



THE ULTIMATE CHEAT SHEET ON WELLBEING IN SENIOR LIVING

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Wellbeing Basics	3
The Research	4
The Application	5
Wellness in Real Estate	7
Certification Programs	11
Implementation	15
Special Offers	16
Author's Note	17

INTRODUCTION

There is a wide body of research that bears witness to the therapeutic value of nature. This is why exterior design and the development of garden settings for people to enjoy is “on-purpose” for us. Our firm’s Purpose Statement is this: ***We exist to serve by enhancing wellbeing through PLACE-Creation.*** We plan and design outdoor spaces that positively contribute to people’s health and wellbeing.

We have compiled this “Cheat Sheet” to quickly highlight some of what is transpiring in the market today, so that you can jump-start and hopefully talk with us about opportunities to enhance the lives of the residents, their families, and your staff by developing purposeful outdoor spaces. Enjoy!

WELLBEING BASICS

The Center for Health and Wellbeing in Winter Park, Florida outlines the 7 Dimensions of Wellbeing¹ :

Physical Wellbeing: *Move More. Eat Better*

Intellectual Wellbeing: *Boost Your Brain*

Environmental Wellbeing: *Love the Earth*

Vocational Wellbeing: *Live with Purpose*

Social Wellbeing: *Connect with Others*

Emotional Wellbeing: *Practice Gratitude*

Spiritual Wellbeing: *Nourish Your Soul*



Do these sound like they are of interest to Boomer as they age? We'd say so. And there are a myriad of ways to creatively plan and develop outdoor spaces that hit on all of these.

¹ <https://wellbeingnetwork.org/7dimensions/>

THE RESEARCH

What The Research Is Telling Us

Each year, the **Mather LifeWays Institute on Aging** publishes its report on the Innovative Research on Aging Awards. For 2018, one of the Silver Awards caught our attention:

Fighting Brain Drain: *Slowing the Aging Brain's Neural Decline with Dance*

Researchers from Colorado State University set out to determine which physical activities are most promising in maintaining brain and cognitive health in later life. Their discovery:

“

*... only the Dance Intervention
reversed age-related changes to the
brain. “*

THE APPLICATION

A photograph of a person's legs and feet walking on a grassy field. The person is wearing a white, knee-length dress and red-and-white striped wedge sandals. The background is a soft-focus green field under bright, natural light.

Our application of that research: **Design a space for Dancing in the Streets!** It doesn't have to be elaborate.

In the mid to late '70s, Christopher Alexander and his colleagues wrote a groundbreaking book called [A Pattern Language](#). Their theories were focused on a deep sense of well-being – a “deeper psychological and emotional comfort, in which people could feel their existence as human beings”.² They outlined a number of timeless patterns observed throughout the history of developing the built environment.

² <https://www.firstthings.com/article/2016/02/making-the-garden>

Here's what they had to say about the Pattern called #63: Dancing in the Streets³ :

- ❑ “Why is it that people don't dance in the streets today? . . . ‘dancing in the street’ is an image of supreme joy.”
- ❑ “ Along promenades, in squares and evening centers make a slightly raised platform to form a bandstand, where street musicians and local bands can play. Cover it, and perhaps build in at ground level tiny stalls for refreshment. Surround the bandstand with paved surface for dancing – no admission charge.”

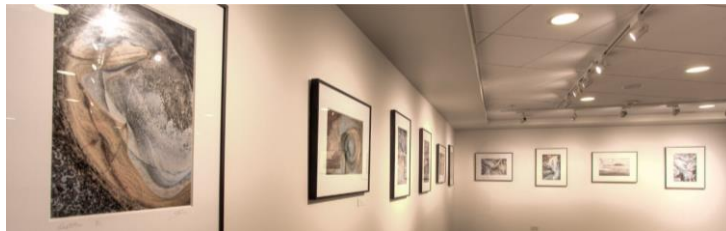


³ Excerpted and summarized from [A Pattern Language](#)

WELLNESS IN REAL ESTATE

The International WELL Building Institute™ delivers the cutting-edge WELL Building Standard™, the leading global rating system and the first to be focused exclusively on the ways that buildings, and everything in them, can improve our comfort, drive better choices, and generally enhance, not compromise, our health and wellness.

One of the projects pursuing WELL Certification is the Frasier – a vibrant life plan community in Boulder Colorado, which, prior to embarking on this new initiative, was devastated by flooding in 2013. Their master plan expansion complex will include a new 98-apartment independent living building, an expanded wellness and fitness center, exercise and warm water therapy pools, a new arts and education center with art gallery, exhibit space and theater, and beautifully-landscaped resident gardens.



