THESIS DEFENCE COMMITTEE/COMITÉ DE SOUTENANCE DE THÈSE
Laurentian Université/Université Laurentienne
Faculty of Graduate Studies/Faculté des études supérieures

Title of Thesis
Titre de la thèse
The Potential of Architecture to Address Homelessness in Northern Ontario

Name of Candidate
Nom du candidat
Baziw, Chris

Degree
Diplôme
Master of

Department/Program
Département/Programme
Architecture

Date of Defence
Date de la soutenance
April 08, 2020

APPROVED/APPROUVÉ

Thesis Examiners/Examinateurs de thèse:

Dr. Kai Mah
(Thesis Advisor / Directeur(trice) de thèse)

Dr. Carol Kauppi
(Thesis Second Reader / Directeur (trice) de these deuxième)

Approved for the Faculty of Graduate Studies
Approuvé pour la Faculté des études supérieures
Dr. David Lesbarrères
Monsieur David Lesbarrères

Prof. Brian Lilley
(External Examiner/Examinateur externe)
Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies
Doyen, Faculté des études supérieures

ACCESSIBILITY CLAUSE AND PERMISSION TO USE

I, Chris Baziw, hereby grant to Laurentian University and/or its agents the non-exclusive license to archive and make accessible my thesis, dissertation, or project report in whole or in part in all forms of media, now or for the duration of my copyright ownership. I retain all other ownership rights to the copyright of the thesis, dissertation or project report. I also reserve the right to use in future works (such as articles or books) all or part of this thesis, dissertation, or project report. I further agree that permission for copying of this thesis in any manner, in whole or in part, for scholarly purposes may be granted by the professor or professors who supervised my thesis work or, in their absence, by the Head of the Department in which my thesis work was done. It is understood that any copying or publication or use of this thesis or parts thereof for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that this copy is being made available in this form by the authority of the copyright owner solely for the purpose of private study and research and may not be copied or reproduced except as permitted by the copyright laws without written authority from the copyright owner.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

Thank you to my advisor Kai Mah, who from his impression on me has always taught me that architecture is about so much more than buildings and that designers have a responsibility to be compassionate. As well, thank you to my second reader Carol Kaupi and her research assistants Rebecca Elphick and Chanelle Larocque who have been my liaisons with the vast fields of research on homelessness.

I would not be in the position I am today if it were not for the overwhelming amount of love and encouragement I've received from my parents to pursue my passions to their fullest and follow after God in spite of all life's challenges.

To my fellow volunteers and the patrons at the Elgin Street Mission, thank you for the light you've shined into my life and the resilience you've displayed in spite of your every circumstance.

A special thanks to Ashley Posluns for working with me over the last six years giving me confidence when putting my ideas into words. And to all of my teachers from Codrington Elementary school to Laurentian University for showing me my potential.

Finally I would never have been able to complete this thesis if it were not for the love and support of my fiancé Meghan Miller.

“Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.”

Matthew 25: 40
List of Figures:

Figure 01
Breakfast provided by Elgin St Mission, photo by author, 2015.

Figure 02
La Fromagerie 80 Elgin St. A popular Cafe, https://www.thefromo.ca/.

Figure 03

Figure 04
Classification of Poverty Matrix, Showing how societal attitudes towards an individual correspond with their perception of their circumstance, by author.

Figure 05

Figure 06
One of many hostile signs located in downtown Sudbury to deter street people from loitering on private property, photo by author, 2019.

Figure 07

Figure 08
The three domains of home Venn diagram and housing spectrum diagram, by author.

Figure 09
Diagram for architecture in the middle meeting the three dimensions of homelessness, by author.

Figure 10
Stereotype content model developed by Fiske et al. 2002, The homeless are often grouped in sector 4, by author.

Figure 11
Collage of legal and physical manifestations of exclusion found in Sudbury photos by author 2019.

Figure 12
Map of downtown Sudbury, each orange circle representing a 100m radius around a hostile artifact, drawn by author.

Figure 13

Figure 14

Figure 15

Figure 16
Facade of Canadian Federal building downtown Sudbury at intersection of Cedar St. and Lisgar St., 2019, photo by author.

Figure 17
Proposed intervention to facade, drawn by author.

Figure 18
Completed installation, October 30, 2019, photo by Braeden Martel.

Figure 19
Perspective of communal space created by Free Coffee Stall, drawn by author.

Figure 20
Axo of stall assembly, drawn by author.

Figure 21
Positive Contact zone created around Free Coffee Stall, drawn by author.

Figure 22
Two people sharing the last milk and sugar, photo by Braeden Martel, 2019.

Figure 23
The stall’s integration into the building facade, photo by Suleman Khan, 2019.

Figure 24
The coffee stall integrating into the sidewalk, photo by Suleman Khan, 2019.

Figure 25
People with all of their belongings stopping for coffee, photo by Suleman Khan, 2019.

Figure 26
People of different age and class together, photo by Suleman Khan, 2019.

Figure 27
Someone enjoying their coffee, photo by Braeden Martel, 2019.

Figure 28
Social life of site pre-fence, 2006, https://www.google.ca/maps/@46.492233,-80.9906209,3a,75y,2.5h,87.28t/.

Figure 29
Bins, dumpsters, fences and spikes used to keep people off of property, 2019, photo by author.

Figure 30
Proposed intervention to fence, drawn by author.

Figure 31
Completed intervention November 18, 2019, photo by Jacob Riehl.

Figure 32
Perspective of people inhabiting bench, drawn by author.

Figure 33
Axo of bench assembly, drawn by author.

Figure 34
Social distance between groups at benches, drawn by author.

Figure 35
People inhabiting the benches, photo by Jacob Riehl, 2019.
Figure 36
Talking with the group about how they feel about their exclusion, photo by Jacob Riehl, 2019.

Figure 37
Someone taking ownership and adjusting the bench on their own, photo by Jacob Riehl, 2019.

Figure 38
The group with their belongings in their hands before the benches were installed, photo by Jacob Riehl, 2019.

Figure 39
The temporary installment method I designed to hang the bench, photo by Jacob Riehl, 2019.

Figure 40
Two people wanted me to take their picture on the bench, photo by Jacob Riehl, 2019.

Figure 41
Conceptual Parti of my proposals, drawn by author.

Figure 42
Conceptual parti intergroup contact, drawn by author.

Figure 43
Axonometric Parti Diagram, drawn by author.

Figure 44
World map, drawn by author.

Figure 45
Map of population density in Ontario showing Sudbury in the “near north”, drawn by author with data from Stats Canada, 2016.

Figure 46
Proportion of different migratory groups by region, drawn by author with data from Kauppi et al., (2015).

Figure 47
Migration of homeless individuals to Sudbury by region, drawn by author with data from Kauppi et al., (2015).

Figure 48
Panorama of Elgin St. Downtown Sudbury identifying my projects site, photo by Drone Malone, 2016 and drawing by author.

Figure 49
A collection of Stories gathered from interviews of individuals experiencing homelessness conducted by Laurentian’s The Poverty, Homelessness and Migration (PHM) study, quotations originally transcribed by Kauppi et al. and drawings by author.

Figure 50
Resource Centre Program, drawn by author.

Figure 51
Restaurant / Cafe Program, drawn by author.

Figure 52
Kitchen / Bakery Program, drawn by author.

Figure 53
Private Overnight Shelter Program, drawn by author.

Figure 54
Communal Gathering Place Program, drawn by author.

Figure 55
Public Storage Program, drawn by author.

Figure 56
Maker Space Program, drawn by author.

Figure 57
Communal Laundromat Program, drawn by author.

Figure 58
Community Garden Program, drawn by author.

Figure 59

Figure 60

Figure 61

Figure 62
The four phases that will slowly integrate my project into the community, drawn by author.

Figure 63
Phase 1 of Home: Sudbury, community garden and sheltered seating area adjacent to Samaritan Centre, drawn by author.

Figure 64
Phase 2 of Home: Sudbury, site acquisition and social reclamation, expansion of garden and seating areas, drawn by author.
Figure 75  
Three unit typologies within the same building grid, drawn by author.

Figure 76  
Axonometric diagram of residential flooring and building system integration, drawn by author.

Figure 77  
Studio unit with room Screen and minimalist furniture, drawn by author.

Figure 78  
Social degrees of separation diagram, by author.

Figure 79  
Primary and secondary spaces diagram, by author.

Figure 80  
East West section of building showing life throughout the building, drawn by author.

Figure 81  
Site Plan 1:1000, drawn by author.

Figure 82  
Perspective of south entrance into courtyard, drawn by author.

Figure 83  
Perspective of Elgin St. elevation, drawn by author.

Figure 84  
Perspective of north entrance into courtyard, drawn by author.

Figure 85  
Ground Floor Plan 1:500, drawn by author.

Figure 86  
Ground floor primary/secondary space diagram represented in blue and orange respectively, by author.

Figure 87  
Perspective of resource centre from behind resource desk, drawn by author.

Figure 88  
Perspective of leaseable spaces from interior courtyard, drawn by author.

Figure 89  
Perspective of seating at interior courtyard, drawn by author.

Figure 90  
Ledo level 1 floor plan 1:500, drawn by author.

Figure 91  
Ledo level 1 primary/secondary space diagram represented in blue and orange respectively, by author.

Figure 92  
Perspective of Ledo room during the day operating for the resource centre, drawn by author.

Figure 93  
Perspective of Ledo room at night operating for the overnight shelter, drawn by author.

Figure 94  
Perspective looking up the Ledo’s open central atrium, drawn by author.

Figure 95  
Home podium/ Ledo level 2 floor plan 1:500, drawn by author.

Figure 96  
Home podium/ Ledo level 2 primary/secondary space diagram represented in blue and orange respectively, by author.

Figure 97  
Perspective of the medicine garden and courtyard at the centre of the building, drawn by author.

Figure 98  
Perspective of the seating area west of the courtyard, drawn by author.

Figure 99  
Perspective of the seating area north of the courtyard, drawn by author.

Figure 100  
Home level 2/ Ledo level 3 floor plan 1:500, drawn by author.

Figure 101  
Home level 2/ Ledo level 2 primary/secondary space diagram represented in blue and orange respectively, by author.

Figure 102  
Perspective of residents gathering in the activity room that is on each floor, drawn by author.

Figure 103  
Perspective of residents using the south common room that is on each floor, drawn by author.

Figure 104  
Home level 3/ Ledo Roof floor plan 1:500, drawn by author.

Figure 105  
Home level 3/ Ledo roof primary/secondary space diagram represented in blue and orange respectively, by author.

Figure 106  
Perspective of residents using the north common room that is on each floor, drawn by author.

Figure 107  
Perspective of residents gathering on their private roof space above the Ledo, drawn by author.

Figure 108  
Home roof floor plan 1:500, drawn by author.

Figure 109  
Home roof primary/secondary space diagram represented in blue and orange respectively, by author.

Figure 110  
Perspective of members of the community utilizing the public roof and courtyard, drawn by author.

Figure 111  
Perspective of the community and residents sharing the rooftop path and gardens, drawn by author.

Figure 112  
Funding allocation diagram, by author.

Figure 113  
Diagram of options for participating in pay it forward system, by author.
**Figure 114**
Diagram showing how programs in the building are connected to each other and the community, by author.

