



## Canadian mayor tours home project

### Calgary, Canada may implement similar workforce housing project

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A workforce housing development in Petaluma has attracted the attention of a Canadian mayor.

Dave Bronconnier, mayor of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, had heard about Petaluma's Frates Square and wanted to see first-hand how it works and if a similar project would meet the housing needs of his city.

He toured homes in the neighborhood on Feb. 26, joined by representatives of the Housing Land Trust of Sonoma County and city officials.

Frates Square is part of the Southgate subdivision on the southeast edge of town. Delco Builders built the 26 three- and four-bedroom homes for qualified low- to moderate-income home buyers.

Preference was given to employees of the city of Petaluma, local school district employees and health-care providers. "It is our goal to enable people who work in Petaluma to be able to afford to live here," said David Sears, a housing land trust board member.

There are stringent guidelines on who qualifies to purchase one of the houses and who the owner is able to sell it to.

Bronconnier's visit was part of a two-day fact-finding trip to California as Calgary, a city of 1 million people, seeks to implement an affordable housing program of its own and enable workers who commute to the city to live there.

Sears found Bronconnier to be very informed and inquisitive. "He asked for some pitfalls to look out for. He wanted to learn from our mistakes," Sears said.

Every homeowner that the mayor visited in Frates Square gave him the same message: If not for the workforce housing program, they wouldn't have been able to afford a house.

"That's the message he took back," said Sears.

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