



Best Practices in Housing

Ground-Oriented, Medium Density Housing (GOMDH)

Greater Vancouver Regional District

Access City of Surrey



Mixed-use Apartment Buildings in Surrey's City Centre with Street-oriented Units that Accommodate Home-based Businesses

PROJECT TYPE

Ground-oriented apartments
Live/work units
Market Housing
Built Project (Phase 1&2)

SPECIAL FEATURES

- A Comprehensive Development (CD) Zone was created in order to accommodate this high-density, mixed-use development
- Ground level units are designed to encourage home-based businesses
- Brick-clad apartment buildings grouped around a central courtyard create an urban, pedestrian-friendly character
- Neighbourhood amenities such as the SkyTrain station, City Centre retail area, parks and public walkways encourage street-oriented activities
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles have been applied throughout

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Development Process

The City of Surrey's Official Community Plan states that the purpose of Live/Work communities is to provide business and employment opportunities in residential areas and reduce commuting. The Access project achieves this objective, while blending effectively with the surrounding neighbourhood.

Designated as 'City Centre' in the Official Community Plan, the original vision for the site was high-rise apartment buildings with a Floor Area Ratio (FAR) of 2.5. A specific Comprehensive Development zone was created in the early 1990s for this proposal.

In 2000, changing market conditions prompted the Developer, Intracorp (Intrawest), to submit a new rezoning application for lower profile multiple-unit residential buildings with a FAR of



Inner pedestrian realm and street access

1.7. A new CD zone was written to expand the definition of 'home occupation' in the Zoning By-Law and allow provision of services within some dwelling units.

Design

The original vision for the larger Gateway development was a 'campus in a park'. The Access project helps to achieve this overall vision, as three low-rise apartment buildings are grouped around an expansive entry courtyard overlooking a park across City Parkway (135th Street). The buildings are attractively clad in brick and hardiplank siding with metal cornices, roofs and accents.

The ground floor units facing City Parkway and the courtyard are designed for home-based businesses and have signed and canopied 'business entrances' towards the street. These spaces add to the interaction between the building and the street. They also serve to increase pedestrian activity, enhancing the vitality, interest and safety of the public realm.

When all five phases are completed, the project will include 255 strata title units, 16 bachelor units, 135 one-bedroom units and 104 two-bedroom units. Starting at \$94,900, these units are marketed as affordable homes for first-time buyers who want to live in close proximity to amenities such as shopping, SkyTrain and parks.

This project has been well received by the public.

Moreover, its high-quality design, generous landscaping and innovative features complement the urban character of Surrey's City Centre, and help to trigger revitalization in an area currently in transition. The courtyard concept, with units overlooking shared outdoor spaces and the public streets provides excellent natural surveillance and the associated benefits of CPTED.

Facilitating Factors

- Staff were able to work closely with the developer to create a Comprehensive Development Zone to suit current market needs
- The project generally conforms to the residential uses envisioned for the site under the original concept. It results in a reasonably high-density (207 units/ha.) even though the proposed buildings are 4-storey rather than high-rise
- Council was very supportive of this project as it had the potential to increase the vitality and livability of the neighbourhood
- Proximity to community amenities, such as Skytrain, shopping, recreation facilities and parks, as well as the affordability and flexibility of the units, has been very appealing to potential buyers

