

PLANNING FOR CHANGE: An OPEN BUILDING workshop

A Joint workshop session proposal including:

- CIB W104 – Open Building Implementation
- the Council on Open Building (www.councilonopenbuilding.org)

Change of functions and floor plans of occupant spaces occur all the time in large buildings, in every country, because societies are dynamic, and technical standards and user preferences evolve. In projects that are planned initially for residential, educational, healthcare, office and retail use, investments in such changes per year – in the aggregate - are often larger than investments in new construction. But too often, such projects are not designed for change but are rigid, resulting in well-known conflict, waste, and negative social consequences. Without planning for change, meeting the goals of sustainability, resilience and a circular economy is severely undermined. Therefore, clients, design service professionals, public officials and builders urgently need to consider the inevitability of continual adaptation in their investment decisions, design methods and building practices.

This workshop will engage a group of 20 - 30 (+/-) participants from many design disciplines, in hands-on design exercises led by experts in the Open Building approach. The aim is to explore and understand basic principles in planning large buildings for change. Some groups will engage in ‘new-build’ exercises, others in transforming existing buildings. All exercises share the goal of exploring basic attitudes and decision-making processes based on Open Building principles. The workshop process is as follows:

- **30 minutes:** The participants will receive a brief overview of the Open Building approach with examples, an outline of the ‘rules or constraints of the game,’ as well as a brief analysis of the physical context within which building interventions (prepared specifically for this workshop) will be considered.
- **One hour:** Participants will be divided into small groups, each chaired by an expert in the Open Building approach. Each group will then discuss and produce a diagram an architectural infrastructure or long lasting (one hundred year) **BASE BUILDING** (core and shell or what is shared by all occupancies) for a new structure, or by adapting an existing structure. Permanent (common) features such as structural elements, fixed (shared) mechanical mains (vertical and horizontal), egress ways and all or parts of facades will be clearly delineated in the sketch designs. Thought will be given to how proposed **BASE BUILDING** schemes can accommodate **INFILL** decisions by others over the life of the Base Building.
- **One Hour:** Each of the **BASE BUILDING** sketch designs will be exchanged with a different group. The exercise will continue with explorations of the capacity of the proposed architectural infrastructure to accommodate **INFILL** decisions. **INFILL** (decisions made independently per occupancy) may change at any time (immediately or every generation or longer) without forcing the **BASE BUILDING** or other occupancies to change. **INFILL** changes may involve functions, floor plans and sub-systems such as pipe, wiring and duct installations, as well as parts of facades identified as **INFILL** elements.
- **30 minutes:** With one **INFILL** decision in mind, groups will then consider more mutable equipment (i.e. furniture components) that can be changed and reconfigured to support evolving use requirements within even shorter time periods, without forcing **INFILL** to change.
- **30 minutes:** Finally, lessons learned by way of the exchanges between groups will be discussed and shared.

The workshop process is iterative and exploratory. Sketch designs will be consensus-based, promoting open discussion, and sharing of ideas and experience. The duration of the workshop, including the half hour introduction, will be three or four hours.