

Supportive Housing and Community Investment

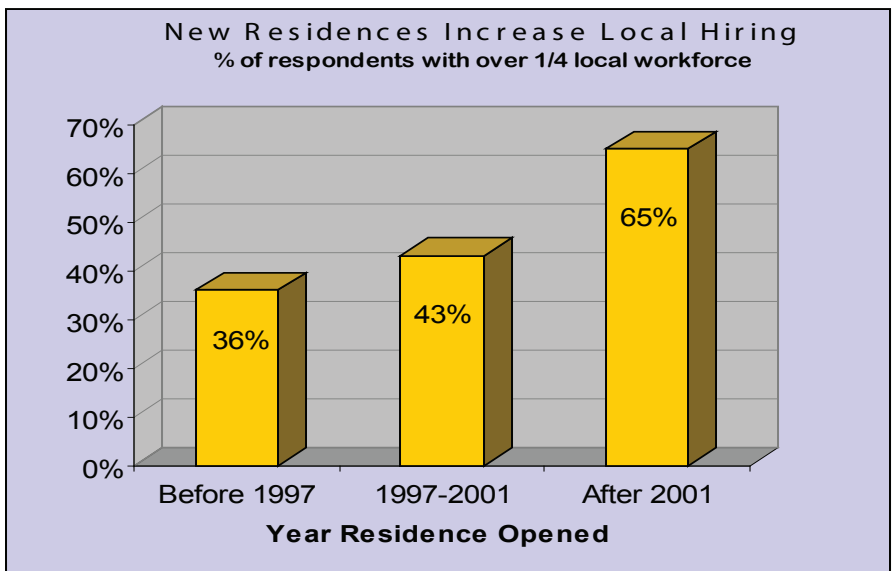
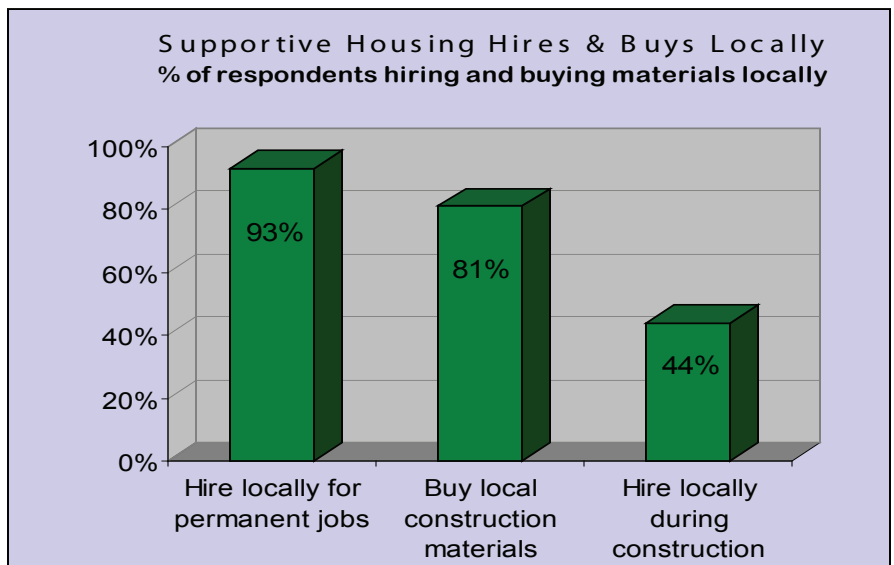
Results from the Supportive Housing Community Benefits Survey

For tenants of supportive housing, the benefits of having a permanent, affordable apartment with services on site couldn't be clearer. What many neighbors of supportive housing don't realize is that these residences also benefit surrounding communities. In late 2007, the Supportive Housing Network of New York conducted a survey of its New York City members to identify steps taken by supportive housing providers to strengthen the communities where their tenants live. The survey was sent to all of the Network's NYC supportive housing providers asking what types of community benefits their residences offer.

The 63 agencies that completed our survey demonstrated an impressive level of community involvement. Many residences hire a significant proportion of their workforce locally, and many more share resources like meeting spaces and programs with the surrounding community. Supportive housing providers also promote broader goals like civic engagement and environmental improvement by participating in community groups and utilizing green design.

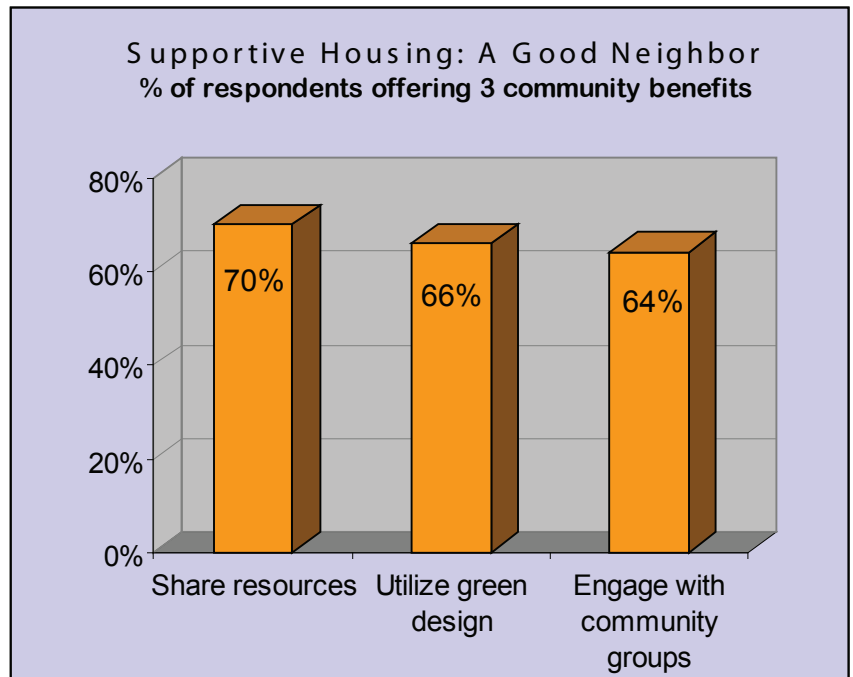
The following are the most striking benefits we found:

