

# Exploring “Community” in Multi-Family Communities

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## Overview

### Considerations

- 33% of Americans live in multi-family (apartment) housing.
- Property management consultants advocate for greater community in these multi-family properties.
- Specifically, consultants argue greater community will reduce turnover expense.

### Research Questions

- Do residents value a strong sense of community?
- How might a property manager create a sense of community at their properties?
- How do they measure strength of community?
- Does a strong sense of community equate to a reduction in turnover?

## Methods

To explore community in multi-family rental housing, this Capstone relied on a two-step analysis:

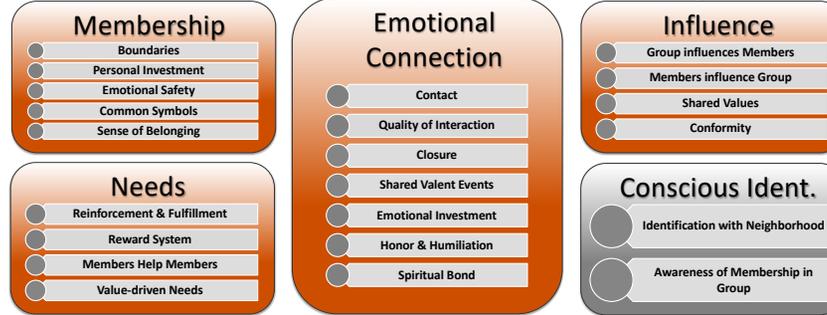
- A literary review of existing research related to the concepts of community in housing and the problem of turnover.
- A qualitative analysis of 15 articles recommending community in multi-family housing.

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## Five Factors Affecting a Sense of Community



## Conclusions

Do multi-family renters desire community?

**YES!**

Can property managers create a sense of community in the properties they manage?

**YES!**

Can we measure the sense of community among residents at a property?

**YES!**

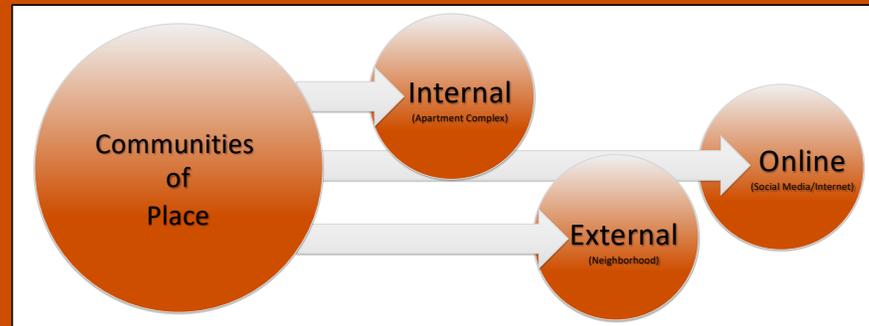
Does greater community lead to reduced turnover? **UNSUPPORTED.**

### What does it all mean?

Industry insiders advocate for greater community. While research does not support linking greater community with reduced turnover expenses, managers *can* establish and improve a sense of community within their properties. Most managers already view community building as fundamental to their role. Strengthening community-building efforts will help property managers better perform their roles and meet customer needs.

### To create community, managers should:

- Define what “community” means for their property. In what ways do staff *and* residents desire community from both an emotional and a physical perspective?
- Expand community-building efforts beyond hosting events. Community building should address the four factors of the sense of community.
- Managers should incorporate online spaces (social media and web) to build community.
- Avoid the trap of community as a consumable. Community building is not an end-goal but rather an improvement to existing customer service processes.



## Literature Cited

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## Further Information

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