**Figure 115**
Furniture in the rooms that could be built by individuals experiencing homelessness, drawn by author.

**Figure 116**
Perspective of pedestrians circulating around the outside of the building, drawn by author.

**Figure 117**
Building circulation diagram for pedestrians who are housed, drawn by author.

**Figure 118**
Perspective of Van Horne St. as the rugged exterior of the building shields it's soft interior, drawn by author.

**Figure 119**
Perspective of an individual experiencing homelessness as they enter the courtyard, drawn by author.

**Figure 120**
Building circulation diagram for pedestrians who are homeless, drawn by author.

**Figure 121**
North South section of the building showing the relationships between; interior and exterior courtyards; commercial and civic programs and domestic and public space, drawn by author.

**Figure 122**
Perspective of formerly homeless residents of Home: Sudbury in common corridor, drawn by author.

**Figure 123**
Building circulation diagram for the formerly homeless residents of Home: Sudbury, drawn by author.

**Figure 124**
Perspective of medicine garden which represents healing for all at the centre of the building, drawn by author.

**Figure 125**
Collage of artifact in the built environment, drawn by author.

**Figure 126**

**Figure 127**
Collage of artifact in the built environment, The final artifact, photos by author 2020.

**Figure 128**
An example of the construction Manual for the wardrobe and integrated desk, by author.
THESIS QUESTION:

Considering the physical, social and legal dimensions of architecture, what is its potential to address the experience of homelessness in a northern Ontario city like Sudbury?

ABSTRACT:

What is architecture’s potential to address homelessness in northern Ontario? This question came from a personal experience: volunteering in a soup kitchen in downtown Sudbury throughout my studies at Laurentian University. This experience, over the last six years, has permeated through my architectural education. Homelessness is a complex phenomenon that architecture alone is unable to solve; nonetheless, architecture does have the potential to facilitate responses to homelessness in collaboration with other professions on interdisciplinary teams.

Attitudes against those living in extreme poverty, historically categorizing those ‘undeserving’ of assistance, can be seen today in the physical, social, and legal realms of the built environment. There is not one, but many, common experiences of homelessness. The current literature provides a definition of homelessness as the exclusion from the physical, social, or legal domains of ‘home’. This definition portrays homelessness as a spectrum dependent on exclusion. Hostile architecture and the selective enforcement of municipal by-laws are contemporary examples of exclusion that penalize those experiencing homelessness. These examples can be mapped in Sudbury, Ontario, to demonstrate how specific architectural elements are spatially connected to areas of high contact between housed and homeless individuals. These contact zones, when designed improperly, can ignite prejudice and lead to conflict, ultimately reinforcing stigma. Meanwhile, the theory of intergroup contact postulates that contact between out-groups and in-groups also carries the potential to mitigate stigma and prejudice under prescribed conditions. The physical mediation of these conflict zones is tested in downtown Sudbury through two public installations where the nuances of this process are observed, documented, and applied to the full building scale.

The process of designing a full-scale building proposal includes an in-depth site analysis to understand the local sociodemographics of homelessness and where a site could best be located. Upon site selection, programs are analysed using a needs assessment through the secondary analysis of transcribed interviews of individuals experiencing homelessness. The needs expressed by people with lived experience are cross-referenced with the existing services in Sudbury to propose new programs to fill the service gaps in the city. A process is then developed whereby a phased introduction of the project brings together relevant stakeholders, leverages their connections in project planning, creates an interface for meaningful community engagement, and develops the site in phases to avoid gentrification. The architecture is described as a mediator of the physical, social, and legal dimensions of both the site and individuals’ experiences of homelessness. Visioning is explored by how it may be inhabited by both those who are housed and experiencing homelessness, including those who have exited homelessness and secured housing. Finally, a future is imagined whereby individuals can find sustainable exits from homelessness. The continued life of the building demonstrates how it has been designed to meet the needs of its residents and not any one particular circumstance. The contribution of this work is the development of a new mode of practicing architecture that is fundamentally interdisciplinary, allowing physical buildings to maximize their positive effect on the life in and around them.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td>My Experience</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART I: EPISTEMOLOGY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 01</td>
<td>Attitudes Towards Poverty.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 02</td>
<td>Defining Homelessness</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 03</td>
<td>Urban Zones of Conflict</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 04</td>
<td>Research Creation Methodology</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART II: ONTOLOGY</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 05</td>
<td>Hypothesis</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 06</td>
<td>Site Analysis</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 07</td>
<td>Program Development</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 08</td>
<td>Praxis</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART II: HOME</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 09</td>
<td>The Physical Dimension</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
<td>The Social Dimension</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 11</td>
<td>The Legal Dimension</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
<td>The Life of the Building</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>Architecture Addressing Homelessness</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A</td>
<td>Thesis Artifact: Ashtray</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B</td>
<td>Furniture Construction Manual</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td></td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This project started for me with a transformation that took place after I began volunteering with the homeless six years ago (Figure 01). For me, homelessness went from an abstract phenomenon that I was vaguely aware of to a complex reality that many people live with which ties together sociology and architecture. As these experiences began to permeate my architectural education, I started to ask myself questions like: why do meals for people who are experiencing homelessness have to be served in a space separate from people who are housed? (Figure 02) What spaces do these people occupy when the shelters are closed? What are the ramifications of the experience of homelessness on peoples’ wellbeing? Over the past six years, these questions have developed into what is today my thesis. This work is dedicated to my friends who are experiencing homelessness and to those who have dedicated themselves to ending homelessness.

The primary function of this research is to uncover the dimensions of the homeless experience that can be addressed architecturally. I have had to come to terms with the reality that architecture is not the sole solution to homelessness—homing alone is not enough to end homelessness. Although the successful emergence of the Housing First Strategy has proven that giving a home is a key dimension to addressing homelessness, there are additionally many social and legal dimensions to the problem that four walls and a roof simply cannot address. This thesis works to broaden the role of architecture beyond the physical domain. In three sections—epistemology, ontology and home—I address the social and legal dimensions of homelessness. The epistemology section describes a new architectural understanding of homelessness; the ontology section maps this understanding to its physical traces in the urban environment; and the home section demonstrates the potential of architecture to address this new understanding.
PART I:

EPISTEMOLOGY

Definition:

The study or theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge, especially with reference to its limits and validity.\(^1\)

In this section of my thesis, I will be examining the physical, social and legal dimensions of homelessness and architecture with the goal of drawing connections between architecture and addressing the homeless experience.

Chapter 01: Attitudes Towards Poverty 5
Chapter 02: Defining Homelessness 9
Chapter 03: Urban Zones of Conflict 13
Chapter 04: Research Creation Methodology 19

Poverty is a phenomenon that has always accompanied society, typically with negative attitudes associated. Although not all who experience poverty are treated equally, for a long time sociologists have proposed the idea that society often categorizes those experiencing poverty between the “deserving poor” and “undeserving poor”. What classifies someone as undeserving? How can these attitudes of negativity, hostility, and exclusion be traced through history to today?

The earliest historical period where we can find several traces of negative attitudes towards poverty is the Renaissance in Europe. It is from this period of time, more than any time before it, that representations of society and everyday life have been immortalized through an explosion of art. This art reveals traces of the physical, social, and legal manifestations of hostility towards certain demographics of the poor (Figure 03). Art historian Tom Nichols, in his book *The Art of Poverty: Irony and Ideal in Sixteenth-Century Beggar Imagery*, conducts a sociological analysis of European attitudes towards beggars through their representations in art. What Nichols identifies is a subdivision of the classical poor broken down into three categories which represent the cause of their poverty and society’s general reaction towards them. The first category of the poor Nichols identifies is the “religious poor”, which represents individuals with visible disabilities, widows, and orphans, who were often displayed in an angelic and idealized form. The external and circumstantial nature of these groups evoked reactions of pity and service from the Christian Church and society at large. The second category of the poor Nichols identifies is the “working poor”. This group represents most of European society during the Renaissance period, including those with jobs, but without enough means to support themselves. Not often represented in this time period, as the majority of society fell into this category, the working poor received no significant response. The third category is the “non-working poor”. The non-working poor were most often represented as repulsive or inhuman. Society perceived this group of people as actively choosing to remain in poverty by not working, thus the common negative attitude.

As visualized in Figure 04, societies attitudes towards the poor have hinged on two dependent variables: the visibility of one’s circumstance and the perception of agency that an individual has taken to change their circumstance. Negative attitudes towards non-working, poor individuals throughout history have manifested in hostility through ostracization, criminalization and punishment.

---

**Chapter 01: Attitudes Towards Poverty**

![Fig. 03](image_url) 15th Century wood carving of beggar being whipped through the streets after the Poor Law of 1601.

---

**Fig. 04**: Classification of Poverty Matrix, showing how societal attitudes towards an individual correspond with their perception of their circumstance.
As social attitudes can be traced through art, legal attitudes can be traced through law. The criminalization of the non-working poor can be dated back as far as 1349 with the Ordinance of Labourers in the United Kingdom. The nature of these laws were to punish the poor for not contributing to society by not working through forced labour, exile, or even capital punishment (Figure 5).

Bridging this knowledge to Canada, the concepts of poverty that existed in Indigenous cultures were whopped out through the process of colonization along with most other traditional ways of life. Because of colonization, Canadian society today borrows more from its European influences than its Indigenous roots. The continued effects of colonization has led to poverty and homelessness disproportionately affecting Indigenous peoples in Canada.

As negative attitudes towards the poor have been transmitted to Canada, there are many new traces of exclusion and hostility towards the “undeserving poor” visible in today’s society (Figure 6). The people experiencing homelessness today are most commonly classified as “undeserving poor”. Social exclusion today is executed in the urban environment through the targeted deployment of fences, spikes, railings and barriers, often referred to as “Hostile Architecture”. Legal exclusion today has become much more discrete yet equally prevalent. Neutral byways pertaining to urban space such as trespassing, loitering, congregation and even non-smoking areas have been documented to be selectively enforced to target the homeless. This punitive response to homelessness is one of the ways architecture is negatively addressing homelessness. To change the way architecture addresses homelessness, I believe we must also address how we, as a society, address homelessness. Therefore, not only do I believe that architecture can address homelessness, I believe that it should participate in forging new opportunities for people’s attitudes towards the homeless to change.

ENDNOTES:

2. Ibid
3. Ibid
4. Ibid
5. Ibid
6. Ibid
12. Ibid
Defining Homelessness

Homelessness is a word commonly used to describe those seen living on the street or begging in public spaces (Figure 07). What most people don’t realize, however, is that the experience of homelessness is much more pervasive and does not always manifest in the ways expected. As described in the previous chapter, those experiencing poverty, and are deemed to be “undeserving” by society, are treated with hostility and exclusion. For my definition of homelessness, I will focus on the state of exclusion; one does not have to be lacking a physical place to belong in order to be excluded socially or legally from society. Homelessness is not dependent on any one circumstance, it is dependent on exclusion. Homelessness is the exclusion that accompanies poverty. In the field of sociology, the European Observatory on Homelessness (ETHOS) has developed a definition of homelessness that is based on the principle of exclusion. However ETHOS suggests that one must be experiencing physical exclusion in order for their experience to be classified as homelessness. Kate Amore, Michael Baker and Philippa Howden-Chapman, in their article The ETHOS Definition and Classification of Homelessness: An Analysis, address the complexities of defining homelessness. They propose a modified version of the definition proposed by ETHOS that releases this dependency on physical exclusion so as to encompass those who experience severe social and legal exclusion as well. At the root of this definition is the three primary domains of home: the physical domain, the social domain and the legal domain. Amore, Baker and Howden-Chapman’s thesis is that exclusion from two or more of these domains constitutes living in a state of habitation that is below the minimum adequacy standard. Therefore, if one is excluded from two or more of these domains, their experience can be classified as homelessness. In Figure 08, the visual representation of the ETHOS definition of homelessness only acknowledges those at the centre of the Venn diagram, whereas this modified version seeks to include those at any point of overlap. The three domains of home provide a spectrum through which one can begin to define housing that considers more than the absence of physical shelter.

