ABSTRACT


STUDENT: Kristy Hatton

DEGREE: Master of Arts in Interior Design

COLLEGE: Applied Sciences and Technology

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The mortality rate for the senior population increases when their place of residence transitions into a space that lacks ease of movement and familiarity. Current senior housing options include retirement communities, assisted living, and nursing homes. Recent trends like ‘smart growth living’ were developed to deinstitutionalize the aging in place concept in communities to increase their sense of comfort, privacy, and independence. However, the process of institutionalization can also be interpreted as a service notion or a particular strategy for physical planning. Likewise, it connotes a negative perception when seniors are living in the community and segregated from mainstream society through intolerances on attitudes, lack of safety, and inadequate support to facilitate integration. Given the illustrated shortfalls in current typologies of senior housing, this creative project investigated the design context of aging in place with particular focus of using one’s own home to identify issues, practices and innovative support systems. The aging in place approach provides various benefits to the senior population as they live in the comfort of their re-designed existing homes. Good
practices associated to modifications indicate the removal of architectural barriers and increase of safety measures to allow seniors to remain in their homes and retain full independence, control, flexibility of movement, sense of purpose, and preservation of integrity. The purpose of this creative project was to identify the attitudes toward senior citizens through published literature, study several aging in place models, and examine the significance of place theory in association to senior citizens. The methodology for this project utilized the methodology known as evidence based design, visual mapping of products related to the senior population, and a residential housing assessment using post-occupancy evaluation charts. The results of this creative project serve as an additional blueprint for studies on aging in place. The identified prevalent issues were translated into workable guidelines that may possibly enlighten professional designers and design students. Moreover, the gathered information of good practices may potentially inform healthcare specialists and other family members to understand further the positive impact of smart living for seniors. Lastly, the study also increases the level of awareness on design issues for elder-friendly environments and communities, and establishes the benefits of aging in place that may possibly decrease mortality rate among seniors.