REAL ESTATE BENCHMARKING AND TRENDS

GRESB

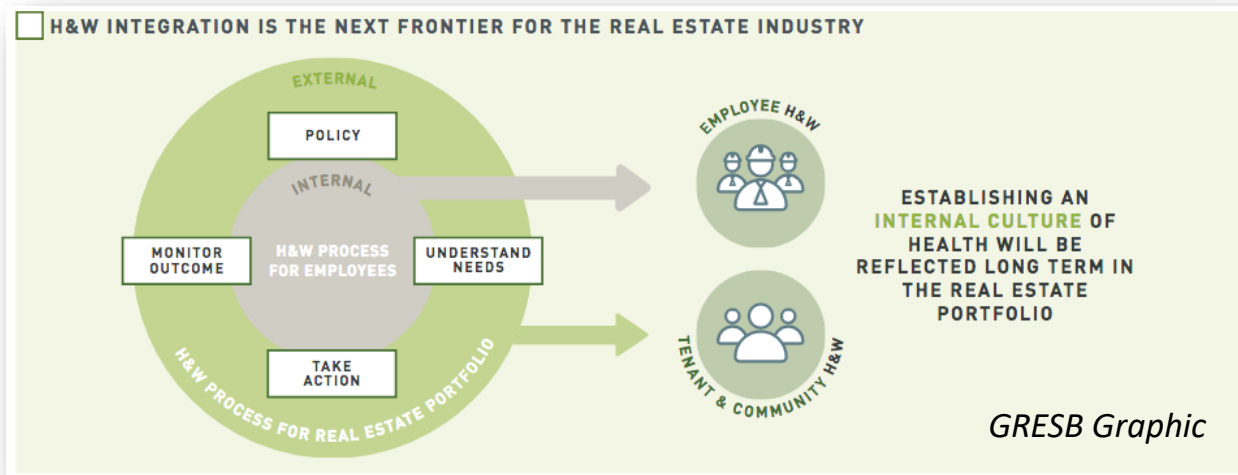
GRESB is the environmental, social and governance (ESG) benchmark for real assets. Like LEED does for better buildings, and SITES for developing sustainable land, GRESB involves an assessment and scoring system. Of particular interest for this Cheat Sheet is the **Health and Well-Being Module**. Check it out.

According to GRESB, it would benefit your organization:

- Better understanding of where you currently stand on health promotion for your employees, tenants and customers.
- Clearer picture of how your actions to promote health and wellbeing compare with those of your peers.
- Improved opportunity to attract new investors, including long-term investors and investors seeking to incorporate health and wellbeing into their ESG analysis.



- ❑ Greater knowledge of the actions you can take to build an effective, comprehensive and measurable corporate wellness program.
- ❑ Insight into how to best capitalize on health-related opportunities, such as increased productivity, tenant retention and reduction in the rate of complaints.
- ❑ Better understanding of the actions you can take to improve your health and well-being programs and performance in the most efficient way.
- ❑ Recognition that you have taken a significant step towards leadership on health and well-being.
- ❑ More consistent messaging about the actions you are taking on health and well-being to your investors and stakeholders.





BOMA, the Building Owners and Managers Association , is also delving into this trend toward wellbeing. They recently had a session on both the WELL Building Standard and the Fitwell Certification Program, using a cost/benefit analysis. Their BOMA 360 Performance Program sets the standard for operational best practices in the commercial real estate industry. GRESB recognized the BOMA 360 Performance Program as the green certification for individual building operations. *(While GRESB is a portfolio-level standard for ESG, BOMA 360 focuses on individual building operations).*

CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

WELL

WELL: The International WELL Building Institute

TEN CONCEPTS



AIR



WATER



NOURISHMENT



LIGHT



MOVEMENT



THERMAL
COMFORT



SOUND



MATERIALS



MIND



COMMUNITY

Graphic from the WELL v2 Public Deck

Copyright© 2018 by International WELL Building Institute PBC. All rights reserved.

This program is about developing better buildings to help people thrive.

WELL v2 is founded on the following principles⁴ :

- Equitable: *Provides the greatest benefit to the largest number of people, inclusive of all demographic and economic groups and with special consideration to less advantaged or vulnerable populations.*
- Global: *Proposes interventions that are feasible, achievable and relevant across many applications throughout the world. WELL v2 offers regionally appropriate pathways for meeting health intents based on where projects are located.*
- Evidence-based: *Undergirded by strong, validated research leading to conclusions that can reasonably be accepted by the scientific community.*



⁴ <https://v2.wellcertified.com/>

❑ Technically robust: *Draws upon industry best practices and proven strategies, offering consistency in findings across the relevant field or discipline.*

❑ Customer focused: *Defines program requirements through a dynamic development process, with multiple opportunities for stakeholder*

engagement, and by tapping engagement, and by tapping the expertise of established leaders in science, health, business, design and operations.

