



2022

Local Housing Incentive Strategies Update



Prepared by:
**Affordable Housing
Advisory Committee**
Economic Development
& Housing Department
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**Affordable Housing Advisory Committee
Report to City Council
SHIP Affordable Housing Incentive Strategies**

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Table of Contents

- I. BACKGROUND 3
 - 1.1 The City of Clearwater3**
 - 1.2 The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee3**
 - 1.2.1 Committee Composition 4
 - 1.3 Process to Develop the Local Housing Incentive Strategies6**
- II. LOCAL HOUSING INCENTIVE STRATEGIES 6
 - 2.1 Affordable Housing Incentives7**
 - 2.1.1 Expedited Review Process..... 8
 - 2.1.2 Modification of Fees 11
 - 2.1.3 Flexible Densities 13
 - 2.1.4 Infrastructure Capacity 15
 - 2.1.5 Accessory Dwelling Units 16
 - 2.1.6 Parking Reductions..... 18
 - 2.1.7 Flexible Lot Configurations..... 19
 - 2.1.8 Modification of Street Requirements 21
 - 2.1.9 Pre-Adoption Policy Consideration 22
 - 2.1.10 Inventory of Public Lands 23
 - 2.1.11 Proximity to Transportation, Employment & Mixed-Use Development 25
 - 2.2 Additional Incentives.....26**
 - 2.2.1 Adaptive Reuse 27
 - 2.2.2 Land Development Code..... 27
 - 2.2.3 Communication and Marketing of Affordable Housing..... 28
 - 2.2.4 Financing 30
 - 2.2.5 Partnerships 31
- APPENDIX A: City of Clearwater Resolutions
- APPENDIX B: Affordable Housing in Clearwater
- APPENDIX C: Values, Principles and Vision
- APPENDIX D: Advisory Committee Meeting Summaries
- APPENDIX E: Summary of AHAC Recommendations

I. BACKGROUND

1.1 The City of Clearwater

The City of Clearwater is approximately 26 square miles in size (land area) and located in Pinellas County on the west coast of Florida along the Gulf of Mexico and Tampa Bay. Clearwater is the county seat of Pinellas County and shares boundaries with the municipalities of Largo, Dunedin, Safety Harbor, Belleair Beach and the Town of Belleair. Along with the cities of St. Petersburg and Tampa, Clearwater is one of the most urbanized areas within the Tampa Bay Region.

According to the most recent decennial U.S. Census, the City of Clearwater had a population of 117,292 in 2020. Estimates from the University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) for 2022 indicate that the City's current population is approximately 119,208. Based on a share (12.25%) of Pinellas County's projected population, the City may have a population of 124,521 by 2040 based on a medium growth scenario.

1.2 The Affordable Housing Advisory Committee

As a recipient of State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) funds the City established an Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) in September 2022 as required by Florida Statute (F.S.), Section 420.9076. Section 420.9076, F.S., effective October 1, 2020, requires all municipalities receiving SHIP funds to:

- a) Establish an Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC);
- b) Prepare Local Housing Incentive Strategies (LHIS) to facilitate the provision of affordable/workforce housing; and
- c) Amend the Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) to include the recommendations of the LHIS.

The AHAC is responsible for reviewing ordinances, land development regulations, Comprehensive Plan policies, and other aspects of the City's policies and procedures that affect the cost of housing. In addition, the AHAC is responsible for making recommendations to encourage affordable housing.

The AHAC was previously required to submit a LHIS report triennially (i.e., every three years). Effective October 1, 2020, the LHIS report must be submitted annually. The report includes recommendations by the AHAC as well as comments on the implementation of incentives for at least the following eleven (11) distinct areas:

- The processing of approvals of development orders or permits for affordable housing projects is expedited to a greater degree than other projects, as provided in s. 163.3177(6)(f)3, F.S.
- All allowable fee waivers provided for the development or construction of affordable housing.
- The allowance of flexibility in densities for affordable housing.
- The reservation of infrastructure capacity for housing for very-low-income persons, low-income persons, and moderate-income persons.
- Affordable accessory residential units.
- The reduction of parking and setback requirements for affordable housing.