It is also important to understand the regional portrait of homelessness in northern Ontario. This topic will be expanded upon in chapter seven, Site Analysis, however first, one must comprehend that a disproportionate percentage of individuals experiencing homelessness in Canada are also of Indigenous heritage. An Indigenous definition of homelessness, as laid out by Jesse Thistle in Indigenous Definition of Homelessness in Canada, is not based on lack of material but rather is only understood through the breaking
down of one’s relations: physical, social, cultural and spiritual. An Indigenous lens on homelessness further reinforces and expands upon the importance of inclusion to the immaterial structures of life. Architecture can be considered not only for its physical presence, but also for its position in the social and legal systems of its place. Therefore the physical, social and legal dimensions of architecture can address the physical, social and legal dimensions of homelessness (Figure 09).

ENDNOTES:


15. Ibid


Architecture, the built environment and the objects we make are often representative of the beliefs and values of the society they come from. In a field of study known as material culture, studying the artifacts of a specific time and place can give a portrait of the culture that created them. In Canada, many different spaces are built to help the homeless such as shelters, food banks and soup kitchens. These services spawn from a common social desire to eliminate homelessness, yet this desire and these developments often position the person who is experiencing homelessness as dependent on their circumstance and often reinforce the connotations of their homelessness. This negative attitude is revealed in the urban environment through artifacts of exclusionary hostile architecture. This exclusion comes often as a result of prejudice, which is transferred from the condition of homelessness to the individual who is experiencing it.

Why is it that we as a society often have such negative reactions towards the group of the poor that we designate as “undeserving”? For an answer, we can look to the field of sociology and the work of Susan Fiske and George Alport who are leaders in the field of stereotypes and prejudice. The stereotype content model, which was developed by Fiske et al. 2002, proposes that all group stereotypes and interpersonal impressions form along two dimensions: warmth and competence (Figure 10). Individuals experiencing homelessness where their circumstance is not immediately visible are often perceived as having low competence. Cultural stereotypes also associate these individuals as having a low level of warmth which is reinforced through storytelling and in the media. This model can therefore explain why homelessness evokes emotional responses of disgust. Neuro-imaging analyses have confirmed these findings; images of individuals experiencing homelessness activated the areas of the brain that represent disgust reserved for inhuman objects. This sentiment was best put, although crassly, by social activist Peter Marin in the 1980s in his article “Helping and Hating the Homeless”:

“For many of us, the homeless are shit, and our policies toward them, our spontaneous sense of disgust and horror, our wish to be rid of them... all of this has hidden in it, close to its heart, our feelings about excrement.”

A methodology of treating homelessness that is based on the premise of elimination and exclusion is not only morally wrong, but also reinforces the state of homelessness as a symptom of exclusion. The emotions of disgust and the dehumanization of individuals experiencing homelessness that have been mapped in the brain can also be mapped in the urban environment through physical, social and legal means of exclusion (Figure 11). As a case study, I conducted a mapping exercise to identify and spatialize all of these physical manifestations of conflict in the downtown core of Sudbury.
Fig. 11: Collage of legal and physical manifestations of exclusion found in Sudbury. Photos by Author.
Ontario. In Figure 12, the layer of orange circles represents the position of artifacts—signs, spikes and specific fences targeted towards keeping the homeless away from that space—within the city. This layer alone shows clusters where there appears to be the most conflict within the city. The next layer of the map is a series of blue buildings with blue paths connecting them. These figures represent the location of key service buildings within the downtown. Viewing both layers simultaneously, it becomes clear that the hostile artifacts are most dense around services and paths between services and are therefore specifically targeting this demographic. These findings demonstrate the efforts to control individuals on the street and ultimately the entire experience of homelessness. This mapping exercise reinforces the hypothesis that the areas of most contact between homeless and non-homeless individuals are also the areas of most conflict.

George Allport, in his seminal work, *The Nature of Prejudice*, focuses on the transmission of prejudice and how it can be reversed. Allport makes the important observation that places of contact between ingroups and outgroups are where prejudice is most often transferred but also where it can be reversed. Moments of interaction between people will either reinforce stereotypes about that group or change them. Referred to as intergroup contact, the conditions that lead to the reversal of stereotypes occur when contact is voluntary, under equal status, and where collaboration can be facilitated.

On the other hand, further tests have been conducted of this theory and resolved that the key condition to positive contact is that it is voluntary. Therefore, the architecture that draws homeless and non-homeless individuals together must allow for contact between the groups to be voluntary to avoid reinforcing negative stereotypes. Architecture thus has the potential to address the social exclusion that accompanies homelessness.

ENDNOTES:

20. Ibid
The word architecture is often used to describe buildings, infrastructure and installations and physical objects, however these objects do not exist independent of their social and cultural context. Architecture is not only what we build, but where we build it, how we build it and who we build it for. Considering these other qualities of architecture, my research methodology has transitioned into building through research creation. In this section, I ask: how might architecture address homelessness through where it is built, how it is built, why it is built and who it is built for.

The key projects that I developed this research creation process from include *Give Me Shelter*, a 2016 fourth-year architecture homeless studio at the University of Southern California (USC) in collaboration with MADWORKSHOP, and the 1980s *Homeless Vehicle Projects* of artist Krzysztof Wodiczko. The *Give Me Shelter* studio sought to gain insight into the experience of homelessness in Los Angeles, California through taking on small scale building projects of personalized mobile shelters and encampments for the homeless residents of Skid Row. Krzysztof Wodiczko’s work, however, is much more positioned as activism. Wodiczko meticulously designed and built shopping carts that could meet the daily needs of someone who is homeless and then exhibited them to draw attention to the needs of the homeless. With inspiration from these works, I position my own project as less of an exposition of the physical dimensions of homelessness and more of an exhibition of its legal and social dimensions.

Hostile architecture arises in urban spaces where contact between homeless and non-homeless individuals develops into conflict. My research creation begins by arising from these physical traces of conflict. I have designed two artifacts that engage their physical, social and legal context to defuse the conflict and create productive spaces of intergroup contact. The interventions are located at specific sites of conflict that I have identified within downtown Sudbury as having the most potential for people to engage with them, in hopes to shift both the perception of the space and the participants.
The first research creation object was designed for the facade of the Government of Canada building located at the intersection of Cedar and Lisgar streets. Constructed in 1957, the Government of Canada building was designed to be more public, using the deep facade with recessed window sills that also function as benches. Designated as a Canadian heritage building, its 1996 facade has been used for decades as a space for public socialization (Figure 15). Since then, metal spikes have been installed along every public ledge of the building in an attempt to deter homeless individuals from laying and sleeping on them overnight (Figure 16). This sad story of the death of this public space inspired me to design an object to subvert the device of exclusion back to a physical space of inclusion and socialization.

The idea for this object started with the design of a series of benches to cover the spikes and return the ledge to a comfortable place to sit or lay down (Figure 19). The next step in this process was to introduce a program that drew people of all backgrounds around a common need. After some deliberation, I decided that offering free coffee was my strategy to bring people to the site and invite them to sit down on the newly reclaimed ledge. The final object consisted of two four-foot long benches that rested on the spikes and one table, designed to serve coffee from Tim Hortons. The table extended out from the spikes with a collapsible leg, making the whole object temporary and portable (Figure 20).

I chose 12:00pm on a weekday as the ideal time to set up the installation because of the increased foot traffic that would be created by the lunch-hour crowd at the surrounding offices. When I arrived the day of the installation, the site was empty. As I set up the benches and table along with my coffee supply from Tim Hortons, the first person came and interacted with the installation. The individual was an elderly man in a wheelchair. I poured his coffee and we began a conversation about why I was giving out coffee. The man ended our conversation with, “I’ll head out now, I don’t want to scare people away from your project,” yet before he could finish his sentence, someone came up behind him and was waiting in line for a cup of coffee. Over the course of an hour, I served 48 cups of coffee to a diverse crowd of people ranging from teenagers to middle-class office workers, to people who identified as homeless, to seniors. Two strangers decided to split the last cup of coffee, one taking the last milk and the other the last sugar. After an hour of serving, I was forced to leave because I had run out of coffee. The strongest effect I believe my intervention had was its ability to welcome people to linger along its benches after receiving their coffee. People from all classes sat together, undeterred by their differences, united by one compassionate act.

Many people asked me questions. While the most common was, “Why are you doing this?” some asked, “Do you know where I can get a free meal around here?” or “How do I get to the YMCA from here?” The question about why I was doing this turned into conversations about why we exclude individuals experiencing homelessness in the city. I was able to have these conversations with people from diverse backgrounds and with people living on the street who were all too familiar with the spikes as deterrents to them laying down.

The most powerful effect of my installation had to be that even when I stopped talking, the people around me continued conversations amongst themselves. My installation became an informal site of dialogue among people of diverse backgrounds on the topic of exclusion and inclusion of homeless individuals within the public realm of the city.
The people’s response was overwhelmingly positive. I received countless smiles, handshakes, and even a hug. I found that most people understood that individuals experiencing homelessness are victims of circumstance, mental illness, or other external factors. The two main attitudes expressed were: we want to be included and we want to be inclusive. Yet there was a “but” following these sentiments, tied to issues of liability, safety, and “bad apples”. People wanted to change to be more inclusive, yet were stuck in their old mentality of exclusion. Despite these concerns, I believe the success of my installation has demonstrated that a future attitude of inclusivity is possible and is for the better (Figure 21).

“I don’t want coffee, I just want to hear about what you’re doing.”

“We love what you have done, if only more of downtown could be like this!”

“Can I give you a hug?”

“Do you know where I can get a free meal around here?”

“We want to be inclusive.”

“We want to be included.”

“You take the sugar, I’ll take the milk.”
Fig. 23: The coffee stall integrating into the sidewalk.

Fig. 24: The coffee stall integrating into the sidewalk.

Fig. 25: People with all of their belongings stopping for coffee.

Fig. 26: People of different age and class together.

Fig. 27: Someone enjoying their coffee.

Fig. 28: People of different age and class together.
I acknowledge that the site I chose for Object 1, though historically interesting, did not represent the site with the most conflict in downtown Sudbury. To test my hypothesis at its extreme, my second installation was designed for the Tim Hortons and LCBO plaza, located at the intersection of Cedar and Paris streets. Owned by development company Dalron, this location has been the site of countless news stories of violence. The tension is palpable at Tim Hortons. The site is located at the intersection of a methadone clinic, mental health and addictions clinic and the public transit terminal. These three services account for an increased presence of people living on the street in the area. Additionally, this site is made up of a series of ledges that are often used by homeless individuals for smoking and socializing (Figure 28). The site is so heavily used by this population that in 2006, the property owner installed spikes on all of the ledges and fences along the property to curb this behaviour (Figure 29). The installation had little effect though. In 2017, Dalron took it a step further and designated the property as an Ontario Smoke-Free zone, meaning people smoking on the property may not only be fined but also legally removed. The selective enforcement of these policies against individuals experiencing homelessness is an example of the physical and legal means of exclusion. Although the bylaws and fences eventually succeeded in keeping unwanted individuals off the property, the other side of the fence quickly became the new site of smoking and socialization. The fence is now used to lean against, lock up bikes, and to hang jackets and other belongings on. This informal transformation of the public side of the fence into an active social zone used primarily by individuals experiencing homelessness and living on the street is what inspired my second installation.

