

# Lowering the Cost of New Housing

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This development plan was commissioned to show that, given a legitimate opportunity, the private development industry has the ability to solve the price problem within the context of the current housing and land market. Some government restrictions and regulations, which have contributed to prices beyond the means of many people, would have to be relaxed to permit the implementation of this plan.

Within this context, three critical objectives have been met:

- (a) to produce housing at prices significantly below current levels;
- (b) to conserve land through efficient planning;
- (c) to provide minimal transportation, servicing and land costs for residents.

In order to determine how the development industry can contribute effectively toward lowering the cost of new housing, a typical suburban community was analysed. A hypothetical plan was prepared for the same site, employing innovative architectural planning and servicing techniques. This was completely costed, including land, construction and servicing.

Where possible, development criteria consistent with current planning policies were used. The design included 85 per cent ground-related family units, averaging 1,000 sq. ft., intended for outright ownership of land and buildings. The remaining units were apartments at 60 units per acre.

## Planning

The existing subdivision is a typical school-centred neighbourhood, developed in accordance with a municipal secondary plan. Except for 20 per cent apartments, the housing mix consists of singles, semis and townhouses (both sale and condominium), with 50 per cent of the total area in 50' x 100' single-family

lots. Parkland of 10 acres fulfils the normal 5 per cent dedication. On the 200-acre site, a population of 4,360 is accommodated in 1,198 dwelling units. The resulting density of 22 persons per gross acre (35 persons per net acre) is comparable to most suburban communities.

The theoretical concept increases the gross density by 2.5 times to a total population of 11,078 in 3,311 units, organized around two public schools and one separate school. Parkland has been dedicated at one acre for 120 units or 27.6 acres. The bulk of the park is related to the schools, with several small parkettes within the residential areas.

The collector road system has been modified to create an intermediate grid midway between the boundary roads, dividing the site into residential quadrants. Each of these areas is served by two local loop streets on which all family housing is sited. Only apartments front directly on the collector system, thus minimizing the traffic impact on the residential precincts.

Four basic ground-related housing types were developed, at net densities ranging from 25 to 35 units per acre. These are the semi, quadruplex, duplex and group house. In each case, the units are sited on individual lots, with parking area and garden related directly to the dwelling. They are shown on the following pages.