- The allowance of flexible lot configurations, including zero-lot-line configurations for affordable housing.
- The modification of street requirements for affordable housing.
- The establishment of a process by which a local government considers, before adoption, policies, procedures, ordinances, regulations, or plan provisions that increase the cost of housing.
- The preparation of a printed inventory of locally owned public lands suitable for affordable housing.
- The support of development near transportation hubs and major employment centers and mixed-use developments.

1.2.1 Committee Composition

The City of Clearwater's first eleven-member AHAC was established on June 19, 2008, representing those actively engaged in the provision of affordable housing. The composition of the first AHAC is outlined in Resolution #08-15 (see **Appendix A**). This first AHAC prepared the City's original LHS, which was approved in December 2008.

Although Florida Statutes required the LHS to be reviewed by the AHAC triennially, the City was not required to review the LHS in 2011 because it did not meet the SHIP funding threshold at that time. In 2014, however, the SHIP funding threshold for LHS review was met. On August 18, 2014, the City formed a second eleven-member AHAC, which reviewed and updated the LHS in December 2014. The composition of the second AHAC is outlined in Resolution #14-26 (see **Appendix A**).

The City formed a third eleven-member AHAC on October 5, 2017, which reviewed and updated the LHS by December 2017. Although the Florida Statute no longer required a resolution of City Council to appoint the AHAC, the third AHAC was appointed by City Council action as Resolution #17-34 (see **Appendix A**).

On September 17, 2020, the City formed a fourth eleven-member AHAC to review and update the LHS by December 2020. The fourth AHAC was appointed by City Council action as Resolution #20-50 (see **Appendix A**).

On September 2, 2021, the City formed a fifth eleven-member AHAC to review and update the LHS by December 2021. The fifth AHAC was appointed by City Council action as Resolution #21-30 (see **Appendix A**).

On September 1, 2022, the City formed a sixth eleven-member AHAC to review and update the LHS by December 2022. The sixth AHAC was appointed by City Council action as Resolution #22-19 (see **Appendix A**).

Section 420.907, F.S. lists the categories from which AHAC members must be selected. There must be at least eight (8) but not more than 11 committee members with representation from at least six (6) of the following categories:

- Citizen actively engaged in the residential home building industry in connection with affordable housing.

- Citizen actively engaged in the banking or mortgage banking industry in connection with affordable housing.
- Citizen representative of those areas of labor actively engaged in home building in connection with affordable housing.
- Citizen actively engaged as an advocate for low-income persons in connection with affordable housing.
- Citizen actively engaged as a for-profit provider of affordable housing.
- Citizen actively engaged as a not-for-profit provider of affordable housing.
- Citizen actively engaged as a real estate professional in connection with affordable housing.
- Citizen actively serving on the local planning agency pursuant to Section 163.3174, F.S.
- Citizen residing within the jurisdiction of the local governing body marking the appointments.
- Citizen who represents employers within the jurisdictions.
- Citizen who represents essential services personnel, as defined in the Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP).

Additionally, effective October 1, 2020, at least one committee member must be a locally elected official from the participating jurisdiction (i.e., a City Councilmember).

The appointed 2022 AHAC members are included in **Table 1**, along with their category affiliation.

Table 1: Committee Composition

Name	Category Represented	Date Appointed
1. Maria (Gaby) Camacho	Labor Engaged in Affordable Housing	September 1, 2022
2. Robyn Fiel	Banking & Mortgage Industry	September 1, 2022
3. Peter Scalia	Advocate for Low-Income Persons	September 1, 2022
4. Lindsay Dicus-Harrison	Real Estate Professional	September 1, 2022
5. Carmen Santiago	Citizen Residing in Clearwater	September 1, 2022
6. Camille Hebting	Represents Employers in Clearwater	September 1, 2022
7. Kevin Chinault	Not-For-Profit Provider of Affordable Housing	September 1, 2022
8. Pierre Cournoyer	Residential Home Building Industry	September 1, 2022
9. Bruce Rector	Serves on the Local Planning Agency	September 1, 2022
10. Jacqueline Rivera	Represents Essential Services Personnel	September 1, 2022
11. Kathleen Beckman	Locally Elected Official (City Councilmember)	September 1, 2022