The idea for this second installation started with the notion of hanging something off the fence (Figure 30). The gesture that I believed would address the physical and legal dimensions of the site was to create a place to sit (Figure 31). I created a series of benches that hung off of the fence as an intervention to subvert the physical barrier as an object of exclusion and instead to use it as something that gives comfort to those that are excluded. It was my intention to create a bench long enough to seat the people who regularly frequent the site, while also inviting outsiders to come and socialize (Figure 32).

The final design was made up of three benches, varying in length, fastened to three sections of the fence. The bench was designed to rest along the bottom crossbar of the fence. Its vertical supports slot in between the fence pickets and lock into place with rotating pieces that span the pickets on either side of the support (Figure 33). The three benches were too heavy for me to carry to the site alone, so I created a dolly that was minimally designed to help me roll the benches into place efficiently. As with my first installation, I chose to set it up at the time with most pedestrian activity: 12:00pm on a weekday. As I arrived the day of the installation, there was already a group of six people standing by the fence. As I entered the group, I was faced with confused and hostile looks. Yet as I unpacked the benches and people saw what I had done, their attitudes changed. The people were excited and even moved their things out of the way to allow me to set up. One person even yelled, “Now I have a place to sleep tonight!” Once all three benches were set up, I sat down and started talking with everyone. Slowly, a crowd of people started gathering around the benches. Over 25 people stopped by within an hour. Some people sat, some put their bags and jackets down on the benches, and others stood around. The first thing people wanted to know was if these benches were going to be permanent and the second was questioning who made them and why. I explained that I planned on leaving them as long as security would let me and that I built them as a way of changing the attitude of exclusion within the city. People were quick to share their sentiments about how they were treated with hostility and how they
were excluded from other places downtown. The reaction was overwhelmingly positive and everyone seemingly took ownership of the benches immediately. After about 20 minutes, a security guard of the property came over to the benches and asked what was going on. I expected him to be hostile and to demand the removal of the benches, but instead he was simply curious. I explained that I was using this installation to explore how we can shift from an approach of exclusion towards individuals experiencing homelessness to one of inclusion. He surprisingly agreed with me and liked my idea so much he said he would tell his boss about it as a way to improve their property. He unfortunately ended our conversation by confirming that I would have to remove the benches, as the fence was private property. I was able to keep the benches there for another hour, but eventually I was pressured to remove them.

I had three major takeaways from this second installation: that including someone is a sign of respect and showing someone respect can earn you respect back; that a simple object, like a bench, can be used for so many other things; and that social groups do not always mix, even when given the opportunity.

In one of my conversations while sitting on the bench with a man living on the street, I said that everyone deserves to be respected. He quickly responded by saying, “No, respect is earned.” I found this sentiment to be common among this group. Because they were not being shown respect, they had no intention of showing respect. The issue with this approach to exclusion is the conflict it creates; there will always be someone who does not feel like they are being shown respect. Meanwhile, the simple act of giving someone a place to sit was enough for me to instantly gain the respect of this entire group of people.

I also found that although people sat on the bench for the whole hour, colouring together. While these were both unexpected positive uses of the space, I also witnessed someone sell heroin and another group unpack and smoke a bong. The latter two uses are unfortunately synonymous with this group of people, yet these activities were likely to have still happened without the bench there. Nonetheless, I believe that the positive uses outweigh the negative and justify the necessity of the bench in this high-conflict area. Though this project was well-received by the people who gathered around it, I found that the people who stopped at the benches were all from the same social group—people connected by living on the street. People from other backgrounds looked on from afar and were clearly talking about the benches, but no outsider came to sit on the benches. This observation brought me to my last finding: that although I had designed the benches to be long enough to accompany different social groups, the one group that had gathered around the bench conveyed a sense of dominance that extended beyond themselves to deter outsiders from the other benches (Figure 33). Although a bench is something that is socially accessible to everybody, it is still a socially constructed space, and without a common program such as coffee to draw people together, the odds of bringing two different groups together are much less likely. I learned that when creating inclusive public spaces, you must provide adequate and enticing opportunities for social groups to coexist (Figure 34).
Fig. 35: People inhabiting the benches.

Fig. 36: Talking with the group about how they feel about their exclusion.

Fig. 37: Someone taking ownership and adjusting the bench on their own.

Fig. 38: The group with their belongings in their hands before the benches were installed.
CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, the findings from these two research creation projects have demonstrated the potential of creating inclusion through interventions that serve individuals experiencing homelessness. Shared inclusive spaces create opportunities for dialogue and build understanding between social groups. Simple acts of inclusion show respect that, in turn, garners respect. The overwhelmingly positive response from these installations has inspired me to share my findings to raise the public's awareness about these topics. I hope to have my findings published in the local news so as to create a larger dialogue about homelessness, conflict and exclusion within the city of Sudbury.

ENDNOTES:


29. Ibid.
PART II: ONTOLOGY

Definition:

Theories concerned with the nature and relations of being or the kind of things that have existence.\(^{36}\)

In this section of I will be studying and then proposing new services for the homeless that represent my epistemology from part one.

Chapter 05: Hypothesis
Chapter 06: Site Analysis
Chapter 07: Program Development
Chapter 08: Praxis

The hypothesis of this thesis is built upon the premise of architecture serving two roles in addressing homelessness in northern Ontario. The first role is the possibility of architecture to not only address the physical dimensions of homelessness, but also the social and legal (Figure 41). The second role is the possibility of architecture to function as a mediator between the individual experiencing homelessness and the social and cultural connotations that are associated with their circumstance (Figure 42). To mediate, architecture must work to facilitate positive intergroup contact in the urban environment. It is in this dual action that architecture has the potential to meet the individual needs of someone experiencing homelessness and address the underlying cultural and societal attitudes that accompany it.

At the root of this theory is the idea of separating the individual from their circumstance and approaching them with an attitude of inclusion. There are several key theories that can be studied to understand how architecture can act to include individuals in the social and legal domains of home. One such theory is the idea of social infrastructure and the right to the city. Eric Klinenberg, in his book *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life*, defines social infrastructure as “the physical places and organizations that shape the way people interact.” Klinenberg’s thesis is that building social infrastructures, defined as places where all kinds of people can gather, is the best way to repair the fractured societies of today. To demonstrate his theory, Klinenberg spent a year traveling and studying libraries across America that function as prime spaces of social infrastructure. What makes libraries successful examples of social infrastructure is their accessibility as a civic space, lacking any commercial pressures to access the space. In addition, their extensive programming not only attracts people across different backgrounds but also brings them together. The uniqueness of programs in libraries is that they are designed with a principal commitment to openness and inclusion, which fosters social cohesion between individuals who would not typically interact. Klineberg found that places with more social infrastructure were not only generally more pleasant places to live, but that these communities were more connected and more resilient.

Libraries are often key resources accessed by individuals experiencing homelessness for shelter, access to technology, and inclusive programming. However, the theories of social infrastructure is broader than just the civic library. If one were to consider the architecture of social service buildings located in urban areas, such as the Samaritan Centre in Sudbury, Ontario, as social infrastructure, they

![Fig. 41: Conceptual part of my proposals.](image-url-1)

![Fig. 42: Conceptual part intergroup contact.](image-url-2)

**Chapter 05: Hypothesis**
could act to connect those that are homeless back into the social domain of cities.

The right to the city is a theory that was first developed by Henri Lefebvre in his 1968 book, *Le droit à la ville*. The theory has since been taken up by numerous social movements and activists as a call for equality and access to public city space. The right to the city was developed as a response to the rapid commodification and commercialization of public space as well as to cities that threatened to annihilate urban life in a capitalist society. Key theorists such as David Harvey have written extensively about how capitalist markets are eliminating public space through commodification and the exclusion of those who do not contribute to the market such as individuals experiencing homelessness.

The legal exclusion of this group of people, can in Harvey’s eyes be seen as a symptom of capitalism and the commercialization of public space. The right to the city therefore postulates that the provision of inclusive public space is an act of resistance to the commercial and legal exclusion of individuals experiencing homelessness in cities. Creating housing and social services that protect public space while foregoing the tradition of posting anti-loitering and trespassing bylaws is a way by which architecture can legally include individuals experiencing homelessness.

Finally, Allport’s theory of intergroup contact postulates that the conditions optimal for contact to reduce prejudice include: equal status between the groups in the situation, common goals, intergroup cooperation and the support of authorities or law. The theory of social infrastructure contributes to the de-stigmatization of social interaction by meeting the conditions of equal status, common goals, and intergroup cooperation. The theory of the right to the city reinforces the importance of equal status and the support of authorities or law in public spaces. Therefore, it is clear that architecture treating homelessness can be measured in its potential to reduce prejudice by its provision of interactions under Allport’s three optimal conditions (Figure 43).

**ENDNOTES:**


31. Ibid.


Homelessness is a universal phenomenon, yet its manifestations are incredibly local. Modes of homelessness vary between country, province, and even city. Often primarily thought of as an urban phenomenon, a recent Canadian social survey found that compared with urban dwellers, a higher percentage of northern and rural residents had experienced homelessness at some point. Understanding the nuances of northern homelessness, specifically as it manifests in Sudbury, is key to unlocking the potential dimensions architecture is able to serve in this area.

Sudbury is located in a region of the province of Ontario known as the “near north”. As shown in Figure 44, the city of Sudbury is situated approximately in the middle of the province, yet located above all of the densest populated areas of the province. Other large northern cities in Ontario include North Bay, Timmins, Sault Ste Marie, and Thunder Bay, yet among them Sudbury has the largest and densest population. As the regional capital of northeastern Ontario, Sudbury is the main destination for people migrating to the area.

The demographics of Sudbury display that there is a significant number of homeless individuals who migrate to the city either en route to somewhere else or to stay and access the services provided there. In their 2014 study, Migratory and Transient Homelessness in Northern Ontario: Pathways to Homelessness in Sudbury and Its Related Impacts, Carol Kauppi et al. identify...
Sudbury as a hub for homelessness activity in northern Ontario. Kauppi et al. found that over a quarter of the total homeless population in Sudbury was migratory or transient. Using data from Kauppi et al. (2011) I created a map to chart the regions of Ontario that homeless individuals migrated from by proportion (Figure 47). This diagram shows that not only do individuals migrate from other northern cities to Sudbury, but also that the second largest percentage of individuals were coming from southern Ontario. Sudbury can therefore be understood as a hub for homelessness in northern Ontario, as well as having significant ties to the homeless communities in other parts of the province.