- Of survey respondents, 93% hire locally for permanent staff positions. Almost half of sites (44%) hire locally during construction. Among those providers that hire locally, two-thirds draw more than 25% of their construction workforce from the surrounding community.
- Many supportive housing agencies also buy their construction materials locally, supporting the local economy.
- Newer buildings hire more local staff, with over 60% of residences built after 2001 drawing more than a quarter of their workers from neighborhoods nearby.
- Over 40% of these newer buildings hire at least half of their permanent staff locally. More than a quarter of all respondents hire the majority of their permanent staff locally.



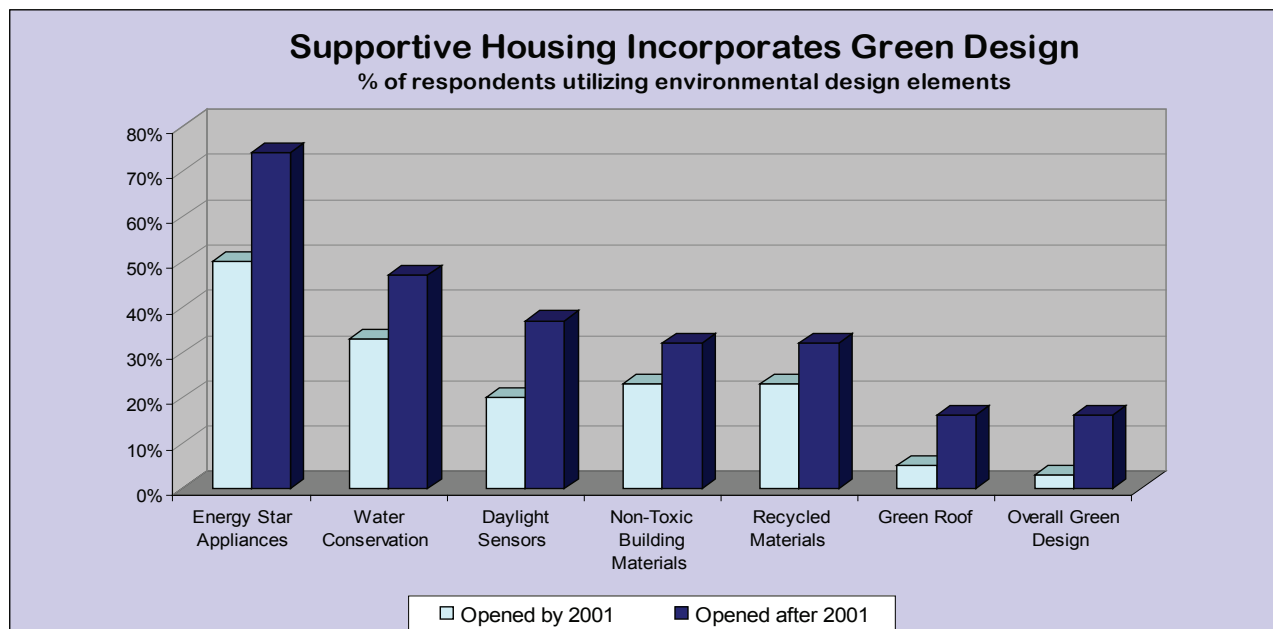
- 70% of respondents share resources such as meeting space, programming and educational assets like libraries and computer labs with the community. This trend is on the rise with newer buildings: among those opened after 2001, over 80% share resources with the community.

- The most commonly shared resource is meeting space: 60% overall offer meeting space to community groups, and this proportion has grown to 76% in residences built after 2001. Residences open their space for a variety of uses, including art shows, community supported agriculture groups, food pantries and community events like health fairs and job fairs.



- Supportive housing providers and tenants take an active role in the communities they live in. Over 60% of sites have staff or tenants engaging in community board meetings, precinct council meetings and other community activities such as voter registration, food and clothing drives, and local fundraising events.

- Supportive housing residences integrate environmental sustainability into their mission by employing green design principles and features. Resource-saving elements include water-conserving faucet fixtures, sensor-operated lights and Energy Star appliances to reduce electricity waste, and non-toxic construction materials that reduce pollution of the surrounding environment. As shown below, newer buildings (those opened during the Bloomberg Administration) have significantly increased their implementation of green design components.



For more information about the relationship between supportive housing and surrounding communities, see the comprehensive NYU Furman Center study on the impact of supportive housing developments on property values around New York City. It is available on our website, www.shnny.org, along with a variety of other resources related to supportive housing and community outreach, on the page “What is Supportive Housing?”