❑ Resilient: *Responds to advances in scientific knowledge and technology, continuously adapting and integrating new findings in the field.*

The WELL program sets preconditions that must be met and outlines a number of additional optimizations that can be achieved. It involves a scoring system, with differing levels of achievement (Silver, Gold, and Platinum) that can be met, based on the % of applicable optimizations you achieve *the expertise of established leaders in science, health, business, design and operations.*

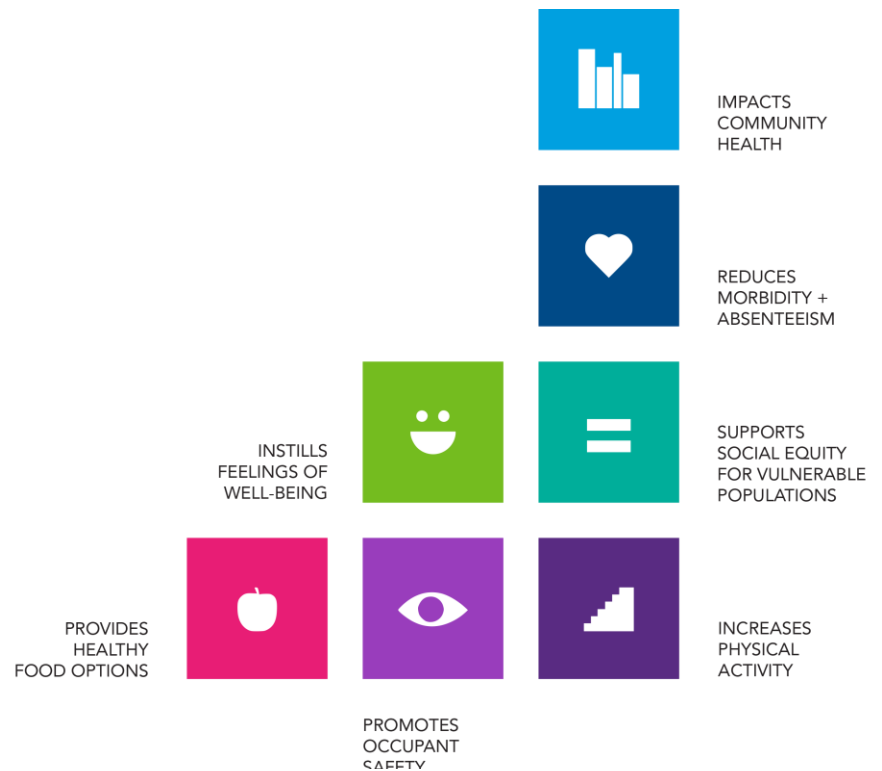


FITWEL

FITWEL is another certification system that optimizes buildings to support health. Things I like about Fitwel are:

- ❑ It deals with the Walkscore® of the site.
- ❑ Building access is included.
- ❑ There are 9-10 items dealing specifically with outdoor spaces in the project.
- ❑ The program is research-based.

Like WELL, Fitwel has different types of levels (1 star, 2 stars, or 3 stars) depending on the number of points scored. The scorecards include over 55 evidence-based and operational strategies that enhance buildings by addressing a broad range of health behaviors and risks. Fitwel addresses health as an interconnected system, with no single dominant category or area of focus. All strategies are voluntary, with no individual prerequisites⁵.



⁵ <https://fitwel.org/standard>

IMPLEMENTATION

Integrated, Multi-Disciplinary Design Approach

In order to effectively plan and design an environment that enhances wellbeing, it is necessary to embrace a comprehensive approach, incorporating a wide range of specialists in the process.

Planners	Architects	Landscape architects
Gerontologists	MEP Engineers	Interior Designers
Occupational Therapists	Operators	Horticultural Therapists
Financial Specialists	Contractors	Marketing Team

Researchers should also be at the table with the team so that the design is evidence-based and grounded.

We have found that a helpful tool is to begin by formulating a set of **Guiding Beliefs** at the inception of the project. These can serve as a compass, pointing to true north, when you find yourselves mired in the weeds and unable to focus on the big picture. For example, one such Belief from the award-winning work our team did at The Cottages at Cypress Cove, a state-of-the-art memory care environment, was that ***“It’s the residents’ home”***. This truth has a number of key ramifications, in terms of design expression.

SPECIAL OFFERS

- ✓ The single most important decision you will make is who will be on your Design Team. Design professionals can save you significant costs over the life of your senior living project through the services they provide.

Download our e-book:
**How to Select the Right
Design Team**

- ✓ Wellness is the new Sustainability Movement, impacting people's lives through their health, happiness, and productivity. Exterior Design has a huge impact on wellness in the aging services industry.

Read more about **Why Wellbeing
is Essential in Senior Living**

- ✓ Keeping the "main thing" the Main Thing is not always an easy task. Establishing a set of Guiding Principles can help you reorient to true north!

Read our blog:
**How To Stay Out of the Weeds
During Project Planning**

AUTHOR'S NOTE

How can we help you maximize your potential in the marketplace? We'd like to learn more about how we can help you achieve great things – whether that involves planning new construction, making repairs or renovations, or completely repositioning your product offering. Let's have a conversation soon.

Let's Talk

What others are saying about us:

<http://ccrclifecast.com/2017/08/15/sustainability-in-senior-living/>

<http://seniorhousingnews.com/2017/07/12/senior-living-operators-can-borrow-disney-design/>

<http://ccrclifecast.com/2017/07/31/senior-living-landscape-design/>

For More Information:

PLACE Creation™

Planning • Lifestyle • Aesthetics • Community • Economics

Specializing in Exterior Design for Senior Living Communities

Brad Smith Associates
P.O. Box 830250
Ocala, FL 34483-0250
321-724-1026
www.BSAPlanning-Design.com