Interestingly, the individuals experiencing homelessness in Sudbury share different characteristics than those in urban areas. Kauppi et al. (2014) found that the majority of homeless migrant and transient individuals are single men without children. Furthermore, they are most often in a state of absolute homelessness, having left behind all connection and support. Figure 46 identifies three subgroups of migratory and transient homeless individuals: those who have recently migrated, those who have stayed for an extended period of time upon migrating and those in the intermediate between these extremes. Of these subgroups, the recently migrated and those who have stayed make up the largest percentage. In the remaining population of non-migratory individuals, the demographic most recently identified as the growing proportion in northern Ontario, are those who experience hidden homelessness. Hidden homelessness categorizes a variety of different experiences that share the attribute of the loss of security over the physical domain. Whereas absolute homelessness can be easi...
to spot on the street, someone experiencing hidden homelessness may show no visible traces of their circumstance and may not even identify as being homeless. Kauppi et al. (2017) found that people living with hidden homelessness are often invisible to the social service system or even intentionally avoiding it because they do not define themselves as homeless, they do not want to be identified as homeless by others, and/or they do not believe that the social services available will meet their needs.

In Sudbury, there are also still many people living in absolute homelessness, especially downtown. With the patterns of urban sprawl that exist in many parts of the city and the high concentration of those living with homelessness in the downtown core, the city is faced with a general population who avoids the downtown for fear of their safety, which in turn makes the downtown core feel even more unsafe, with fewer eyes on the street. Ultimately, I believe the architecture that is designed to meet the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness must also take into consideration its role in mediating the perceptions associated with homelessness as they will be associated with those who access it. Architecture should not hide the circumstances that lead to people accessing social services, but it should address the individual first. Instead of calling a building a soup kitchen, for example, the location could simply be called a restaurant. Instead of calling an overnight shelter a homeless shelter, it could simply be called a hotel. These services could then meet the needs of individuals without requiring them to identify as anything other than simply human.

With these goals in mind, I have chosen the southern end of Elgin Street in downtown Sudbury as the site for the final design exercise of this thesis. Figure 48 shows a panoramic view of downtown, highlighting the importance of Elgin Street. Located at the northern end of the street are the city’s most recent efforts towards urban renewal: the McEwen School of Architecture and the future Place Des Arts Performance and Exhibition Centre. The centre of the Elgin Street corridor is known as the arts district of downtown, home to many small shops, galleries and popular restaurants. At the southern end of Elgin Street is the Sudbury Hockey Arena, followed by the derelict Ledo Hotel and empty parking lots. It is this southern tip that I believe holds the greatest potential to transform downtown Sudbury and offer the best services to those experiencing homelessness in the city.

ENDNOTES:

37. Kauppi, Carol, Bill O’Grady, Rebecca Schiff, and Far Martin, eds. Homelessness and Hidden Homelessness in Rural and Northern Ontario. Guelph, ON: Rural Ontario Institute, 2017.


39. Ibid


41. Ibid


43. Ibid

Chapter 07: Program

Homelessness is a universal phenomenon, yet it is characteristically different in every city. As mentioned in the previous, homelessness differs greatly from cities in northern Ontario like Sudbury and cities in southern urban centers like Toronto. In each city, the programs and buildings that are designed to treat homelessness should reflect this difference. Designing an architectural program to address homelessness is as important as designing the building and spaces. My proposal for the historic Ledo Hotel and adjacent parking lot is to expand the Elgin corridor through the introduction of commercial services mixed with social and civic services and housing.

As I have studied different precedents of architecture in addressing homelessness around the world, I have found one common thread. The commonality was best stated to me in an interview between myself and Jeff Malin, the director of business development for the Skid Row Housing Trust out of Los Angeles. He said,

“Stability. I need it. I’ve always wanted stability and security. Stability and secure environment... it is so hard to move around a lot.”

Looking at the Out of the Cold shelter, why don’t we have an Out of the Heat shelter? ... I think Sudbury as a whole, doesn’t look at our population with any kind of respect. So without that respect, our population kind of gets thrown in the back right?”

We should have a house where people have their own rooms with a kitchen to do their own cooking, or laundry room and more counseling for people to come and talk to someone about their situation. Its hard walking around downtown there with your bags and all you got, no place to go, you really don’t have no place to go.”

Good support makes good supportive housing.”

For architecture to successfully address homelessness, it must also successfully facilitate programs addressing homelessness. People who have lived the experience of homelessness can best articulate the services they are in need of, so I turned to the existing work of Laurentian’s The Poverty, Homelessness and Migration (PHM) study. With help from study’s research assistants, I developed a comprehensive secondary analysis of their previously transcribed interviews conducted with individuals experiencing homelessness to extract their stories about how services have affected them. Together, we looked for patterns where there were key services missing or failures in the current services. These new needs became the inspiration for the programs of my project. Figure 48 displays some key quotes from this process where individuals are sharing the personal needs of their circumstance. The

“Good support makes good supportive housing.”

For architecture to successfully address homelessness, it must also successfully facilitate programs addressing homelessness. People who have lived the experience of homelessness can best articulate the services they are in need of, so I turned to the existing work of Laurentian’s The Poverty, Homelessness and Migration (PHM) study. With help from study’s research assistants, I developed a comprehensive secondary analysis of their previously transcribed interviews conducted with individuals experiencing homelessness to extract their stories about how services have affected them. Together, we looked for patterns where there were key services missing or failures in the current services. These new needs became the inspiration for the programs of my project. Figure 48 displays some key quotes from this process where individuals are sharing the personal needs of their circumstance. The
The result of this process was nine new or updated services that we identified as lacking in the community.

The first pattern I identified from our analysis was individuals being unable to find what services are available to them in the city. Multiple people suggested a resource centre to solve this, where service providers could make others aware of what they offer and coordinate care (Figure 50).

The next pattern I identified was of people choosing to avoid services in fear of the stigma associated with homelessness. The concept of cross-programming social and commercial services within the same place, such as a café that offers free meals to the homeless, could reduce this fear (Figure 51). By bringing more non-homeless individuals into the space and allowing those who experience hidden homelessness to remain anonymous, all individuals would be able to comfortably access the services they need.

Tied to these programs, the next pattern I identified was homeless people feeling judged by the non-homeless staff and volunteers that run most services. I believe that operating the mixed social and commercial spaces in a way that accommodates jobs for homeless individuals, for example training them in the kitchen or serving, would narrow the tension between staff and patrons (Figure 52). This strategy ties directly into the next pattern of people, who feel helpless over their situation and feel better when given an opportunity to improve their situation or circumstance or help someone else.

The next major pattern I found was the failure of the open room, cot-based, overnight shelter system. The failure of this system is the anxiety, especially felt by women and minorities who have experienced trauma, of sleeping with no separation from the other occupants of the shelter. Additionally, the lack of privacy is a common concern. Often, the result of these factors was that once people entered the shelter system, they felt they no longer were allotted the stability they needed to recover. Although a private room in an overnight shelter system would be able to serve less people than a cot system, the service provided would be a much better experience and would provide privacy and possibly even stability for those who need it most (Figure 53). Additionally, between the hours that meals are provided and the opening of the overnight shelter, there is no place where individuals experiencing homelessness are accepted. Instead, they are often forced out onto the street. A communal, indoor gathering place would be able to meet this need. Ideally this space would also be able to offer free showers and bathrooms to homeless individuals (Figure 54). Tied to this extra space needed is the requirement for a place to leave one’s belongings during the day, such as public lockers (Figure 55). As the participants said in the interviews we conducted, humans need more than just a place to be, they need things to do.
During my bench installation, people stopped by to use the bench for a variety of activities: two people used it as a surface to clean their bag of tools, and two others had a colouring book and sat and coloured on the bench. A maker space would offer creative expression as well as a launch pad for people to feel enabled to better their circumstances (Figure 56).

Another simple program needed for this community is a laundromat. This service would need to be offered at low or no cost to individuals experiencing homelessness, but could also be open commercially to the rest of downtown Sudbury residents. Currently there are no publicly accessible laundromats in the downtown area. This public laundromat has the potential to informally become a shared social space of contact (Figure 57).

Finally, the last program, a community garden, is a catalyst for collaboration on intergroup contact (Figure 58). A community garden is an activity that could benefit individuals experiencing homelessness—to cultivate their own food—that could ultimately be served in a cafe or restaurant. This program can also act as a heart, connecting all of these other proposed programs through the shared act of cultivation.

It is important to distinguish that the programs of this whole building are not dependent on the circumstance of homelessness but rather dependent on shared human needs that surpass circumstance. Our shared needs and desires can be what connects individuals from different backgrounds and experiences in a position of equality and inclusivity.

ENDNOTES:
45. Jeff Malin (Director of business development at Skid Row Housing Trust, Los Angeles, California) in discussion with the author, January 2020.
46. Kauppi, Carol. “Interviews Conducted by the Poverty, Homelessness and Migration Study.” Sudbury, n.d.
Praxis is a word that describes the process by which a theory, lesson or skill is enacted, embodied or realized. In many ways, an architectural thesis in itself is an exercise in praxis, enacting, embodying or realizing theories through built or unbuilt forms. This chapter of my thesis is dedicated to the process by which a building is realized in a community with minimal impact and maximum uptake. As I begin to map programs to a site, a building begins to form, yet how that building forms will influence the context it is situated in and the sensitive populations it is being designed for.

In order to successfully address homelessness in downtown Sudbury, this project, which I will refer to as “Home: Sudbury”, will eventually become an urban block. This block will house: a resource centre and emergency shelter, active commercial storefronts with social imperatives, integrated civic services such as a computer library and maker space, planning, coordination and event spaces for local social service providers, an active community vegetable garden, and flexible supportive housing. In the beginning, however, the project must begin with much smaller interventions that can more rapidly meet the immediate needs of the community and create an interface between the community and designers. With these new measures in place, the final design of the building can better be tailored to the community it is in and the community can claim a sense of ownership over it. The design of each phase utilizes three principle themes derived from my definition of homelessness to provide a home for those who come to Sudbury without one: physical mediation, social mediation and legal mediation.

In preparation for this design exercise, I interviewed key figures in the city of Sudbury about their experiences with projects of this nature. I found that previous attempts at similar projects in Sudbury had been made and both succeeded and failed in different respects. The earliest urban renewal project in Sudbury was the demolition of a residential neighbourhood within the downtown area to construct a shopping mall that today is the Rainbow Centre (Figure 59). This demolition by the city displaced hundreds of people who temporarily became homeless and waited years for the completion of the new housing they were promised. Following this demolition and reconstruction, the second most prominent urban renewal project in Sudbury to date has been the construction of the School of Architecture (Figure 60). Carol Kaupi has described in interviews that through her research, the site that the school was built on used to be the primary gathering place for homeless individuals in the city. She said that the construction of the school displaced that population, shifting their congregation to where it is today: the transit terminal and Tim Hortons Plaza, also known as the biggest conflict zone in the city.

The most recent project for the homeless by the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) in Sudbury is a combined shelter, medical clinic and recovering alcoholics home (Figure 61). This ambitious project has yet to complete construction and has already failed the population it was meant to serve in many ways. First, once funding from the city was allocated for the construction of this project, other services, such as the Salvation Army, lost its operation funding and immediately
had to close.\textsuperscript{39} This left the city without any operational shelters for eight months during the construction of the new project until it was operational. The rushed construction timeline also surpassed the funding schedule, causing the CMHA to run out of money while waiting for the approval of their provincial funding. Furthermore, this created the need for the city to bail out the CMHA with taxpayers money in order to be able to complete construction.\textsuperscript{39} Although these circumstances do not necessarily affect the positive outcomes of this project, once complete, all involved will have lessons to recall on the importance of planning, coordination and timing for multi-programmed social projects.

Though overall the Rainbow Centre, school of architecture and new CMHA home are very different projects, their shared failure is in the rushed nature of their planning and execution. These failed steps objectify the context of the buildings as expendable towards their overall goal of progress. I believe Home: Sudbury must emerge organically from the existing urban fabric without jeopardizing its surroundings in the process.

