

Best Practice

Municipal Collaboration to Address Housing Shortage

CONTACT

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THE PRACTICE

There existed a shortage of quality housing in the community of Gull Lake. The RMs of Gull Lake, Webb, Carmichael and the Town of Gull Lake worked together to address the housing issue so that people who worked in the community did not have to commute long distances from other communities.

THE PROCESS

The group contracted an independent life housing study to be conducted for the town and area. The study confirmed the need for additional housing in Gull Lake. There have been two public meetings in the community regarding the type and number of housing needed and those meetings were followed up with two meetings focused on senior condominium needs.

The municipalities provided funding for the housing study and the Cypress Hills REDA acts as a guarantor in securing a bank loan for the construction of new housing. A non-profit corporation was formed and maintains ownership and maintenance of the properties.

THE RESULTS

The construction of senior-living condominiums in the community have allowed seniors to move into housing more suited to their lifestyle and has allowed younger families to move into their vacated houses. This has given the town time to develop more residential lots to accommodate growth.

LESSONS LEARNED

The RMs of Gull Lake, Webb, Carmichael and the Town of Gull Lake learned that municipal leadership is essential to providing a superior quality of life for residents. Investment in senior-type living was a new concept for a rural community. Typically, developers tend to shy away from rural areas and focus on larger projects in larger communities, but the municipalities worked together to provide more suitable housing for seniors which, in turn, opened up housing opportunities for young families.