

2025 Update of Local Housing Incentive Strategies

AHAC Meeting #2 | October 14, 2025 | 9:00 a.m.

Clearwater Main Library (100 N. Osceola Ave., Clearwater, FL 33755)

MEETING SUMMARY

The City of Clearwater requested that Wade Trim facilitate an update of the City's Local Housing Incentive Strategies (LHIS) report, which was last updated in 2024. A 10-member Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) representing various affordable housing interests was appointed by the City Council on August 21, 2025 (Resolution #25-11), to evaluate and update the 2024 LHIS report. The second meeting of the AHAC was held on October 14, 2025, at the Clearwater Main Library (100 N. Osceola Ave., Clearwater, FL 33755). Eight (8) AHAC members, City staff, and the City's consultant attended the meeting:

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| • Robyn Fiel (Chair) | Representative of the banking or mortgage banking industry in connection with affordable housing |
| • Linda Byars | A citizen who resides within the jurisdiction |
| • Christine Bond | An advocate for low-income persons in connection with affordable housing |
| • Charessa Doty | Representative of a not-for-profit provider of affordable housing |
| • Michelle Chenault | Serves on the City of Clearwater's local planning agency (Community Development Board) |
| • Cheri DeBlaere | Representative of essential services personnel |
| • Frank Cournier | Representative of those areas of labor engaged in home building in connection with affordable housing |
| • Mike Mannino | A locally elected official/City Councilmember |
| • Dylan Mayeaux | City of Clearwater, Economic Develop. & Housing, Acting Housing Manager |
| • Terry Malcolm-Smith | City of Clearwater, Economic Develop. & Housing, Housing Coordinator |
| • Dania Perez | City of Clearwater, Economic Develop. & Housing, Programs Coordinator |
| • Jessica Chueka | City of Clearwater, Economic Develop. & Housing, Specialist (Subrecipients) |
| • Lauren Matzke | City of Clearwater, Planning & Development, Director |
| • Amanda Warner | Wade Trim, Planner (City's Consultant) |
| • Connor Baird | Wade Trim, Planner (City's Consultant) |

Two (2) AHAC members were not in attendance: Kelly Batsford (Representative of employers within the jurisdiction), and Rick Vail (Residential home building industry in connection with affordable housing).

The purpose of the second AHAC meeting was to review the LHIS process and schedule; confirm the affordable housing values, principles, and vision statement; continue to review and discuss the contemporary barriers identified by the AHAC during the first meeting on September 9, 2025; receive direction on whether to maintain, modify, or remove any recommendations from the 2024 LHIS report to address those contemporary barriers; and to identify any new incentive recommendations in response to the AHAC's evaluation of the City's current practices regarding affordable housing.

Welcome and Introductions

AHAC Chair, Robyn Fiel, called the meeting to order and welcomed the committee. Each committee member then introduced themselves. City staff thanked the committee and introduced the representatives of City staff in attendance and the City's Consultant.

Approval of AHAC Meeting Minutes from September 9, 2025

AHAC Chair, Robyn Fiel, asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from September 9, 2025. A motion and second was made, and the minutes were approved by the committee.

Summary of Presentation to AHAC

AHAC Chair, Robyn Fiel, introduced the Consultant. Wade Trim Planner, Amanda Warner (Consultant), then explained the purpose of the meeting and provided an overview of the agenda for the meeting, to include a presentation in Microsoft PowerPoint format and facilitated AHAC discussion.

The Consultant reviewed the LHS update process and schedule of events toward approval/submittal. The schedule of events included:

- Early August – City designates staff and selects AHAC members
- August 21, 2025 – City Council appoints members to AHAC
- September 9, October 14, October 28 – AHAC meets to update LHS report
- November 18, 2025 – AHAC holds public hearing to approve updated LHS report
- December 4, 2025 – City Council holds public hearing to approve updated LHS report for submittal to Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC)
- December 31, 2025 – Deadline to submit LHS report to FHFC
- March 31, 2026 – City Council to adopt amendments to LHAP to incorporate LHS
- May 2, 2026 – Submit amended LHAP with proof of City Council approval to FHFC