My project delivery plan is made up of four phases along a flexible timeline (Figure 62). Phase one of the project begins with the most immediate need of the local community. This phase will bring all of the relevant players to the same table: a small scale intervention
at the Samaritan Centre. In 2017, I completed an independent study interviewing patrons and staff at the Samaritan Centre to see how the building could be improved to meet their needs. The patrons of the centre expressed a need for a dignified and sheltered place to smoke and socialize outside and the staff expressed an interest in creating a community garden for the patrons to participate in and to provide fresh produce for the kitchen. Together we developed an idea for a community garden located across the street on land that would be donated by CP Rail (Figure 63). The garden could provide fresh produce for the kitchen and a sheltered smoking area for the patrons. I went through the process of getting city planning approval, the land donation agreement, and even funding from the downtown BIA. Unfortunately, the project was put on hold when the city shifted funding from the downtown to infrastructure repairs. I do, however, see this organic community initiative as a great place to start again with Home: Sudbury by bringing everyone into the same room and restarting the collaboration between the city, nonprofits and downtown businesses.
Fig. 64: Phase 2 of Home Sudbury, site acquisition and social reclamation, expansion of gardens and seating areas.

The second phase of this project involves utilizing the intervention in phase one in order to leverage the newly created connections between social services, individuals with lived experience, city officials and downtown businesses. These connections will be used to initiate the process of realizing the full project. The site I have currently chosen is the city block at Paris and Van Horne Streets, adjacent to the Samaritan Centre. Today, this location is occupied with parking, a couple of low-income apartments and the Ledo Hotel. I chose this site due to its proximal location to the current hub of social services in the city, key civic projects such as The Market at Elgin Greenway, future developments like the downtown Synergy Centre, as well as its historic significance. The downtown Synergy Centre is a commercial development of a new library branch, art gallery and event centre/hotel. It poses the biggest threat to the vulnerable population that call this part of town home. Occupying the current site of the hockey arena and the adjacent parking lots north of my site, this commercial development will generate a lot of money for the city and increase life on the streets in the area. At the same time, this life will be in stark contrast to the life the local community is used to. This development poses the potential to become the future site of most conflict in the city between those who are housed and those experiencing homelessness. This is gentrification on a massive scale. The threat of this potential conflict could possibly be leveraged at the table of relevant players that was formed in phase one to purchase the land of the Ledo site, which is currently for sale (Figure 64). As this conversation would happen during the preliminary planning stage of the Synergy Centre, the community garden run through the Samaritan Centre has the potential to expand and move on to the new Ledo site to replace the
parking lot. With this newfound space, benches and tables could also be built to create a new park space downtown. The effect of creating a new public park is that it will introduce new people to the site which was once a derelict parking lot. Ultimately, the goal is to slowly introduce the area back into the public realm within its urban context for use by both those who are housed and the homeless.

The third phase of this project is the formation of a community interface. The planning for Home: Sudbury would begin with multiple stages of community consultation and input from the population of people experiencing homelessness and those who are housed. The interface would be a physical space within the Ledo Hotel on the site for meetings and charretts to be held between the project committee and community (Figure 65). The city can use federal funding under the Community Capacity and Innovation Stream to begin to renovate the ground floor of the Ledo Hotel, which is currently only being used for storage, to house this interface and the future resource and coordination centre. The use of this space will allow for the return of the Ledo storefront to the public realm, intertwining with the community garden and the Elgin Street corridor. Home: Sudbury, in its final form, would derive from this space; the seed fertilized by the community. This phase would last as long as it naturally takes to coordinate such a project.
with the goal of completion being concurrent with the construction beginning on the Synergy Centre across the street. The fourth and final phase of the project would be to meet the rest of the communities needs by the complete construction of the rest of the site which will be described in the following chapters (Figure 66).

Taking a phased project delivery approach allows for more time for community involvement, to coordinate funding and to earn the trust of the population this project aims to serve. The praxis has been designed to hand over the project to the community in order for it to be shaped to meet their needs.

ENDNOTES:

49. Carol Kauppi (Professor at Laurentian University) in discussion with the author, December 2019.
50. Gail Spencer (Coordinator of Shelters and Homelessness at city of Sudbury Social Services Division) in discussion with the author, February, 2020.
51. Ibid.
In this final section I will describe the design of what I believe to be all who need one in Sudbury.

**Definition:**

Of, relating to, or being a place of residence, congenial environment, or the social unit formed by a community living together.\(^{52}\)

---

Chapter 09: The Physical Dimension

An individual’s experience of homelessness may feature exclusion from any three of the domains of home. The Home: Sudbury project will operate as an interface between an individual and each domain, starting with the physical. There are many ways in which architecture can meet the physical need for shelter, however the physical domain encompasses more than just a roof to sleep under. I have shaped my building in a way to create a variety of spaces and microclimates that provide a spectrum of shelter with a robustness that can accommodate many of the challenges that may arise during the transition from homeless to housed (Figure 71). From supportive housing units, to open indoor spaces to outdoor sheltered spaces through commercial, civic and social uses, Home: Sudbury will be equipped to address the physical needs of many different circumstances.

The building's massing is made up of various commercial storefronts with a void carved out at the centre of the site as a barrier-free indoor public space that anyone can occupy year round, 24/7 (Figure 67). The second story of the building is then connected down to the ground plane to create an elevated semi-enclosed outdoor public space (Figure 68). The programs that enclose this space are the more civic and domestic programs that require less foot traffic and encourage people to linger in the pleasant microclimate. The dichotomy of these two building podiums reflect the spectrum from commercial to civic programs and indoor and outdoor spaces. The remaining two residential stores of the building are stacked above the civic podium with a void at the centre of the floor plate that has been carved to allow light and fresh air to the outdoor podium below (Figure 69). Encircling the void is a single loaded corridor that faces inward, providing an eyes on the street effect for the podium below. The vast roof of the building is then occupied by the community garden (Figure 70).
Fig. 71: Aerial Rendering of House: Sudbury, looking south west.

Fig. 72: Perspective of illuminated street facade that can be inhabited day and night.
As Sudbury is situated in a northern climate, the city’s outdoor spaces become harsh and uninhabitable for over half of the year. A key contribution of this building to the city is the provision of outdoor public spaces that can function successfully throughout the winter so that people can still find comfort when they lose access to other indoor spaces. Figure 72 demonstrates how the inhabitable public realm of the building evolves to function in all seasons. As I’ve experienced first hand in Sudbury, movement becomes quite precarious for pedestrians in the winter, especially for people who are elderly or less physically able, as sidewalks accumulate snow and ice. Home: Sudbury incorporates the sidewalks that surround it into the inhabitable public realm of the building through integrated benches along its exterior walls with awnings that shade the benches and windows below. In the winter, however, these benches would be unmounted from the wall, creating the space to redirect the sidewalk to pass underneath the awnings. The awnings can thus protect the walking surface of the sidewalk from accumulating snow and ice, while the plows can clear away any residual precipitation. Furthermore, the building harnesses snow banks, which begin to accumulate between the road and sidewalk as winter progresses, as a natural windbreak, creating a tunnel-like microclimate that protects the walking path.

The courtyard space at the centre of the building is designed around an elevated medicine garden. The garden and planters bring plant life into the courtyard space and provide ample seating for gathering and activities outside in the summer. The walls that enclose the courtyard have been angled to the south so as to cast minimal shadows into the space, allowing the sun to brighten and heat it year-round. In the winter, however, the large open space will often be snowed in. An overhang has therefore been projected around the perimeter of the space, covering two gathering spaces and allowing for circulation around the courtyard to be safe and protected year-round. This space can be used for special events, such as snowman building and winter markets, which take place in the winter months. The reality, however, is that between these events this space will mostly be used to navigate between indoor spaces and for that reason, the same passive design strategies have been employed to use snow banks and overhangs to protect the walkways.

The roof of the building is where the community garden has been designed, however it functions as much more than that. The planters have been arranged to form a winding track that circumnavigates the courtyard. In the summer, the garden can be tended to by the community and residents of the building, while those uninterested in planting in the garden can still utilize the space as an elevated trail for exercising through walking or jogging. In the winter, while the garden will be buried in snow, the space between the planters can be shoveled, creating large snow banks on either side of the walking path. Therefore in the winter, the walking path can still be used as a way for residents and the community to get some fresh air on a nice day while remaining protected from the cold wind.

The ground floor of the building has been specifically designed as an indoor space for people to escape both the heat and the cold. In the summer, the elevated garden acts as a skylight to bring views of vegetation and natural light down to the centre of the space, while in the winter, the vast number of open tables and chairs invite anyone passing through to warm up as long as they need.
Fig. 74: Perspective of Shaughnessy St at the beginning of winter.
The structure of the building has been designed to meet the fluctuating needs of the homeless population. Over time, the demographics of those experiencing homelessness is constantly evolving and is not always predictable. To ensure that this building does not become redundant and that it can keep up with the changing demographics, the structural and mechanical systems have been designed on a standard grid that is interchangeable over time. I have designed three apartment typologies that can fit within the same 9 by 9 meter steel column and concrete slab grid (Figure 73). Within the same footprint in the building, there can be six studio units, three single bedroom units or two double bedroom units. As formerly homeless residents of the building gain stability and control over their circumstance, they may decide that moving out of this dwelling is what is best for them. They may find other housing and decide to move out or, as others move out of the building, they may be able to have their unit converted into a single bedroom. As the needs of the individuals or families living in single bedroom units evolve, they too may either choose to move on or find space to convert their units into multiple bedrooms.

The initial ratio of studio to one bedroom to two bedroom units will be decided during the community engagement phase of the project, but generally, the grid system allows for walls, floors, plumbing and HVAC to be rearranged through a plug and play raised floor system. As the physical domain needs shift in Sudbury, so too can the homes that Home: Sudbury provides.

Another aspect that has been addressed is the state of circumstance that people will be in as they move into the building. For some individuals who have been experiencing absolute homelessness for extended periods of time, the transition to living in a house will not be smooth. Challenges common with this transition are hoarding and the misappropriation of furniture, plumbing and HVAC systems.35 The benefit of the raised floor system in relation to these phenomena is demonstrated in (Figure 74). As pipes, wire and vents are all run through the floor instead of the walls, access to these systems for repairs can be done simply by lifting any of the floor panels with the correct tool. Therefore, if a resident damages the floors or building systems in their transition to being housed, repairs can be made by replacing a single floor panel rather than the whole floor or walls.
Finally, equally important to the provision of physical spaces for individuals experiencing homelessness, is agency within those spaces. Jill Pable, in her paper *Possessions in the homeless shelter experience: The built environment's potential role in self-restoration*, describes the importance of individuals being able to personalize a space with their belongings in order to restore a sense of self while in a shelter environment.²⁴ It is no stretch to extend this notion to housing, where individuals previously experiencing homelessness may struggle with taking ownership over a new space. Home: Sudbury begins to address this issue by giving its residents control over their room’s layout, furniture, light and privacies. The units come with basic furniture that is made of resilient materials such as wood that can be disassembled, rearranged and modified to the residents’ personal desires. Additionally, each room has two windows: one facing outdoors and one in the door facing the corridor. The window in the door serves two purposes: first to bring light in from the courtyard, but more importantly to provide a canvas for residents to express themselves outwardly to their neighbours by displaying art, a personal greeting or object. Over each window I have designed a custom screen that can control the amount of privacy and light that the resident wants in the room, as well as translucent and opaque sliding panels (Figure 74). The Home: Sudbury building is providing flexibility and agency through the spatial domain to the public and its residents.

