

Research Assistant

Natural Capital and Urban Intensification Project

DURATION: 4 month (October 2015 – January 2016), part-time position (20 hours per week)

Hosted by the City of Surrey Planning Department

Funded by the Bullitt Foundation (SFU Urban Studies/Small Housing BC)

Project Objective

To identify “small home” development options for densifying three specific single-family neighbourhoods in North Surrey, in ways that are acceptable to existing neighbours while maintaining and enhancing the natural features unique to each area. The work will be done in consultation with planners and environmental specialists at the City of Surrey as well as experts within Small Housing BC.

Methodology

The researcher will work mostly independently, embedded within the City of Surrey Planning Department, toward the development of a report that presents potential design options for small housing infill development in three sites in North Surrey - demonstrating the feasibility of these designs according to planning principles and according to an objective of conserving and enhancing natural features specific to each site. The three sites will be pre-determined by the research team, in consultation with the City of Surrey, for fit and feasibility. Small housing form types will be suggested by existing recent innovations and work in this field by members of the research team.

The researcher will conduct an analysis focused on key aspects that define the natural and built character of the area. These will include, but are not limited to:

- Context - location, key connections to larger city;
- Natural features - open space, water courses, significant trees, etc.;
- Typical Street/Block structure - dimensions, etc.;
- Existing building footprints - residential uses dominantly;
- Typical lot structure - cadastral, etc.; and
- Typical house types - dimensions, key architectural elements, etc.

After the analysis, the Project Team will undertake a series of design studies for each site that will depict small housing options (layouts, drawings, etc.) and its impact of neighbourhood character and natural systems. The researcher will be the primary responsible researcher for preparation of this report and the development of preliminary design options and their evolution, based on ongoing feedback from members of Small Housing BC and SFU.

The report will form part of a package, which will also include innovations in public consultation for small housing and infill housing development, and innovations in financing models for small housing, in Metro Vancouver municipalities.

The overall project deadline is **March 1, 2016**.

Position Description

The researcher will conduct the site-specific assessment and design, working in consultation with staff at the City of Surrey, and the project team, which includes design, architecture, and small housing development expertise. While considerable design and environmental planning research exists to support the work, additional research will also be an important part of this position. Activities will include:

- Preparatory review of research on small housing forms and possibilities, infill design options in the City of Surrey and BC-Pacific Northwest
- Review of City of Surrey land use, environmental, and other data on cosmos, the City's GIS
- Additional literature review in natural environment enhancement via sensitive design and infill housing development
- Orientation to 3 sites of interest, including field visits
- Interviews and consultation with staff at the City of Surrey: area planners, arborists, environmental and landscape design team
- Preparation of detailed design options
- Preparation of the case for natural feature conservation/restoration and long term monitoring plan
- Writing and case study preparation solicitation of feedback and revisions
- Meetings with research team, additional consultation as needed
- Preparation of presentation, seeking opportunities for public presentations

The RA is expected to work primarily independently – with ongoing guidance from members of Small Housing BC and SFU. Weekly contact with primary supervisor and project manager is an additional expectation, as well as occasional additional face-to-face or conference call team meetings. Workspace will be provided for the RA at the City of Surrey; the RA should plan to work from this space at least one day per week.

Qualifications

The ideal candidate for this position will have: background training and expertise in urban design, including architectural drawing skills (using 3d software – i.e. SketchUp – and by hand); knowledge of graphics and associated software (Adobe Suite); background understanding of environmental planning and design; a basic understanding of ecology and landscape architecture principles; knowledge of community planning and development planning in BC; strong research skills; good professional communication skills; strong professional writing skills. Must have an ability to work independently with minimal supervision, excellent

time-management skills and an ability to coordinate and call upon multiple team members for assistance at strategic points in the project.

Application Deadline:

Please send a cover letter and curriculum vitae to info@smallhousingbc.org before September 14th, 2015.

In the subject line please put “Research Assistant”.

Details

DURATION: Sept 8, 2015 – Dec 31, 2015

SALARY: \$20 hourly (exclusive of benefits), approximately 20 hours per week

PRIMARY SUPERVISOR: Meg Holden, Associate Professor, Urban Studies and Geography
(mholden@sfu.ca)

CITY OF SURREY SUPERVISOR: Don Luymes, Manager, Community Planning

PROJECT MANAGER: Bob Ransford, Small Housing BC, (ransford@counterpoint.ca)

Report hours and questions regarding payment to: Terri Evans (urban@sfu.ca)