During the first AHAC meeting on September 9, 2025, the AHAC made no changes to the affordable housing values, principles, and vision statement previously included in the 2024 LHS report prepared by the former committee. During the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025, the AHAC confirmed that the existing affordable housing values, principles, and vision statement should be continued in the 2025 LHS report. Although the terms, “safe,” “accessible,” “attainable,” and “affordable” in the values and vision statement were discussed, the committee’s direction was to retain the previous values, principles, and vision statement. **After further discussion, the AHAC recommended modifying value “C” to replace the term, “workforce” with “residents” to capture a broader population, including not only the City’s workforce but also retired persons.**

The Consultant reiterated the 11 incentive areas under Section 420.9076, F.S., and the additional five AHAC-initiated incentive areas from the previous 2024 LHS Report. The Consultant then presented the contemporary barriers to affordable housing identified by the committee during the first AHAC meeting on September 9, 2025, and the status of each existing recommendation based on City staff input regarding current City practices. The existing recommendations within the 2024 LHS report were discussed with the committee. If an AHAC-identified barrier to affordable housing and corresponding incentive was already addressed by an existing recommendation within the 2024 LHS report, those recommendations were noted (i.e., starred) within the presentation.

Committee Discussion

During the second meeting, the Consultant facilitated AHAC discussion of recommendations for inclusion in the 2025 LHS report. The discussion focused on strategies to address the barriers and incentives identified by the AHAC during the first AHAC meeting on September 9, 2025. In 2025, strategies are needed to address barriers such as lack of affordable housing supply, lack of housing options for senior citizens, renter cost burden and the high cost

of rent/utilities, real estate taxes and insurance costs, and land use and zoning regulations. Strategies are also needed to support incentives such as accessory dwelling units and infill density. The following provides a summary of the committee’s discussion of recommendations to incentivize the provision of affordable housing in the City of Clearwater.

1) **Expedited Review**

During the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025, the “Request for Expedited Permit Processing for Affordable Housing Activity” form was discussed, along with the duration of single-family (and multi-family) permit reviews. City staff confirmed that the “Request for Expedited Permit Processing for Affordable Housing Activity” form exists and is available to developers. City staff also provided clarification regarding the timing of permit reviews, the City’s classification of detached and attached units, and whether the expedited review process is working. City staff noted that measurable outcomes work best.

The AHAC requested additional information about how many forms have been submitted through the expedited permitting process (e.g., over a 6- or 12-month period) and typical review times. City staff responded that they would research and provide that information to the AHAC. The AHAC also inquired about applicability of the City’s expedited permitting process to other types of housing (e.g., duplexes, triplexes, etc. and “missing middle” housing types).

The AHAC also discussed what constitutes an affordable housing “project” and whether there is a checkbox on permit applications denoting an affordable housing project. City staff responded that the permit application now tracks the number of affordable units included in the project.

The AHAC discussed building example plans, and whether any templates have been submitted for pre-screening. The AHAC discussed whether building example plans (referenced under Recommendation 1.5) are truly an incentive, since none have been submitted. The AHAC also discussed issues of practicality, including scarcity of land and unique site constraints. Committee member Frank Cournier stated that “plans on file” do function as an incentive because they reduce review times, since City staff only needs to review a site plan and not a full plan set. Such plans could be on file and pre-reviewed to expedite permitting.

After discussion, the AHAC decided to modify Recommendation 1.2 by adding “single-family,” and to modify Recommendation 1.5 by also including “accessory dwelling units” (ADUs).

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modified Recommendation 1.2 as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 1.2 *The Assistant Director of Economic Development & Housing and Permit Manager will continue to be the primary and secondary points of contact when submitting single-family and multi-family affordable housing projects. Through close coordination, these two staff positions will:*

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Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modified Recommendation 1.5 as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 1.5 *Encourage affordable housing developers of single-family homes and accessory dwelling units to submit frequently used building example plans for pre-screening by the Building Official to further expedite the staff permit review process.*

The AHAC made no changes to Recommendations 1.1, 1.3, or 1.4 during the second AHAC meeting.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued Recommendations 1.1, 1.3, and 1.4 from the 2024 LHS report with no changes, and modified Recommendations 1.2 and 1.5 as shown above in strikethrough/underline.