ENDNOTES:


Chapter 10: The Social Dimension

PHYSICAL DEGREES OF SEPARATION:

- Separated Spaces
- Connected Spaces
- Same Space Far
- Same Space Close
- Same Space Together

The social domain of home can be addressed on personal and societal levels. A personal experience of homelessness often results in a disconnect between an individual and their social networks either due to their circumstance or conditions brought on by homelessness. Enabling individuals to build new communities and foster a new sense of belonging is one dimension of how Home: Sudbury addresses the social domain. The other aspect in which this project addresses the social domain is through separating the individual experiencing homelessness from their circumstances. It is separating the individual experiencing homelessness from the connotations of their circumstance by creating spaces of intergroup contact and providing social services without the necessity of identifying as homeless.

As mentioned throughout this thesis, a key step in addressing homelessness is separating the individual experiencing homelessness from their circumstances. It is through this process that stigmas and prejudices around homelessness can disappear and new social connections can begin to form. The programs that will run through Home: Sudbury are designed to address shared human needs with the goal of bringing people of different backgrounds together on an equal playing field. The building’s commercial facilities, including the laundromat, cafes and restaurant, are all to be operated with an integrated “Pay it Forward” system so that people who are unable to afford these amenities can still participate without having to identify with their circumstance.

The spatial organization of the programs within the building as well as the architecture that forms around them have been designed to facilitate a broad spectrum of participation in socialization. In the spaces downtown where I have documented the most traces of hostility from intergroup contact, the common thread was forced proximity between housed and homeless individuals. Rather than social engineering intergroup contact at every program, the building offers choices in how close people want to get to each other. Figure 76 shows the basic degrees of separation that have been designed into every public space of the building.

Examples of how the building will function to bring people close together appear through the interactive programming of the facilities located on the site such as the event space, maker space, library or cafe. Residents of the building could participate in art classes offered out of the maker space, while pedestrians circulate through the outside of the building. The art could then be displayed through an exhibition in the event space where housed and unhoused people can begin to enter the same space at distances they feel comfortable at. Someone who is housed could become intrigued by the art created by someone who is unhoused. In turn, this could result in intergroup contact, with people from two different groups admiring the same art. The art display has the potential to create dialogue across different backgrounds. For example, a homeless person may invite a non-homeless person to one of the cafes to discuss their work in a shared space, and further develop a meaningful friendship with this person.

These kinds of stories cannot be engineered by architecture, however architecture can facilitate the right combination of facilities, programs and events to enable them to occur naturally over time. As architecture is merely the shell that contains the social life of the building, it is the residents and participants in this social setting that will set the tone of any social interaction.

Each level of the building has been designed so that the physical form of it facilitates the social programs offered through a series of primary and secondary spaces (Figure 77). Primary spaces are designated with a specific program in mind that is able to bring people together, such as a laundromat, and are complemented with secondary spaces. Secondary spaces operate much more loosely within the building as social spaces where people can meet, congregate, socialize or rest. Secondary spaces complement primary spaces by offering a less structured space for more natural interactions to take place. Providing the opportunities for contact and making it voluntary through primary and secondary spaces is another way the architecture of Home: Sudbury is mediating the social realm.
Fig. 80: East West section of building showing life throughout the building.
At the scale of the community, the building begins by acknowledging the existing context of the site downtown. The context of the building that presents the most opportunities for contact are the Synergy Centre, event centre, farmers’ market, Elgin Greenway and Samaritan Centre (Figure 78). The southeast corner of the site has been sculpted to create a new shaded seating area for the patrons of the Samaritan Centre and pedestrians alike. (Figure 79) The south facade of the building along Elgin Street mimics the success of the small storefronts that make up the north end of the street by breaking up its long mass with a rhythm of windows doors and vertical masonry elements (Figure 80). Furthermore, this facade directly faces the farmers’ market across the street at the old rail station and, in future, will create a lively pedestrian corridor with the Elgin Greenway. Finally, pedestrians accessing the Synergy Centre to the north have the ability to cross the site to the south through a break in the facade that connects to the southern section of the site through the courtyard Figure(81).
At the shared ground floor of the building, the primary programs are the resource desk and coordination centre, located inside the renovated Ledo. Crossing over into the new construction of Home: Sudbury, there is the restaurant, bakery and cafe (or leasable commercial spaces). The complementary secondary spaces include the seating in front of the resource desk and the various seating arrangements at the centre between the commercial programs in the interior courtyard. (Figure 82-86)
The primary spaces of the upper floors of the Ledo are the rooms which operate during the day as offices for the social workers or resource desk staff, and at night are converted into residences using Murphy beds and creating a private hotel-style overnight shelter. Each floor is open concept, connected to the other floors through an open atrium for safety and natural lighting, with secondary communal spaces for the socialization that often takes place in overnight shelters (Figure 87-91).
At the podium level of Home: Sudbury, the new portion of the building are the civic primary spaces: the maker space, library, common kitchen and event space. To the east is where the domestic primary spaces can be found: the laundromat, the lobby for the residents and public hygiene facilities. The secondary spaces in the courtyard are organized around an elevated communal medicine garden that is designed with Indigenous traditional knowledge. These spaces are outdoor social areas where people can congregate, socialize and rest (Figure 92-96).
The first two levels above the podium of Home: Sudbury have been designed for public use, however the third and fourth stories are only accessible to residents of the building and their guests through keycard-activated elevators. This layer of security adds a vertical barrier which is created between the private space of the residents of the building and the public space. The primary spaces on the residential floors of the building consist of apartment units organized around a shared corridor. Along this shared loop are several secondary resting areas and common spaces for the residents (Figure 97-100).
On the second level of housing, fourth story of Home: Sudobry, the building connects to the roof of the Ledo through the north common room to offer the resident a private outdoor garden for both social gathering and private rest and solitude from the streets below. These secondary spaces complement the apartments by creating opportunities for residents to foster a sense of community through shared activities (Figure 101-104).

Fig. 101: Home level 3/ Ledo Roof floor plan 1:500.

Fig. 102: Home level 3/ Ledo north primary/secondary spaces diagram represented in blue and orange respectively.

Fig. 105: Home level 3/ Ledo roof primary/secondary space diagram represented in blue and orange respectively.

Fig. 106: Perspective of residents using the north common room that is on roof floor.

Fig. 107: Perspective of residents gathering on their private roof space above the Ledos.
On the roof of Home: Sudbury, the public realm is reconnected to the residence at the primary spaces of the community garden. The path between the garden beds is intended to be used as a secondary space for exercise for both residents and the community. Other secondary spaces are created for resting, gathering and socializing with views of downtown and the building’s surroundings (Figure 105-108).

LEGEND

1. Community Garden
2. Exercise Path
3. Rest Area
4. Utility Room

ENDNOTES:

The legal dimension of homelessness pertains to an individual’s legal rights and freedoms, which may be lost due to one’s circumstances. In some cases, such as for refugees, one may have no legal stability. Whereas in other cases, an individual’s circumstance of homelessness will cause them to lose legal rights and freedoms such as accessing public space. Furthermore, for someone who is experiencing or is at risk of homelessness, access to the proper social services and government support is a basic right. Therefore, the aim of Home Sudbury is to address the legal dimension of homelessness by making a broad range of social services available and connecting service providers with the people who need them most.

The city of Sudbury is one of 60 communities that has been designated by the Canadian federal government as a centre for homelessness in Canada. Designated communities are required by law to have service coordination plans in place. Furthermore, initiatives, Figure 110 shows how this system will be implemented throughout the building in the physical and digital realms. Giving to someone who has identified themselves as being in need can be done either anonymously in the building, online or person to person. Receiving this help can be done anonymously in person, online or person to person as well. In the building people can decide to donate a meal or a coffee while making their purchase and that donation will then be anonymously recorded by the business. An individual in need of a free meal can then approach the business and anonymously gesture that they would like to redeem a free meal. Online, someone at home or through their phone, can make donations to the business to support the free services. Receiving this help can be done anonymously in person, online or person to person as well.

The benefit of this matrix is that because many funding sources have strict limitations on what they can be used for, offering many services maximizes the number of funding sources that can be tapped. The other dimension of legal funding is the separation between capital and operational funds. There are many one-time capital funds that can be allocated to new projects, however there are limited operational funds that are made available by the city of Sudbury each year. Many of the service-related programs are commercialized to draw upon private funding, borrowing their social operating budget from pay it forward would. Finally people can purchase suspended meals or coffee and hold onto the vouchers themselves for the next time they see someone asking for money on the street so that they can then hand it to them person to person. The pay it forward system therefore enables giving and receiving to become anonymous so that while participating in the commercial spaces, one’s circumstance can remain private. Each funding source can be divided by what it can fund capital and operationally. Maximizing the funding potential for this project is what enables its mixed programs to address the many different circumstances that can create homelessness.

For individuals whose opportunities have been limited by their homelessness, architecture can provide solutions through its design and construction. The design of the programs intentionally mixes specific commercial programs with civic and social programs in order to create synergies that offer opportunities to the formerly homeless residents of the building and individuals

Fig. 112: Funding allocation diagram.

Fig. 113: Diagram of options for participating in pay it forward system.
Fig. 114: Diagram showing how programs in the building are connected to each other and the community.

Fig. 115: Furniture in the rooms that could be built by individuals experiencing homelessness.

experiencing homelessness in the community. Figure 113 shows how the programs within the building connect to each other and to the residents and businesses in the community. Each connection represents a synergy where, for example, the community and residents can collaborate to maintain the garden. Local businesses can contribute by donating funding or food waste as compost. Farmers from the local markets could donate seeds. And finally, the food cultivated at the garden could be sold to the in-house restaurant to benefit the homeless residents as well as those at the Samaritan Centre.

Wood will be utilized throughout the building because of its sustainability as a material. Additionally, it can be locally sourced and carpentry is a relatively easy and transferable skill to learn. The construction of the building offers the opportunity to hire homeless individuals with carpentry skills or to teach new trade skills to willing individuals experiencing homelessness. Rather than pre-ordering mass produced products to furnish the apartments, simple yet durable wooden furnishings have been designed that individuals with no previous carpentry experience can learn to build (Figure 112). Not only does this create a temporary source of income for individuals experiencing homelessness during the construction of the building, but it also provides them with a skill that is highly transferable and in high demand in the construction industry. An example of one of the detailed construction manuals that would be given to the residents for each component of furniture is included in appendix A.

ENDNOTES:

57. Ibid.
58. Ibid.
Chapter 12: The Life of the Building

As architecture cannot be completely encompassed by the physical, social and legal domains, I have created a fourth domain: the architectural. In the architectural domain is where the life of the building is inhabited. The building itself will be experienced differently from person to person. Therefore, I have created three general categories including the experience of the pedestrian that is housed, the experience of the pedestrian who is experiencing homelessness and the experience of the formerly homeless resident. It is important to recognize that homelessness is a spectrum, however for the sake of this project, all experiences of homelessness have been grouped together.

