



Building Better Homes and Communities

www.actprogram.com

Affordability and Choice Today

ACT Solutions

Development Process Information Seminars Timmins, Ontario

Incentive

In spring 2002, the City of Timmins' Community Development Department (Building, Planning and Economic Development) staged an information session for the local construction industry. Many industry members were not up to date on municipal planning processes and had been providing inaccurate information on permit applications. Also, many were not aware of new products and procedures that could be used following Ontario's introduction of new regulations.

Those in attendance felt there was much value in this type of gathering. They wanted more of them and suggested numerous topics for discussion.

Plan

In response, the City decided to host additional seminars in 2003 for builders, developers, contractors, architects, engineers and suppliers. Working in partnership with the Timmins Construction Association, the City developed plans to:

- ❑ create a better understanding of the roles of the approval authority and the industry
- ❑ educate builders on regulatory changes
- ❑ expedite review and approvals of applications through better industry knowledge and understanding of requirements.

The ultimate goal of the seminars was to improve the working relationship between the construction industry and municipal staff. In turn, this would result in smoother and faster project approvals and improve the quality of construction.

Project team

City of Timmins Community Development Department
Timmins Construction Association
Board members

Results

The partnership between the City and the Timmins Construction Association was key to developing



Construction industry members benefit from a series of seminars on regulatory changes and other building and planning topics.

Source: City of Timmins

content for the seminar series. The partners identified industry problems, concerns and questions with respect to the City's building and planning processes. These issues became topics for the seminars, which were organized around two themes — building matters and planning.

So many topics were identified that the project team decided it needed seven sessions instead of the four originally planned. The planning sessions covered various aspects of site plan control agreements,

It could work for you!

Program Partners:



the Official Plan and zoning by-laws. The seminars focusing on building issues included the following topics:

- ❑ combustible piping systems;
- ❑ expansion and contraction issues;
- ❑ mould problems; and
- ❑ building codes.

Most of the 211 people who attended the seminars came from the construction industry. There were also a number of students from Northern College who are in the school's construction management program. The City also invited municipal staff and construction industry members from small, neighbouring communities, and a handful of these individuals also attended.

A major challenge for organizers was convincing the builders who most needed the training to sign up. These builders repeatedly encountered problems when seeking approvals. Special encouragement from industry peers and City officials, well in advance of the sessions, proved to be a good strategy in getting them to attend.

According to Mark Jensen, the City's Director of Community Development, the seminar project met all its key objectives.

"We have seen a notable improvement in the quality of the site and building plans coming into the City for approval as a result of the seminars," said Mr. Jensen.

"This means it takes less of our time to review and approve them, which saves us time and money. We have also experienced more positive relations with our construction industry stakeholders as a result of sharing information and working more closely together," he said.

There is also a better understanding of how legislative changes affect the industry and how new products can be used to meet those changes.

Mr. Jensen said these types of seminars should have been held years ago because ongoing education and professional development in construction related fields are hard to come by in a northern community. Based on this success, the City and the Construction Association are planning to stage ongoing seminars in the future.

Related report

Timmins Development Process Information Seminar Series (City of Timmins, 2004)

This report is available from the ACT website. See "ACT projects & solutions".

Contact

John Hoffren,
Municipal Coordinator
City of Timmins
jhoffren@city.timmins.on.ca
(705) 360-1350

Affordability and Choice Today

Got a housing regulatory issue? ACT may already have a solution! Find out about ACT regulatory reform projects carried out across Canada:

www.actprogram.com

ACT Administration

c/o The Federation of Canadian Municipalities
Tel: 613-241-5221 ext. 242
Fax: 613-244-1515
E-mail: info@actprogram.com

The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements recognizes ACT as a top global best practice for improving the living environment.

ACT is sponsored by CMHC.

It could work for you!