EXPERIENCE GAINED

- High-quality and innovative design can

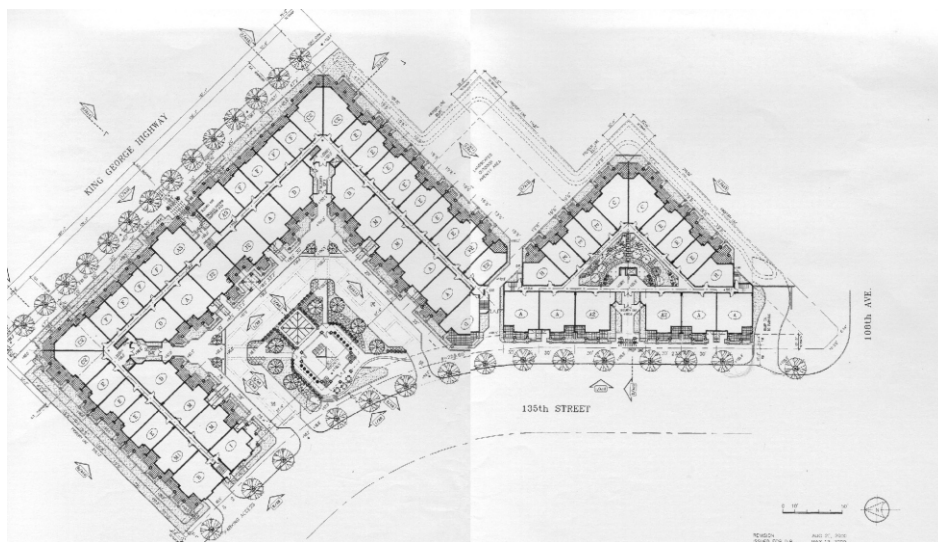
- assist in the revitalization of a neighbourhood
- Flexible zoning can enable “home-based business” opportunities without significant changes to traditional building form
- The courtyard concept can be used to provide excellent natural surveillance and meet CPTED principles
- An increased emphasis on design features such as landscaping, textured paving and decorative lighting can be used to enrich the urban experience, enhancing a multitude of activities like walking, jogging, bicycling and relaxing



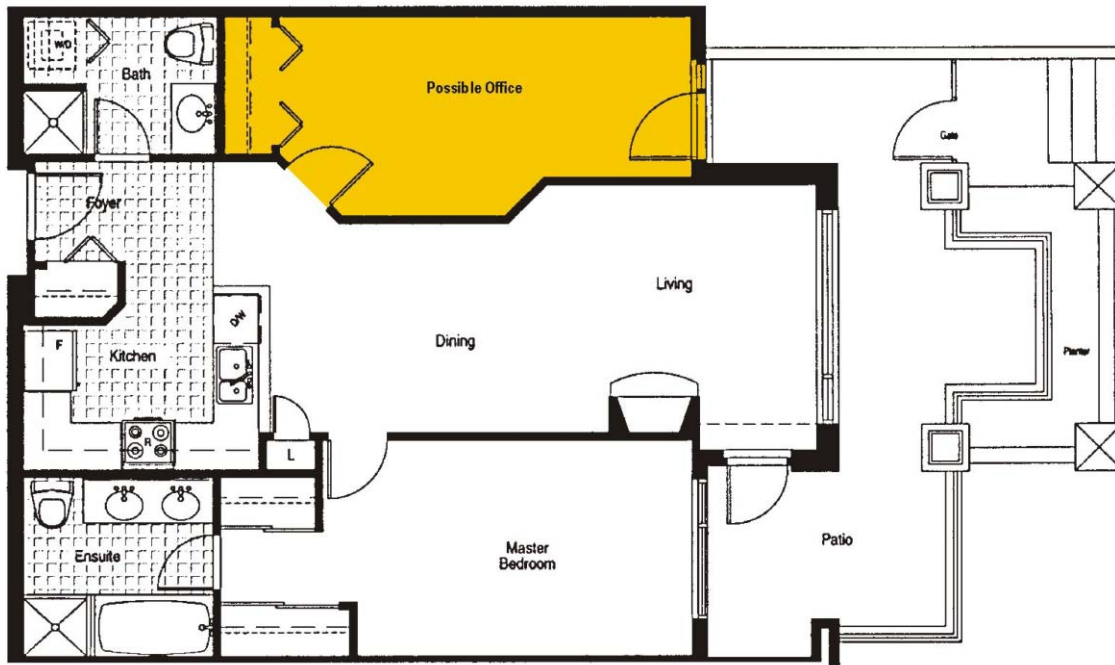
Entry door



Street access



Site plan



Unit Floor plan
Type C- Ground Floor

VITAL STATISTICS

Project Name	Access
Year of Completion	2002
Dwelling Units	255
Site Area	12,303 sq m (132,432.7 sq ft)
Gross Density	207 units/ha. (84 /acre)
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	1.7 FAR
Site Coverage	40%
Parking	281 underground, 19 surface stalls for visitors.
Site usage:	
Buildings and structures	30%
Paved and hard surface	10%
Unit Information	
Bachelor	16
1 bedroom	135
2 bedroom	104

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