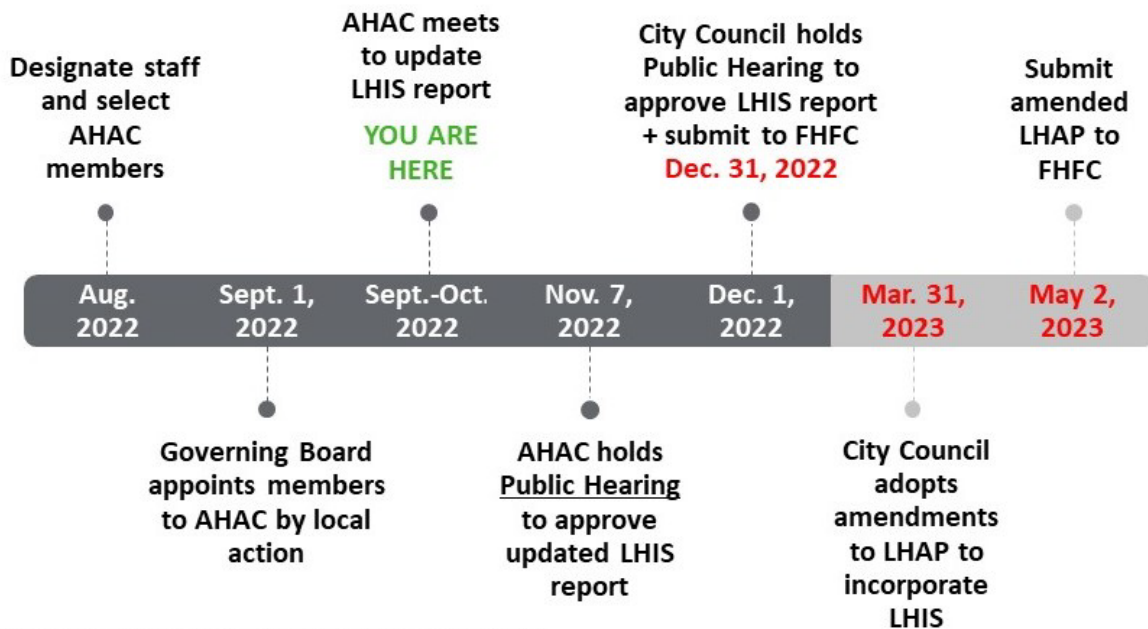
1.3 Process to Develop the Local Housing Incentive Strategies

To update the LHS, City staff and AHAC members actively participated in the following activities to fulfill the requirements of Section 420.9076, F.S.

- Review of requirements of Section 420.9076, F.S.
- Discussion regarding main issues/barriers affecting the production of affordable housing (see **Appendix B**)
- Discussion with for-profit and non-profit developers to identify main barriers to the provision of affordable housing (see **Appendix B**)
- Evaluation with City staff and AHAC of the current regulations (comprehensive plan, code, and ordinances) that provide developer incentives for the provision of affordable housing
- Update of the LHS report

Chart 1 outlines the schedule established in Florida Statutes to prepare the LHS:

Chart 1: Schedule to Meet Requirements



Dates in black are recommended timeline to meet deadlines

Dates in red are statute or rule deadlines

Source: Originally based on Florida Housing Coalition, Webinar, SHIP Incentive Strategies and the AHAC, 2019, updated to reflect City of Clearwater events and dates.

II. LOCAL HOUSING INCENTIVE STRATEGIES

The City of Clearwater’s sixth eleven-member AHAC was formed in September 2022 to review and update the values, principles, vision, and recommendations for the LHS. The resulting values, principles and vision are found in **Appendix C** and the resulting recommendations are found in **Section 2.1 and 2.2** below.

2.1 Affordable Housing Incentives

The following provides synopses of the City's current affordable housing practices, including policies,¹ procedures, ordinances, and regulations. The following also outlines the AHAC's evaluation of the recommendations to incentivize affordable housing that were previously approved in 2021. As part of the evaluation, the AHAC may continue, modify, or remove some recommendations and may add new recommendations as relevant. Recommendations for incentives are organized by the strategic incentives cited in Florida Statutes respective to the SHIP program funding. Section 420.9076, F.S., cites 11 areas of affordable housing incentives for examination by the AHAC. The AHAC evaluated the City's implementation of various incentives in these 11 areas and recommended other areas not cited in the statute.

