective. These members were willing to help us work through those gaps. We see that in order to do this well, we would have needed to bake in a strategy and education for ourselves around diversity, equity, and inclusion much earlier in the process. And our conversations with our former members make it clear that it would potentially be harmful to create a strategy around this quickly, without taking the time necessary to truly understand how to build this culture as a community.



We have done well on age diversity, with lots of children, something some cohousing communities struggle with. One reason for this, I think, is that our founding family has children. No one wants to be the first and possibly only family with children and having children from the beginning makes it safer and more comfortable for other families to contemplate.

Similarly, it might be a leap of faith to be the first person of color or the sole representative of a minority. It could be exhausting if the community has not done work up front to make sure that it is truly welcoming and will not put the burden on members of marginalized groups to educate other community members. It has been pointed out to me multiple times, and I am starting to get it, that white liberal groups can feel more toxic and exhausting than an overtly racist setting. Implicit bias also surfaces for people who are neurodiverse, disabled, or LGBTQ+.

It is true that lack of diversity, particularly racial or economic diversity, in cohousing is a widespread concern—not just in the U.S. but in Canada and Europe too. People in intentional communities tend to be educated and have a good bit of privilege. In fact, 95 percent of cohousing members are white and 66 percent hold a graduate degree, according to a 2011 study conducted by Angela Sanguinetti, a researcher at the University of California, Davis. The reasons for this are complex.

*So where does our community go from here?*

We know there is not a fast or easy one-stop method to creating a community that is inclusive of diversity, and we know the process must be sensitively navigated. What is also belatedly becoming clear is that there is already a considerable body of knowledge available to draw on.

I'd like to share a personal example here to illustrate how we learn from people who have been doing the work for many years.

In the summer of 2020, I decided to go on a 6-day river rafting trip. A friend recommended a company in Utah and to my delight I discovered that they were offering their first ever LGBTQ+ trip. (Shout out to Holiday River Expeditions!). The trip was co-sponsored by The Venture Out Project, which leads wilderness trips for the queer and transgender community. I am a cis-gendered lesbian, and while I have had trans acquaintances, been an ally for trans coworkers, and have paid attention to trans issues, it was eye-opening to experience expert facilitation in how to navigate gender issues and be a better ally. I learned, for example, how much smoother it is to include pronouns as part of a round of introductions, and how to more skillfully navigate incidences of misgendering, whether it is my own mistake or someone else's that happens in my presence. (We also had a number of BIPOC folks on that trip and discussed the lack of opportunities for safe and comfortable wilderness experiences for the BIPOC community, which resulted in Holiday River adding a BIPOC affinity trip to their offerings). It was a transformative trip for many of us (one of us even got a tattoo to commemorate). Being in a safe and supported social environment is a special experience that cannot be taken for granted for members of marginalized communities.

My point being, that while I actually have no experience with being trans, I can learn from others how to help create and hold a safer space. Different marginalized groups have different experiences, so it can and does feel like a lot to take on. However, there are specific learnings, strategies, and existing experts who can serve as guides.

So while we are late to the game, we remain committed and recognize that laying the proper groundwork in our community will require seeking out these voices to help us do the work. For example:



- Crystal Byrd Farmer is a diversity consultant who was interviewed on the Inside Community Podcast. She is also offering upcoming workshops with the Cohousing Institute which we are encouraging all community members to attend, and will discuss our takeaways at community meetings.
- The Token: Common Sense Ideas for Increasing Diversity in Your Organization by Crystal Bird Farmer is a pithy, funny and to-the-point introduction to issues, which we will discuss in future community salons.
- We will participate in being the first audience for a workshop on neurodiversity with

Meghan Bonde of Team Neurodivergent, which she will present at the 2024 National Cohousing Conference being held in Denver August 1-4, 2024.

- Several members already attended a training on Transgender Cultural Fluency presented by Adrien Lawyer with the Transgender Resource Center of NM.

An immediate action we will take is to give priority for our few remaining units to families (inclusive of nontraditional families) with children, and also to people from historically under-represented groups (QTBIPOC).

We will continue the work of how to make our cohousing community more inclusive, and how we can be allies in the diverse communities of Albuquerque. If you feel moved to offer support or resources, please reach out!

*"Many well-intentioned HR managers have welcomed marginalized people with the vision of a diverse organization, but they don't actually want diversity. They want the appearance of diversity while everyone conforms to white middle-class culture...When I talk about doing The Work, I mean the process of examining your internal beliefs about your world and the marginalized people you encounter." Crystal Byrd Farmer*

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## **The Commons: A Monthly Gathering for the Cohousing Curious (and experts too!)**

The 10th of every month  
10am MT



### **The Commons**

A (free) monthly gathering for the cohousing curious (and experts too!)

Curious about cohousing but don't know where to start? Want to meet with cohousing newbies and experts alike? This (free) monthly gathering will include a Cohousing 101 presentation and ample time to connect and ask questions. We'll share cohousing lingo, best practices and more information on how to continue your cohousing journey. Join us once, or every time – we'll be here every month on the 10<sup>th</sup> at 10am MT.

[REGISTER](#)

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# Senior Cohousing Q&A



## A monthly gathering

The 20th of every month  
@ 10am MT

## Senior Cohousing Q&A

Want to learn more about what it's like to build, join, and participate in cohousing as you age? The Senior Cohousing Advocates Committee will be facilitating an informal conversation for those interested in senior cohousing and/or senior living in intergenerational cohousing. This (free) event will take place every month on the 20th at 10am MT.

[REGISTER](#)

## Will you share your community stories with us?

Submit anecdotes, photos, videos and stories so that we can help tell the story of life in community.



