

Many rural and suburban communities, whether incorporated or not, lack adequate building, housing, zoning, and subdivision controls. On the other hand, when such regulations are enacted in the suburbs, they are frequently different from those in the central city and from those in other suburbs. These differences put a burden on housing developers who operate in several jurisdictions. Many housing, building, zoning, and platting codes are also out of date and require types of development which are more expensive than necessary. Regulations which are uniform from one jurisdiction to another within an urban area would eliminate unnecessary obstacles to homebuilding, increase the coverage, and allow more expert application of reasonable requirements. It has been estimated that modernized building codes alone can often reduce building costs by \$1,000 per house, while assuring safe and sound construction.

The need for uniform zoning and subdivision standards hinges not only on the need to assure adequate protection to home buyers, but also on the tendency for these standards to be used for purposes of excluding lower income persons from a community. Thus, zoning sometimes has required minimum lot sizes to be very large for all subdivisions within a certain jurisdiction, and platting regulations have established excessive improvement standards over and above those necessary, thereby tending to restrict housing to upper-income groups.

Municipal and county codes should be administered jointly wherever possible to assure uniform application of their provisions. This could be accomplished through interlocal contracting or the voluntary transfer of functions between cities and counties, two devices suitable for a variety of uses in metropolitan areas.

County governments should enact uniform codes to apply within unincorporated areas, and metropolitan planning agencies or councils of governments within multijurisdictional metropolitan areas should actively encourage all the municipalities and counties involved to cooperate in the enactment of uniform codes. States can facilitate the use of accepted model codes by enacting enabling legislation for their adoption by reference, thereby removing the necessity of official verbatim printings and publication of lengthy codes at several stages during the formal approval procedure.

Another way of encouraging uniform housing and building codes has been demonstrated in those States which have adopted either model or mandatory State codes. In California there are mandatory State housing and building code minimum standards and there are model codes in New Jersey. In New York there is a model State building code and a mandatory State housing code. There are model State building construction codes in Connecticut and Minnesota; mandatory construction codes in Indiana and Ohio; and both model and mandatory codes (covering different types of buildings) in North Carolina and Wisconsin.³⁴ Finally, there are mandatory State housing codes in Iowa, Massachusetts, and Hawaii.

In California, the State Housing Act governs construction and housing standards of all dwellings, including apartments and hotels, within the State. Enforcement of the State Housing Act is carried out by local officials, with State officials available to assist and assure

³⁴ The 1967 State Legislative Program of the Advisory Commission will include a model State act providing for the development of a model State building construction code.