Regarding Recommendation 1.1, the AHAC requested additional information regarding how many forms have been submitted, and affordable housing projects expedited, through the expedited permitting process covered by that recommendation.

2) **Modification of Fees**

During the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025, the AHAC made no changes to Recommendations 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, or 2.4. It was noted that Forward Pinellas is studying the multi-modal impact fee and that the City of Clearwater has adjusted fees in the past and will be conducting a fee study in the future. The City recently decreased permitting fees for affordable housing projects by 75%.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued Recommendations 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 from the 2024 LHS report with no changes.

3) **Flexible Densities**

During the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025, the AHAC made no changes to Recommendations 3.1, 3.2, or 3.3. The Live Local Act was discussed at it pertains to density flexibility, along with the City's current affordable housing density bonus and public amenities incentive pool.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued Recommendations 3.1., 3.2, and 3.3 from the 2024 LHS report with no changes.

4) **Infrastructure Capacity**

The City's infrastructure capacity was not identified as an affordable housing barrier. The City of Clearwater is nearly built out and has sufficient infrastructure capacity for infill development. Therefore, there is no need to reserve infrastructure capacity.

The AHAC continued the previous recommendation of "no recommendation" from the 2024 LHS report with no changes.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC made no change to the recommendation of "no recommendation" as previously approved in regard to infrastructure capacity.

5) **Accessory Dwelling Units**

During the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025, the AHAC made no changes to Recommendations 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4. ADUs are already allowed in both nonresidential and residential development by the City's *Comprehensive Plan* and *Community Development Code*. Although cohousing is not specifically addressed in the City's policies or regulations, missing middle housing types are potentially permissible as infill development. The City currently provides information about ADU permitting on the City's website.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued Recommendations 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4 from the 2024 LHS report with no changes.

6) **Parking Reductions**

During the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025, the AHAC discussed Recommendations 6.1 and 6.2 regarding flexible setback requirements and parking reductions. The AHAC made no changes to Recommendations 6.1 and 6.2 during the second AHAC meeting. The AHAC noted that flexible setback requirements allow the flexibility for affordable housing developers to adapt a project to the specific site and address unique site constraints. Parking reductions were discussed in detail, weighing the potential for parking nuisances against their effectiveness as an incentive for affordable housing development. The AHAC noted the importance of proximity to alternative modes of transportation for persons residing in affordable housing, particularly persons with disabilities.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued Recommendations 6.1 and 6.2 from the 2024 LHIS report with no changes.

7) **Flexible Lot Configurations**

Although flexible lot configurations were discussed during the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025, the AHAC ultimately made no change to Recommendation 7.1. The AHAC discussed issues of compatibility and the importance of infill development. City staff and the AHAC noted the importance of retaining the existing recommendation's clause, "while remaining sensitive to the character and context of existing neighborhoods."

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued Recommendation 7.1 from the 2024 LHIS report with no changes.

8) **Modification of Street Requirements**

Street requirements were not identified as an affordable housing barrier during meetings with the AHAC and City staff. Therefore, modification of the City's existing street requirements was not recommended.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC made no change to the recommendation of "no recommendation" as previously approved in regard to modification of street requirements.

9) **Pre-Adoption Policy Consideration**

The City's current pre-adoption policy consideration process was discussed during the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025. The AHAC made no changes to Recommendations 9.1, but Recommendation 9.2 was flagged for revision since the Senior Executive Team (comprised of the City Manager and Department Directors) is no longer the venue for the review process described. The review process now occurs through collaboration between the Economic Development & Housing Department and the Planning & Development Department, sometimes in conjunction with the City Clerk.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modified Recommendation 9.2 as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 9.2 Continue the City's interdepartmental review process ~~maintained by the Senior Executive Team~~ through which any new regulatory instrument created in the City (ordinances, regulations, etc.) or by related State legislation can be evaluated for its effect on housing affordability.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued Recommendations 9.1 from the 2024 LHS report with no changes and modified Recommendation 9.2 to remove the reference to the Senior Executive Team.