This evaluation of recommendations occurred during meetings with the AHAC and City staff from September through December 2022. The following provides the schedule of these meetings:

- 9/13/2022 Meeting with the AHAC and staff of the Economic Development & Housing Department
- 10/11/2022 Meeting with the AHAC and staff of the Economic Development & Housing Department
- 11/7/2022 Public Hearing with the AHAC, staff of the Economic Development & Housing Department, and interested members of the public
- 12/1/2022 City Council meeting to accept the updated LHS report

Summaries of the AHAC meetings held on September 13, 2022, and on October 11, 2022, can be found in **Appendix D**. The LHS report is a result of the meetings held with the AHAC and the input of City staff to determine the feasibility of the AHAC recommendations. On November 7, 2022, the AHAC reviewed the LHS report and finalized its recommendations regarding affordable housing incentives. The final recommendations, as approved by the AHAC, are captured in **Appendix E**. The LHS report was accepted by City Council on December 1, 2022, and the recommendations will be used to amend the Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) and the City's *Comprehensive Plan*.

¹ All references made to the City's "Comprehensive Plan" are drawn from the official document as adopted by City Council inclusive of any amendments as of April 7, 2022.

2.1.1 Expedited Review Process

Strategic Incentive No. 1 (Florida Statute)

The processing of approvals of development orders or permits for affordable housing projects is expedited to a greater degree than other projects, as provided in s. 163.3177(6)(f)3, F.S.

Meeting Synopsis:

No discussion related to expediting review processes occurred during the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, the “Request for Expedited Permit Processing for Affordable Housing Activity” form was discussed, along with the duration of single-family permit reviews. Although recent amendments to Recommendation 1.1 require reviews of single-family permit applications to be completed in four days of the initial submittal and three days of all subsequent submittals, the actual review time has proved to be longer. City staff responded that permit volume often impacts review times. The designation of an “Affordable Housing Advocate” was discussed as a means of expediting the review process, as was the creation of an affordable housing “dashboard” on the City’s website.

The AHAC also discussed whether any single-family developers have submitted template plans for pre-screening to expedite the permit review process. City staff responded that although regularly encouraged, no template plans have been submitted. The AHAC discussed the potential of purchasing template plans to make available as an incentive for affordable housing.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, changes proposed to Recommendations 1.1, 1.2, and 1.4 were reviewed and agreed to by the committee. These changes focus on the committee’s intention to either continue or act more affirmatively on the previous recommendations.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

The City of Clearwater Economic Development & Housing Department continues to provide a form titled, “Request for Expedited Permit Processing for Affordable Housing Activity” that, when completed and submitted by the developer, expedites permitting for affordable housing projects. The form can be issued for a site-specific project or for a one-year period, depending on a developer’s business strategy. This form does not expedite the review process for site plans, land use plan amendments, rezoning, or annexations, as these submittals are subject to board-dependent meeting schedules (e.g., Community Development Board, City Council).

Currently, and depending on the type of project, the Assistant Director of the Economic Development & Housing Department and the Permit Manager and/or Planning Manager act as liaisons between the developer and the City.

The Assistant Director of the Economic Development & Housing Department determines whether a project qualifies as affordable housing and, if eligible, provides the developer with the “Request for Expedited Permit Processing for Affordable Housing Activity” form and applicable checklists.

The Economic Development & Housing Department and Planning & Development Department support customer service for potential affordable housing projects by providing information and responding to developer inquiries by the end of business day (EOB). The Planning & Development Department utilizes technology to enhance administrative efficiencies. All permitting is facilitated by a one-stop “ePermit Hub” portal that supports electronic plan submittal, review, and inspections, or through Accela. Information, forms, and checklists are available online and at the counter for all types of projects (not necessarily affordable housing). Target dates and permit status are posted via the ePermit Hub portal and review time has been generally reduced to 14 days.

The Housing Division recently updated its webpages to improve communication and another update is in process. The Planning & Development Department also provides information on its webpages.

The City already maintains a “Building Plan Review Committee” brochure that summarizes the City’s development review processes; however, this brochure is not specific to policies or processes that incentivize affordable housing in the City of Clearwater.

While the City regularly encourages developers to submit template plans to expedite review, none have submitted template plans to date.

