

A call to action

We ended our conversation with Jayde offering a broad approach and call to action for everyone in the housing ecosystem.

Jayde:

I think the biggest thing that I would kind of push forward is that when we talk about building these kinds of spaces, we've only started doing them recently, right? It's only now that, for example, CMHC is saying, okay, we want to put 15% accessible suites in these builds. But they're using outdated information currently, which is a bit tough. And they're not thinking about diverse disabilities maybe as much as mobility disabilities. I think the biggest thing for me to keep in mind as we're moving forward is we're already behind the curve. 15% accessible units right now, when we're in massive housing shortages across pretty much the entire world, but the country, for sure. Thinking about affordable accessible housing, there's no reason not to build in accessibility. The biggest thing I can say around accessibility is it benefits everyone. When done right, it benefits everyone. There's no reason not to do it, you know, just really pushing back at those misconceptions and helping people understand, yeah, okay, you have to think about it a little bit differently. You know they all have suppliers, for example, with the stoves. We'll come back to this example. Everybody that is building a multi-unit residential building has a supplier for their stoves, and they buy the same model of stove, and they throw it on all of their builds, all of their suites. But that one is the standard range with the controls at the back and the door opens, and somebody, maybe, who's not able to bend, lean, and reach can't use the oven. So then they go and buy a toaster oven. Or the microwaves, you know, up above the range, and you can't reach it. And so all of these hazards, and it's like with one small change choosing a range with the knobs at the front. you've increased your accessibility across every build. It's not more ugly, it's not more expensive, and it works for everyone, right? And so it's more about changing, I think the thought process and it can be uncomfortable the 1st time somebody pushes into that new realm. But then, after they've done it once, typically, the response is, Oh, that was actually really easy, I didn't understand, it could be that way. And then, you know, sort of the light bulb goes off. And I would love to see more of that. I love when builders really get into accessibility.