10) **Inventory of Public Lands**

During the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025, the AHAC discussed the City's inventory of available public lands and properties having repeated code violations. The AHAC made no changes to Recommendations 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, and 10.5. The AHAC inquired about properties on the public lands inventory list, as well as referrals from the Code Compliance Division. City staff responded that there is ongoing coordination between the Code Compliance Division and the Housing Division regarding the list of violations and the potential for lien reduction or rehabilitation program funding. City staff also discussed the potential for stipulated settlement agreements for blighted properties.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued Recommendations 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.4, and 10.5 from the 2024 LHS report with no changes.

11) **Proximity to Transportation, Employment, and Mixed-Use Development**

No specific issues with the City's current policies regarding proximity to transportation, employment, and mixed-use development were identified during the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025. The City's current policies remain acceptable to the committee. The AHAC made no changes to Recommendation 11.1 during the second AHAC meeting.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued Recommendation 11.1 from the 2024 LHS report with no changes.

12) **Additional – Adaptive Reuse**

No specific issues with the City's current policies related to adaptive reuse were identified during the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025. The City's current policies remain acceptable to the committee. The AHAC made no changes to Recommendation 12.1 during the second AHAC meeting.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued Recommendation 12.1 from the 2024 LHS report with no changes.

13) **Additional – Land Development Code**

No specific issues with the City's *Community Development Code* were identified during the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025. The AHAC made no changes to Recommendation 13.1 during the second AHAC meeting.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued Recommendation 13.1 from the 2024 LHS report with no changes.

14) **Additional – Communication/Marketing**

No specific issues with the City's communication and marketing strategy were identified during the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025. The AHAC made no changes to Recommendation 14.1 during the second AHAC meeting.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued Recommendation 14.1 from the 2024 LHIS report with no changes.

15) **Additional – Financing**

No specific issues with the City’s financing strategy were identified during the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025. The AHAC made no changes to Recommendations 15.1, 15.2, and 15.3 during the second AHAC meeting.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued Recommendation 15.1, 15.2, and 15.3 from the 2024 LHIS report with no changes.

16) **Additional – Partnerships**

During the second AHAC meeting on October 14, 2025, the AHAC recommended emphasizing the “starting points” for persons seeking information about affordable housing development in the City of Clearwater. Such points include the City’s Affordable Housing webpage and “Sunny” the City’s chat bot.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modified Recommendation 16.1 as shown in strikethrough/underline:

16.1 *Develop public and private partnerships for the provision of affordable housing:*

- **Direct persons seeking information about affordable housing development in the City of Clearwater to the City’s affordable housing webpage:**
<https://www.myclearwater.com/housing>
...

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC will consider the proposed modification to Recommendation 16.1 at the next AHAC meeting on October 28, 2025.

Next Steps

The Consultant will respond to AHAC direction to continue or modify recommendations as discussed during the second AHAC meeting held on October 14, 2025. The Consultant will present the updated 2025 LHIS report at the third AHAC meeting. The third AHAC meeting will be held on October 28, 2025, at 9:00 a.m., at the Clearwater Main Library (100 N. Osceola Ave., Clearwater, FL 33755). If any AHAC members will be absent on October 28, 2025, questions or comments should be submitted in advance directly to Dylan Mayeux in the City’s Economic Development & Housing Department.

Acting Housing Manager, Dylan Mayeaux, thanked the committee for their time and noted the value of their input.

Public Comment

AHAC Chair, Robyn Fiel, invited public comment and asked if anyone was there to speak publicly. There was no public comment. AHAC Chair, Robyn Fiel, then adjourned the second AHAC meeting.

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The AHAC is a public advisory board and is subject to Florida’s “Sunshine Law” therefore committee members may not discuss AHAC matters with other committee members outside of a properly noticed and recorded public meeting. AHAC members are encouraged to contact City staff directly to discuss AHAC matters.