[SHARE YOUR STORY HERE](#)

## Cohousing is part of a more sustainable, democratic and connected future.

To date, CohoUS has helped enable the development of over 200 cohousing communities in the US. These communities serve as examples of the sustainable and community-based neighborhoods our country will need in the future. Please support CohoUS and help us double that



number in the next few years.

**Your monthly gift** will both support new initiatives as well as the continued nurturing of our communities and growth of our movement. As an **Evergreen Neighbor**, you can take pride in **creating a legacy** that will live on to support future generations.

**Donations, as a community or as an individual, are accepted year round and can be made to:**

Cohousing Association of the US  
3860 Chase St  
Wheat Ridge, CO 80212



**DONATE**

## Professional Services



[The Cohousing Company](#)

The Cohousing Company offers design and some key development consulting service from leading cohousing expert Charles Durrett to assist you in building a high-functioning cohousing community.



[Cohousing Solutions](#)

CoHousing Solutions provides development consulting and marketing services to help you create your cohousing community.

## Classified Listings

Forming Communities and Communities Seeking Members



[Sunnyside Village Cohousing](#)



[Adams Creek Cohousing](#)



[Mission Peak Village](#)





[Burns Village & Farm Cohousing and Agrihood Community](#)  
Burns, TN



[Cohousing Houston](#)  
Houston, TX



[Rachel Carson EcoVillage](#)  
Gibsonia, PA



[Cathedral Park Cohousing](#)  
Portland, OR



[Heartwood Commons](#)  
Tulsa, OK



[Heartwood Cohousing](#)  
Bayfield, CO



[Washington Commons](#)  
West Sacramento, CA



[Newark Cohousing](#)  
Newark, DE



[Cohousing ABQ](#)  
Albuquerque, NM



[Shift Esperanza Eco-Village](#)  
Nosara, Costa Rica





# Homes for Sale or Rent



## [Seattle, WA](#)

For Sale: 2br/1.5b Home in New Seattle Cohousing-Community



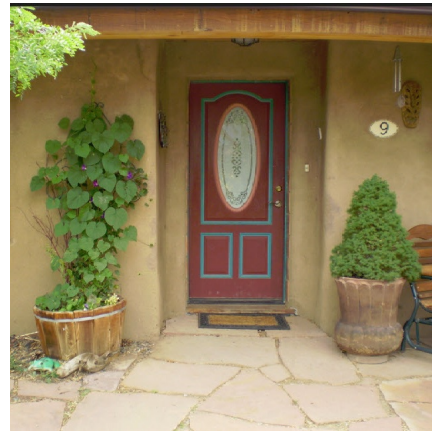
## [Durham, NC](#)

For Sale: Newly available 1BR/1BA condo in thriving downtown Durham NC community



## [Durham, NC](#)

For Sale: Village Hearth Cohousing Very unique 2BR/2BA in LGBTQ-focused 55+ Community in Durham, NC



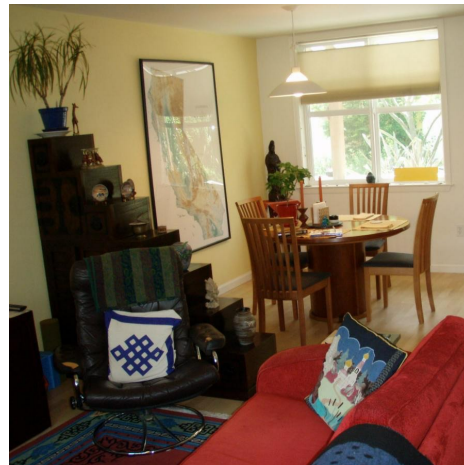
## [Durango, CO](#)

For Sale: Custom Timber Frame, Natural-Built-Straw-Clay-Construction-3/2, + Sunny Office in Heartwood CH



## [Aptos, CA](#)

For Sale: 2BR/ 2Bath townhome for sale in the seaside community of Aptos, CA



## [Corzet, VA](#)

For Sale: 3 Bedrooms + 2.5 Bathrooms + Studio Apartment Rental in Emerson Commons Cohousing, Crozet, Virginia





[Rougemont, NC](#)

For Sale: Sunny, Open Plan Highlights Available Home at Elderberry Senior Cohousing in North Carolina



[Durham, NC](#)

For Sale: Village Hearth Cohousing LGBTQ and Allies 55+ Cottage Style, 650 Sq. Ft. 1 Bed/1 Bath home



[Fair Oaks, CA](#)

For Sale: Reduced \$30,000! Gorgeous 3 Bdrm 2 Bath Flat in Desirable Fair Oaks, CA



[Durham, NC](#)

For Sale: 2BR/2BA Single Level home in Durham, NC. Village Hearth is welcoming new neighbors!

## Supporters



STUDIO  
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The Cohousing  
Company

## By The Numbers

**172**  
Established  
Communities

**105**  
Forming  
Communities

**20**  
Communities  
Under Construction

### Community Directory

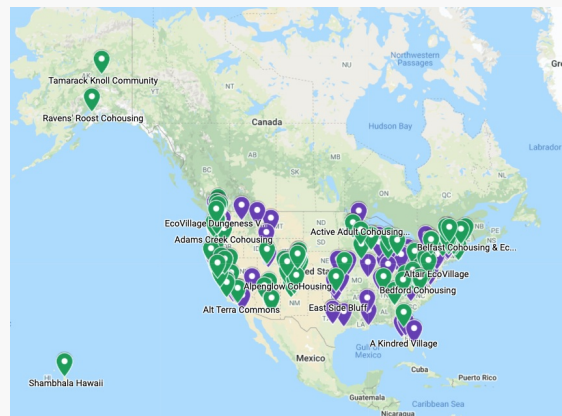
**Searching for a Cohousing Community?**

[Click Here for Community Directory](#)

[Click Here for Seeker Directory](#)

**Searching for Cohousing Professional?**

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