

Item 10.3.2



Increasing Access to Affordable Housing in Rural HRM Using ADUs / Backyard Suites

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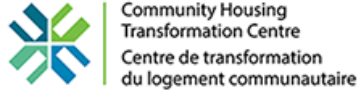


Study on Role of Education in Using ADUs in Increasing Access to Affordable Housing in Rural HRM, finished recently

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Community Housing Growth Fund
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Key Findings



1 | Education is critical to increase the use of ADUs

Expected finding, but HIC was asked to do the study to confirm its hypothesis that educational support is critical to enable greater use of ADUs / Backyard Suites to increase variety & # of affordable housing options in rural communities

2 | Property Owners are afraid of the commitment & risks involved w/ ADUs

Unexpected finding of the study which looked at barriers & incentives as part of what kind of education might be needed. To address this HIC feels education is required, but also an intermediary like an ADU-based Housing Co-op

3 | ADU Policies & Programs need to be in better alignment

A preliminary review of HRM & Provincial policies and programs designed to enhance the use of ADUs found many of these policies and programs are not well aligned or informed by an HRM rural specific housing needs assessment

Times have changed, and are changing...

In the past, concentration of growth in the core made sense to limit expenses for services such as sewer, water, roads, etc.

This restriction on rural growth though no longer makes sense post-pandemic.

For inspiration, we recommend checking out Witchcliffe development in Australia which considers economic development as well as housing, the environment and population growth in a very holistic way.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bWmmBv_N0JM&t=1288s



**WITCHCLIFFE
ECOVILLAGE**

Restrictions on Rural HRM Out-of-Whack!

- Recommendation in Regional Plan Review is to reduce growth targets from 25% to 10%,
- Growth is still being concentrated in urban / suburban communities and has been for years,
- Technology post-pandemic does allow now for remote work and less commuting for work, and
- Rural HRM is recognized as an important asset to attracting people and businesses to HRM.



Restrictions on Rural HRM Out-of-Whack!



- Rural HRM has 8 Regional Growth Centres identified under the Regional Plan, but growth in these areas is still being limited despite the need for and desire for growth in these areas
- In MH, a 2006 Vision and 2014 Community Development Plan called for policies then to support an increase in the variety of housing to enable older adults / seniors to age-in-place as well as to retain and attract younger people to the area

Key Recommendations



- 1) A specifically Rural HRM Housing Needs Assessment needs to be done to enable the development of appropriate goals, policies & programs, and the evaluation of progress towards those goals
 - i. Should include asking various nonprofits if they are noticing more people moving to rural areas / often living illegally because they cannot find housing in urban / suburban areas



Key Recommendations

2). Growth targets for Rural HRM should not be reduced, or at least not for regional growth centres, because it sends a message to HRM staff and other stakeholders that HRM only cares about urban / suburban growth. It also ignore the desires expressed in various community consultation exercises (ie. MH Vision)

- i. ie. CMHC Co-op Housing Program is requiring 75 units for a development in MH because their definition of rural is based on their understanding that HRM's priority is urban development (not rural)



Key Recommendations

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- 3) Consult widely, frequently and constantly to understand what people of a variety of backgrounds and socio-economic groups want and need, and review frequently how populations in rural areas of HRM are changing.
 - 4). Recognize there are new ways of creating communities that are more holistic (ie. Witchcliffe), and that make the most of new technology.
 - 5). Support the agency of people across HRM to create healthy communities that do not necessarily need a lot of infrastructure \$ to create communities focused on well-being for all including the planet (ie. Musgo Rider Transportation Co-operative).



Next Steps! for Housing Innovation Co-op



1. Development of ADU educational programs,
2. Planning for development of an ADU-based Housing Co-op; looking into leasing of land from individual property owners to add an ADU to their property, and
3. Development of 'tiny home' / ADU-based pocket neighbourhoods in rural communities, (staff report re: RVs & building codes could be gamechanger in this, but need to change policies re: campgrounds to match).



