

Recognizing that the extreme shortage of housing units in the Upper Valley threatens the strength of the regional economy and the high quality of life, the Upper Valley Housing Coalition was formed to serve a broad cross-section of the workforce throughout the region.<sup>1</sup> The Coalition will work to promote a diversity of rental and ownership options that are affordable for all income groups.

**Section 1 PURPOSE**

To encourage the planning and production of a diversity of housing that:

- 1.1. Increases the supply of rental and ownership housing to serve a diversity of incomes and abilities in the workforce of the entire Upper Valley region.
- 1.2. Is consistent with “Smart Growth” town planning principles as described below.

**Section 2 USE**

The Guidelines are to be used as follows:

- 2.1. To educate the general public and employers about the need for workforce housing;
- 2.2. As a resource for town boards and staff in their formulation of master plans and land use regulations and in their review of project applications;
- 2.3. To educate the general public about the benefits of using Smart Growth planning principles;
- 2.4. As a guide for developers in the planning of projects; and
- 2.5. As an evaluation tool for reviewing a developer’s request for the Coalition’s support of a proposed project.

**Section 3 ENDORSEMENT METHODS**

To promote housing that meets the above criteria, the Housing Coalition will:

- 3.1. Actively work with the local community to inform and gain project support from the residents and employers.
- 3.2. Encourage members to attend public permitting hearings for the project and testify on behalf of the project.
- 3.3. Serve as a resource for members attending public permitting hearings.
- 3.4. Serve as a resource bank for technical and professional expertise which is available to offer testimony regarding the economy, housing market, and innovative practices during the permit application process.
- 3.5. Support municipal officials in their review of housing proposals and regulations that are consistent with these Endorsement Guidelines.

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<sup>1</sup> *Upper Valley Housing Needs Analysis*, Applied Economic Research, Laconia, NH. August 2002. Copies are available from the Upper Valley Housing Coalition.

## **Section 4 CRITERIA**

The Housing Coalition will give support to housing proposals and regulations that are successful in meeting the following criteria:

### 4.1. Site Selection:

4.1.1. As a priority, the proposed project would be located in or adjacent to an existing town center or designated growth center and would satisfy these location criteria:

- 4.1.1.1. Be served by, or have access to, public or community water and sewer systems.
- 4.1.1.2. Be accessible by public transportation to services and employment, or have the potential to be accessible.

4.1.2. Where it is not possible to locate a project within a town center or designated growth center, then the project would minimize impact on important natural resources identified in local or regional plans including:

- 4.1.2.1. Water quality
- 4.1.2.2. Prime agricultural land
- 4.1.2.3. Critical habitat or ecologically-sensitive areas
- 4.1.2.4. Identified scenic areas.

### 4.2. Site Use: Proposals are encouraged to:

- 4.2.1. Offer a mix of housing choices as defined by unit sizes and unit costs.
- 4.2.2. Include housing affordable to households with incomes below 120 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI), with some consideration given for households at and below 50 percent AMI. Affordable ownership units would be priced below \$175,000. Affordable rental units would not exceed \$900 per unit per month (2 bedroom minimum).
- 4.2.3. Utilize methods to ensure long-term affordability.

In addition to providing a mix of housing, projects are encouraged to:

- 4.2.4. Include "Lifecycle housing" which enables households of all ages to live in the housing community.
- 4.2.5. Incorporate compatible commercial spaces.
- 4.2.6. Include uses other than housing, such as community spaces as defined in Section 4.3.5.

### 4.3. Project Design: Recommended considerations are:

- 4.3.1. Densities that average ten to twenty units per acre for multi-family and four to eight units per acre for single family.
- 4.3.2. Building heights that utilize the full potential of the zoning regulations.
- 4.3.3. Building and unit sizes that are modest in scale. The targeted unit sizes for multi-family are: one bedroom (600 square feet); two bedroom (800 to 1,000 SF); three bedroom (1,000 to 1,200 SF). The targeted unit size for single family is: three bedroom (1,200 to 1,600 SF, plus 200 SF for each additional bedroom above the third).
- 4.3.4. Circulation plans that minimize the impact of cars and enhance bike and pedestrian access and movement within the proposed development.
- 4.3.5. Project amenities that encourage shared community spaces, such as garden plots play spaces, walking paths and meeting rooms.
- 4.3.6. Building plans that incorporate energy saving equipment, materials, methods and design.
- 4.3.7. Site design in rural areas would cluster development or use tools such as a Planned Unit Development (PUD).

**Amended by the Upper Valley Housing Coalition Board of Directors on January 12, 2004.**

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