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modifies the following recommendations from the 2021 LHS report with changes as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 1.1 *Continue to use the “Request for Expedited Permit Processing for Affordable Housing Activity” form to fast-track affordable housing projects. Projects submitted with this form will receive priority during the permit review process. ~~Continue to strive to~~ by completeing reviews of single-family permit reviews within four days of the initial submittal and within three days of all subsequent submittals.*

- 1.2 *The Assistant Director of Economic Development & Housing and Permit Manager ~~should~~ will continue to be the primary and secondary points of contact when submitting affordable housing projects. Through close coordination, these two staff positions ~~should~~ will:*
 - *Create and oversee an affordable housing “One Stop Streamline Permitting Process.”*
 - *Act as a liaison between the developer and all departments involved in the review and permitting process.*
 - *Organize and participate in the pre-application meetings.*
 - *Provide necessary information and forms to the developer to avoid delays during the application and review process.*

- *Create a process and definitive project requirement checklist for affordable housing projects for each level of review and stage of permitting.*
- *Create a definitive but feasible review timeline for affordable housing projects considering variables such as the type, size and impact in the community depending on the level of review and stage of permitting.*
- *Release to the applicant and all City departments involved at once, written statements for additional requirements and project determinations.*
- *Track the review process through the City's online ePermit system.*
- *Report to the developer the status of the application.*

1.3 *Continue to improve customer service toward potential project applicants by:*

- *Maintaining a positive attitude*
- *Offering a quick response time via email or phone calls*
- *Making available project requirements and forms*
- *Providing a list of potential mentors experienced in affordable housing development*
- *Utilizing new technology to enhance administrative efficiencies and to educate developers about the City's affordable housing incentives and permitting process by means of link sharing, web forms, videos/webinars, virtual meetings/forums, and other tools*

1.4 **Publish** ~~Review and annually update~~ a brochure ~~or and~~ other informational handouts **to be published** in a prominent location on the City's Affordable Housing webpage that explains the City's development approval and permitting process to developers, including but not limited to:

- *Relationship between City and County policies and the regulation of land use, density, and intensity*
- *City-sponsored incentives for affordable housing such as the "Request for Expedited Permit Processing for Affordable Housing Activity" form, Affordable Housing Density Bonus, Parking Reductions, and Nonconforming Exemption for Affordable Housing*

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

Implementation:

Recommendations 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5 are already implemented to varying degrees by City staff; however, changes to Recommendations 1.1, 1.2, and 1.4 as proposed by the committee will require further coordination between the Assistant Director of Economic Development & Housing and Permit Manager to fully implement.

2.1.2 Modification of Fees

Strategic Incentive No. 2 (Florida Statute)

All allowable fee waivers provided for the development or construction of affordable housing.

Meeting Synopsis:

No discussion regarding the modification of fees occurred during the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, minor changes to the AHAC's previous recommendations were proposed, focusing on the committee's intention to either continue or more affirmatively act on previous recommendations. Additionally, discussion surrounding Recommendation 2.2 proposed adding benchmarking language such as "on par" with other municipalities in Pinellas County to achieve fee competitiveness.

At the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, changes proposed to Recommendations 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 were reviewed and agreed to by the committee. The previous 2021 recommendation regarding development of a new Parks & Recreation impact fee structure to reduce or waive impact fees for affordable housing was completed; therefore, that recommendation is removed.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

While impact fees do increase the costs of affordable housing; it is also true that affordable housing creates the same demand for public infrastructure as other types of development. Therefore, the City of Clearwater charges specific fees to conduct development reviews and issue permits for affordable housing projects. The current City of Clearwater fee structure is adopted as Appendix A (Schedule of Fees, Rates and Charges) of the *Community Development Code*. Development review fees are based on the level of review, and permitting fees are based on construction valuation. City of Clearwater impact fees are assessed per unit. Depending on market conditions, these fees could potentially deter the development of affordable housing.

In Florida, impact fees may be waived by exception for affordable housing projects consistent with the Florida Impact Fee Act, Section 163.31801(8), F.S., which does not require the local government to use any revenues to offset the revenue loss. This exception or waiver is applicable to housing that is affordable as defined by Section 420.9071, F.S. (i.e., 30% of 120%).

