

# NEWS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **NEW ENABLING HOUSING CHOICE PROJECT IN CLARESHOLM: LAND USE POLICY UPDATE REPORT TO HELP INCREASE HOUSING CHOICE FOR COMMUNITY**

**ALBERTA — April 5, 2023** — On behalf of the Rural Development Network (RDN), the Sustainable Housing Initiative (SHI), through its Enabling Housing Choice (EHC) Project, has partnered with the Town of Claresholm to perform a Land Use Policy Update Report that provides recommendations for increasing housing choice in the community.

One of the ways SHI supports diverse, sustainable, and equitable housing development in Albertan communities is through its EHC Project. This project is made possible through funding and support from the Alberta Real Estate Foundation. The overall goal of EHC is to drive transformational, long-term policy change that will benefit Alberta's real estate industry by addressing policy, bylaw and process barriers that realtors, housing developers, and municipalities often face when trying to improve housing choice.

"The Enabling Housing Choice project is a wonderful initiative that's working to improve housing diversity in various Albertan communities - and will eventually develop a Guidebook to serve as a resource for groups across the country," says Asad Bhatti, Director of Housing at RDN. "We are very excited to work with the Town of Claresholm on this project, and to help provide diverse housing options for the community."

The purpose of the Land Use Policy Update Report is to provide recommendations that promote housing choice and diversity, while also discovering effective solutions for promoting infill development in the Town of Claresholm. These recommendations will be informed by extensive research and community engagement to better understand how policy updates can best address Claresholm's housing needs.

"The Town of Claresholm is excited to partner with the Sustainable Housing Initiative for the Enabling Housing Choice Project. Collaborative research and best practices, community engagement, and strengthening ties with the development industry are essential to discovering effective methods for enabling diverse housing development in our community," says Deputy Mayor of Claresholm, Brad Schlossberger. "Development Readiness is at the core of Council's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, and diverse housing options and community sustainability are key Council priorities."

The overall goals for the Land Use Policy Update Report are:

- To identify policy recommendations that enable diverse housing development in Claresholm.

- To meaningfully engage with community members to garner further support for housing choice in Claresholm.
- To increase housing options through infill development opportunities in Claresholm.

For more information about the Enabling Housing Choice Project, please visit [www.housingredefined.ca/enabling-housing-choice-project](http://www.housingredefined.ca/enabling-housing-choice-project).

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## **ABOUT THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT NETWORK**

RDN is a not-for-profit that facilitates, supports, and champions rural community development through collaboration, research, and service provision. RDN supports the sustainability of rural communities and works with communities to amplify the "rural voice". RDN collaborates to identify and bring focus to rural issues, build local capacity, and find innovative, rural-based solutions to unique issues.

To learn more about RDN, visit [www.ruraldevelopment.ca](http://www.ruraldevelopment.ca).

## **ABOUT THE SUSTAINABLE HOUSING INITIATIVE**

In 2015, RDN created the Sustainable Housing Initiative (SHI) in direct response to rural communities expressing their need for support in addressing the critical lack of affordable housing. This issue has not received the same attention and resources as it has in urban centres, and comes with unique challenges requiring unique solutions. The SHI conducts research and data analysis and produces housing needs assessments, business plans, financial analyses and more. This lays the groundwork necessary for projects to access funding from governments, banks, and other sources, which is often the biggest hurdle to overcome.

To learn more about SHI, visit [www.housingredefined.ca](http://www.housingredefined.ca).

## **ABOUT THE ALBERTA REAL ESTATE FOUNDATION**

The Alberta Real Estate Foundation (AREF) was established in 1991 to advance the real estate industry and strengthen Alberta's communities. Created under the Real Estate Act after years of discussion between industry leaders and officials in the provincial government, the Foundation started making an impact right away by funding initiatives to help educate and train real estate professionals. AREF invests in real estate policy, research, practices, and education that strengthen Alberta's communities.

To learn more about AREF, visit <https://aref.ab.ca/>.