



Cultural Heritage & Museums

Reimagining Community Inside the City

An ambitious cooperative housing project is taking shape in Budapest's rapidly changing 8th district with goals of providing affordable homes, community support services, and sustainable shared spaces.

A bold urban experiment is taking shape in Budapest's rapidly gentrifying 8th district. The "Cooperative Ownership for Communities" project aims to transform a rundown four-story factory building into a sustainable, mixed-use housing complex owned and operated by its residents. At the heart of the concept is a cooperatively owned structure designed through close collaboration with the diverse groups who will ultimately live and work there. Two floors will provide affordable transitional housing tailored to supporting vulnerable populations. One will house women and children escaping domestic violence or human trafficking situations, offering not just a safe home but also counselling services and community support for healing and reintegration. Another floor will host dorm-style accommodations for students hailing from rural areas and underrepresented backgrounds. Rounding out the residential component will be rental units priced at below-market rates to maintain economic diversity. But the complex aims to be much more than just housing.

The ground floor will house subsidized office spaces for local non-profits, co-working areas, and flexible community rooms hosting everything from art exhibits to urban gardening workshops. And in the basement, a unique feature - a distribution hub for a regional food co-op providing affordable, locally sourced produce. Sustainable building strategies like solar panels, green walls, and geothermal HVAC will also drastically reduce the complex's environmental impact. The project team plans to engage residents in participatory design processes to ensure the physical spaces evolve alongside their needs. With its bold cooperative ownership model and holistic approach to urban living, this pioneering concept could catalyze

more inclusive, democratic, and sustainable housing solutions across Hungary and beyond.

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This story is part of the Special Feature on the New Bauhaus Awards 2024.

Find out more at the New Bauhaus website: [Cooperative Ownership for Communities: Creating a multi-functional cooperative space for communities from a brownfield site in Budapest](#)