



Building Better Homes and Communities

www.actprogram.com

Affordability and Choice Today

ACT Solutions

Setting the Stage for Innovative, Affordable Homes on Mountainous Terrain Hope, British Columbia

Issue

Residents of the District of Hope, BC, wanted a fuller range of housing types that would be attractive to newcomers representing a wide range of income groups. Outdated zoning bylaws and residential development guidelines stood in the way. They did not provide guidance on developing housing on mountainous terrain, sustainable development, innovative servicing or environmental sensitivity.

Plan

The ACT project team mapped out a two-stage initiative to revise Hope's bylaws and procedures.

First, using workshops, the team consulted with housing industry and other community stakeholders to obtain input on the problem and how to solve it. The goal was to create consensus for and write a new housing strategy. This phase let builders, developers and community groups buy into the process and the strategy.

The second stage involved preparing new zoning and residential development guidelines for submission to Council.

Project team

District of Hope
George Ronmark, developer and builder
Sheltair Limited, consultants in energy conservation
Michael Van Hausen, urban designer and landscape architect

Results

The project team's extensive and forward-looking final report, *New Housing Strategies: Creating Policy and Streamlining Bylaws*, planted the seeds for a new housing strategy. Hope has created a supportive and proactive housing development environment, in collaboration with the private sector and other community partners, that combines affordability strategies with housing design and policy innovations.



Hope, 200 km northeast of Vancouver, needed to change outdated regulations to encourage a broader range of housing types.

Source: District of Hope

A central feature of the study was a 'Smart and Sustainable' housing strategy that created four geographic areas of housing:

- ❑ Central Business District that permits a new mixed use zone, encouraging mixed housing and commercial uses;
- ❑ Peninsula area surrounding the downtown that allows new coach houses, small lot (infill) zoning and townhouse zoning, encouraging intensification close to downtown on underutilized lots or parcels;

It could work for you!

Program Partners:



- ❑ Urban Edge area that permits new small lot housing and coach houses; and
- ❑ Urban Fringe areas that provide for some small lot infill, but primarily cluster development where appropriate.

Seven case studies were prepared illustrating innovative ways for the private sector to introduce new affordable housing choices to the Hope housing market. The case studies identified zoning provisions for the following housing forms:

- 1) granny flats or coach houses and secondary suites;
- 2) infill and narrow lot (small lot housing);
- 3) infill and duplex;
- 4) apartment, seniors and live/work;
- 5) riverfront conservation development (small lot and townhouse);
- 6) strata and small lot;
- 7) and cluster conservation development.

Environmental considerations were taken into account, namely vegetation, water, wildlife, soils, air quality, energy efficiency and waste recycling. Financial implications for each example in the seven case studies were also considered, as were economic benefits and revenue generation possibilities.

These case studies demonstrated that private sector housing solutions could provide homeownership housing for households with annual incomes as low as \$50,000. Granny flats and coach houses could provide rental housing for households whose incomes are in the \$20,000 (granny flats) to \$40,000 (coach house) range.

“The Hope housing market is still firmly grounded in single-dwelling housing solutions,” the project team stated in their report to Council. “Innovative (unconventional), well designed, and affordable housing alternatives must be pursued if the District is to increase the supply of affordable housing in Hope.

“Educating developers to the market opportunities, the public to the quality of neighborhoods and housing that could be created and helping households see the financial merits of pursuing these and other innovative housing solutions is the key to ensuring that a place for these housing forms is found in Hope.”

The District of Hope’s Council wholeheartedly endorsed the project team’s report, and staff prepared the necessary amendments to both the Official Community Plan and zoning bylaws.

“We rezoned a property for a duplex unit which basically fits [the duplex lots case study],” says District of Hope Director of Community Development Scott Misumi.

New zoning for apartment, senior and live/work housing, as outlined in one of the report’s case studies, has been used by a community group to obtain funding for their project, he says, adding: “Many other concepts are currently being considered but this case study proved to be very useful.”

Two other case studies have also been considered. A request for proposals regarding a riverfront conservation development was issued and discussions have been held on pursuing an urban edge greenfield development.

Related reports

New Housing Strategies: Creating Policy and Streamlining Bylaws (District of Hope, 2005)

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

Contact

Scott Misumi, A.S.C.T.
Director of Community Development
District of Hope
smisumi@hope.ca
(604) 869-5671
Toll Free: 1-866-226-HOPE (4673)
Fax: (604) 869-2275

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.

2006

It could work for you!