



CATCH Property - Concord, New Hampshire

Conclusion

Pulling It All Together to Create Community!

Efforts to promote affordable housing can, and should, complement efforts to stem sprawl and preserve open space. Smart growth encourages communities to increase housing choice, not only by modifying land use patterns on newly developed sites, but also by increasing the supply in existing neighborhoods and on land served by existing infrastructure.

Similar to ongoing smart growth efforts in New Hampshire, the strategies highlighted in this handbook employ a combination of tactics to address affordable housing and land use patterns within the community. A few communities have started to “package” zoning changes to increase the supply of affordable housing with efforts to protect open space, and direct growth to areas with the infrastructure to support it.

Because affordable housing and smart growth objectives are compatible, forging a strong alliance between these two constituencies is a smart policy for all communities. This will require analysis of the existing zoning ordinance and the master plan, and may require significant changes to the zoning language. This analysis and implementation is necessary because smart growth is not a specific tool, but rather a comprehensive strategy of zoning and land use tactics.

Developed as part of the *Achieving Smart Growth in New Hampshire* project, the following smart growth principles can be helpful in the analysis of existing regulations, and then guiding and supporting the creation of new housing alternatives in New Hampshire communities:

Maintain traditional compact settlement patterns to efficiently use land, resources, and investments in infrastructure;

Foster the traditional character of New Hampshire downtowns, villages, and neighborhoods by encouraging a human scale of development that is comfortable for pedestrians and conducive to community life;

Incorporate a mix of uses to provide a variety of housing, employment, shopping, services, and social opportunities for all members of the community;

Preserve New Hampshire's working landscape by sustaining farm and forest land and other rural resource lands to maintain contiguous tracts of open land and to minimize land use conflicts;

Provide choices and safety in transportation to create livable, walkable communities that increase accessibility for people of all ages, whether on foot, bicycle, or in motor vehicles;

Protect environmental quality by minimizing impacts from human activities and planning for and maintaining natural areas that contribute to the health and quality of life of communities and people in New Hampshire;

Involve the community in planning and implementation to ensure that development retains and enhances the sense of place, traditions, goals, and values of the local community; and,

Manage growth locally in the New Hampshire tradition, but work with neighboring towns to achieve common goals and address common problems more effectively.

New Hampshire communities can take charge of their own housing destinies if they possess the:

- Vision
- Local support
- Community organizing and communication skills
- Appropriate tools and regulations
- Range of partnering organizations

Now it is time to identify approaches that match the needs of your community! What will the existing and future residents require for housing? How well are you meeting the current housing needs? How can a diversity of future housing units be accommodated in your community? New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority encourages you to follow up on the many projects and programs featured in this document. All of the references to specific regulatory language that have been featured have also been included in the Appendix. A list of additional contacts and sources of information has also been included.