The life of the building for the pedestrian that is housed is about the circulation around and through the site as well as their direct access to the commercial and civic programs of the building (Figure 113). Figure 114 shows the circulation patterns through each level of the building for this population. The key to the success of the social integration of the building in the community is a physical transparency that allows people to pass beside, through and over the building without requiring to access any of its programs. The building transitions between functioning as a path at the sidewalk level, to a shopping mall at the ground level, and a community centre in the courtyard.

Fig. 116: Perspective of pedestrians circulating around the outside of the building.

Fig. 117: Building circulation diagram for pedestrians who are housed.
Fig. 118: Perspective of Van Horne St. as the rugged exterior of the building shields it's soft interior.
The life of the building for the pedestrian who is experiencing homelessness is quite similar to the experience for housed individuals aside from the nuanced challenges that accompany homelessness (Figure 115-116). The building’s physical transparency still allows for this population to pass alongside, through and over the site. However, for people experiencing homelessness, the public spaces in and around the building may become their temporary home, where even for just a couple hours they can sit and relax without feeling any exterior pressure judging their presence in the space. Homeless individuals may also spend all night at this location in the overnight shelter, allowing them to easily access the Samaritan Centre across the road for breakfast, or the heat inside Home: Sudbury in the winter months. Depending on their schedule, the homeless individuals could also use the area inside the ground level or outside at the podium level as a means to socialize with their community. As pedestrian traffic increases in the area, hidden homeless individuals are able to choose anonymity. When they become hungry, for example, they are able to enter the restaurant from the inside of the building and access free meals through the pay it forward system. Individuals experiencing homelessness can also access their social workers and case managers for appointments or job interviews at the resource center. Finally, they can use the maker space or library to keep themselves mentally occupied or use the exercise track or garden on the roof to physically occupy themselves. Ultimately, the building can become a centralized location for people experiencing homelessness to have access to the services they need, and can additionally offer activities and opportunities to help individuals socialize throughout the day.
Fig. 121: North South section of the building showing the relationships between interior and exterior courtyards, commercial and civic programs and domestic and public space.
Lastly, the life of the building as it is experienced by formerly homeless individuals who are able to live in its supportive housing units (Figure 127-128). Homelessness can be quite traumatizing. The effect of the trauma on these individuals can continue long after they are housed. Some individuals who were formerly homeless struggle to feel safe outside once they are housed for fear of what has happened to them before. This trauma can have a negative effect on the recovery of these individuals as they may begin to reclude and lose social skills. Life in the building must offer a balance of privacy and security for those who have experienced trauma and a safe and comfortable environment for activities to allow them to branch out. Each apartment unit opens up to a shared corridor that looks inwards towards the courtyard. Residents are connected immediately to each other and to the life of the building as they step out of their rooms. This connection can be mediated by a shade and privacy screen while individuals are in their rooms and by the wooden screen outside the corridor. The social, civic and commercial programs within the building can all be accessed by residents without having to leave the safety of the building as they adjust to their new situation. Activities run through these spaces are opportunities for residents to become familiar with the programs as well as each other. The common rooms and activity rooms on each floor are spaces where a sense of community can be fostered between the residents. Events can be both self-organized, organized through the building manager or by volunteer organizations, in effort to encourage socialization. As the residents become more comfortable in the building, opportunities will be made available through the garden and civic spaces as well. For example, the library and maker space could eventually employ residents as supervisors. These opportunities will allow the residents to take on new responsibilities within the facilities they use and share with the community. As every individual’s life journey varies up until they come into contact with the building, the architecture of Home: Sudbury is a celebration of this diversity coexisting.
Conclusion:

Architecture Addressing Homelessness

The aim of Home: Sudbury is to address the needs of the community, to help those experiencing homelessness and ultimately to end the experience of homelessness in Sudbury. I believe there will come a threshold where new units begin to open up in the building and that there will no longer be individuals experiencing homelessness in the area with the need to move in. At this point, the building will begin to cross over into a new life, where the inhabitants of the building could range from students to young families or even seniors—wherever the next largest need may be. As none of the programs being put in place are dependent on homelessness, the activities can simply be adjusted to appeal to the building’s new community. Although today the building is being designed for people experiencing homelessness, the building is not dependent on homelessness. As homelessness ends, the life of the building simply evolves to meet the next set of circumstances that requires a place to live. This is separating the individual from their circumstance. Home: Sudbury is a home to people, independent of their situation, so that they may find the strength and opportunities to overcome their conditions.

In proposing such an ambitious vision of the role architecture can play in addressing homelessness, it may become tempting to label this project utopian. I believe this would be a mistake. Architecture alone does not have the tools to end the experience of homelessness, which I have demonstrated by drawing on the field of sociology to show where the role of architecture ends and the role of the other various social, cultural and legal systems begins. The contribution of this thesis is meant to broaden the role of architecture; to acknowledge its responsibility to facilitate these social, cultural and legal systems. This new architecture cannot be completed solely by architects. It takes collaboration between designers, social workers, community members, policy makers and individuals with the passion and leadership to see these projects into reality. The broader implications of this work are not only applicable to Sudbury, Ontario nor just architecture that is addressing homelessness. What has been developed is a new mode of practicing architecture that is fundamentally cross-disciplinary, allowing buildings to maximize their positive effect on the life in and around them.

To begin the design of an artifact that represents the work of my thesis, I started with the physical manifestations of conflict that I was familiar with in downtown Sudbury, the signs that designated the area as an Ontario Smoke Free zone. These signs were posted on all faces of the buildings yet away from the buildings the signs were set up in specific locations that people previously used to congregate such as the alleys between the parking lot and transit terminal. Though the signs on the buildings were in good condition, it was the signs specifically placed in the face of those they were targeting that were vandalized. Yet the signs were not torn down or completely painted over or even defaced with profanity. The specific words on the signs that were hostile, such as trespassers, no smoking, or prosecuted, were scratched out. This vandalism is not reckless, it is a resistance specifically to the unfair laws that are being used to criminalize them.

To shift perspectives, we can look across the street from the transit terminal and see an Ontario Government building. At the entrance to the building are a considerable amount of no smoking and no loitering signs, and I have often seen security come out of the building to escort my friends from the homeless shelter off the property. Yet every couple of hours on any weekday you can find groups of 5 to 10 workers from inside the building standing in the same place and smoking the same cigarettes yet being left alone. I’ve even seen that group of people scoff at others being escorted away from the plaza across the street for the same reason they are outside in the first place. To the property owners and politicians who are writing bylaws such as Ontario Smoke Free, smoking is something that is a health hazard and used to degrade people. On the other hand, to the workers who come outside everyday smoking is their short break from work, or time to catch up with friends. Though they are aware of the health impact it is more of a social and personal act that they see as normal. Yet neither of these perspectives justify the mistreatment of people living on the street. If smoking is something to be looked down upon could it not be a shared burden that both sides of the street have and if it is something normal and social could it not be social on both sides of the street?

Coming from this research I have designed an object. An ashtray which should bring to light these two questions about what role smoking plays in the contemporary city and more specifically who is to be accommodated. The ashtray is a round wooden totem with a bowl carved out of the top which the sand and ashes lay in. The wood, a dense white oak has been charred black to give it a rugged and durable yet beautiful finish. The object is to be carried at the hip of its owner via a metal hook that extrudes from its back side. When the user of the object needs to have a smoke they need simply to find a place outside where they are comfortable and they can remove the object from their belt and use the metal hook to hang it beside them. The hook has been designed to fit behind any kind of sign affixed to a wall or fence and if there are no signs around the object and be easily balanced on the ground or between spikes on a curb. This object is not specifically designed for the homeless, the only requirement for someone to use this object is that they smoke. For example, someone living on the street who has been targeted by the smoking bylaws in the parking lot can simply wait for security to walk away and use the very signs that have been erected to affix the ashtray too and reinstates the social space that was once there. On the other hand, someone who works across the street can bring the object outside with them and affix it to the same signs and use it to collect their cigarette buds instead of leaving them on the street.

Culturally, the ashtray has had many different meanings. Historically in societies where smoking was seen as a delicacy ashtrays were symbols of status. Through the industrialization mass produced ashtrays were seen as a symbol of modernization. Yet today the ashtray has been diluted, its meaning split between its utilitarian function and the connotations associated with smoking. I see my object as a return to the cultural meaning of the ashtray. Yet it has a special meaning to those living on the street. Much like their vandalism this object hangs from the signs obscuring their message and rebuilding the social spaces they have been used to destroy. Through the juxtaposition of use on both sides of the street I see my ashtray as a totem, connecting these two groups on the foundation of our shared humanity.

Appendix A:

**Thesis Artifact: Ashtray**

Fig. 125: Collage of artifact in the built environment.

CONNECTION DETAIL
Fig. 126: Process of making artifact.
Fig. 127: The final artifact.
Appendix B: Furniture Construction Manual

DESCRIPTION:
A wardrobe with an integrated cantilevered desk that will be assembled for each room.

TOOLS:
- Circular saw
- Power Drill
- Jig saw
- Wood Glue

MATERIALS:
1 x: 4’x8’ 3/4” Baltic Birch Plywood
2 x: 4’x8’ 1/2” Baltic Birch Plywood
1 x: 4’ Length of 1” Steel Pipe
2 x: Steel Handles
4 x: Steel Hinges

Step 1:
Cut the sheets of plywood with the circular saw following these patterns. Once cut sand the pieces working from 150-300 grit and then apply a clear coat of varnish.

Step 2:
Take the two 24x72” pieces and use the circular saw to cut 3/4” wide groves at a depth of 1/4”. In one of the two pieces use a drill and jigsaw to cut a square hole 1/2” wide by 2” long just at the point designated in the second image below. Use the dimensions above to cut a slot in the top of two of the 9x24” pieces. Finally use a forstner bit to drill a 1” diameter hole in the centre of both 46x24” pieces 3” from one side.

Fig. 128: An example of the construction Manual for the wardrobe and integrated desk.
Step 3:
Begin to assemble the walls take the two pieces that you cut in the last step and find the shorter 24” pieces the correspond with the gaps between the grooves and glue them into place.

Step 4:
Next create each of the four shelves by stacking a 24”x46” piece on top of a 24x48” piece. Then assemble the body of the wardrobe by slotting the wider bottom of each shelf into the grooves on both of the doors and glue them into place. At the same time fit the 4’ length of pipe into the 1” holes on the inside of each wall.

Step 5:
Assemble the cantilevered desk by taking the 25.75” piece of 1/2” plywood and inserting it into the square hole you drilled into one of the walls in step 2. The piece should extend into the wardrobe under the third shelf and be left protruding 18”. Then take the remaining two 24x48” pieces and glue them together to create the desk top. Finally glue the desk top to the support protruding from the side of the wardrobe.

Step 6:
To complete the wardrobe construct the doors by attaching the hinges and handles to the remaining two 24x60” pieces of 1/2” plywood. The final wardrobe should now look like the image below.

FULLY ASSEMBLED WARDROBE
Bibliography:


Carol Kauppi (Professor at Laurentian University) in discussion with the author, December 2019.


Jeff Malin (Director of business development at Skid Row Housing Trust, Los Angeles, California) in discussion with the author, January 2020.

Kauppi, Carol, Bill O’Grady, Rebecca Schiff, and Fay Martin, eds. Homelessness and Hidden Homelessness in Rural and Northern Ontario. Guelph, ON: Rural Ontario Institute, 2017.

Kauppi, Carol. “Interviews Conducted by the Poverty, Homelessness and Migration Study.” Sudbury, n.d.


ARCHITECTURE
ADDRESSING
HOMELESSNESS