In 2016, Pinellas County restructured its transportation impact fees to fund not only standard road widening but also multi-modal improvements such as mass transit, bicycle, or pedestrian features. Such alternative modes of transportation are beneficial to persons without reliable access to an automobile and complement the provision of affordable housing. Consequently, the 2017 AHAC recommended coordination with Pinellas County regarding data-based rate flexibility within the multi-modal impact to support the provision of affordable housing.

The City of Clearwater is identified as Multi-Modal Impact Fee District #6/6A within Pinellas County.

A Multimodal Impact Fee is charged to offset the cost of improvements needed as development occurs and population increases resulting in an increased burden on traffic infrastructure. Revenue from the fee is shared between Pinellas County and the City of Clearwater. The fee can be reduced or offset through a traffic study, reduction for low-income housing, and pre-existing development traffic counts.

Fee Waiver or Exemption – Government projects (e.g., library, rec center, etc.) are exempt. This exemption applies to both the City and County portion of impact fee revenue.

Reduction for low-income housing:

- A single-family home under 1,500 square feet (SF) for a qualifying low-income household (LIHH) is charged \$653 compared to \$1,003 for the same size home for a household not qualifying as LIHH. The fee for non-qualifying LIHH increases as follows: \$1,242 for 1,501 SF to 2,499 SF; and \$1,529 for a home 2,500 SF and larger. Square footage is determined by heated area.
- Multi-family projects for qualifying LIHH are charged \$557/unit while projects not qualifying as LIHH are charged \$972/unit. (Sourced from City staff, 2021)

Fees are cited in Pinellas County's *Land Development Code*, Chapter 150, Article II. Alternatively, applicants can submit independent analysis to support further reduction of impact fees based on trip generation or economic studies.

In 2021, the AHAC recommended that the new Parks & Recreation impact fee structure either reduce or waive impact fees for affordable housing. These fees, which are scheduled for City Council adoption in January 2023, have been revised to include a waiver for affordable housing. The Planning & Development Department also recently completed changes to its fee structure to reduce plan review and permit fees by 75% for affordable housing. Moreover, the Economic Development and Housing Department has a policy for City-funded affordable housing projects whereby, if the developer does not realize a 12% profit on total development costs, the City will write-down the loan to provide for a 12% profit.

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modifies the following recommendations from the 2021 LHIS report with changes as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 2.1 Coordinate with Pinellas County, ~~as feasible~~, regarding data-based rate flexibility within the multi-modal impact fee to support the provision of affordable housing.
- 2.2 Continue to assess the financial, legal, and administrative feasibility of reducing, refunding, or redefining (by unit size) the costs of impact fees and/or permitting fees

related to the development of affordable housing with the goal of being on par with other municipalities in Pinellas County.

- 2.3 *The Planning & Development Department will ~~recommend amending~~ continue to implement the fee Schedule of Fees Rates and Charges ordinance to provide for a reduction in the Plan Review and Permit Fees for single-family homes.*
- 2.4 *The Economic Development & Housing Department will ~~develop a policy~~ continue to assist with the payment of Plan Review and Permit Fees and impact fees utilizing state and federal funds designated for affordable housing.*

Implementation:

Recommendation 2.1 is already implemented by Pinellas County but requires ongoing coordination between jurisdictions to certify affordable housing projects. This coordination will be implemented by the Engineering Department and will be monitored by City staff of the Economic Development & Housing Department and Planning & Development Department. In response to updated Recommendations 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4, City staff will continue to monitor how its internal departments and other local governments are addressing plan review and permit fees and impact fees to ensure Clearwater’s incentives are competitive throughout the region.

2.1.3 Flexible Densities

Strategic Incentive No. 3 (Florida Statute)

The allowance of flexibility in densities for affordable housing.

Meeting Synopsis:

No discussion regarding the flexible densities occurred during the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, the committee reviewed and agreed to continue the previous recommendations from the 2021 LHis report with no changes.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

The City of Clearwater supports flexibility in densities for affordable housing through its *Comprehensive Plan* policies and through its *Community Development Code*.

The City’s latest *Comprehensive Plan* was most recently amended on April 7, 2022. The *Comprehensive Plan* will be updated more extensively during the coming year. Existing *Comprehensive Plan* policies in support of flexible densities are adopted in the Future Land Use Element (FLUE) and Housing Element as follows:

Policy A.2.2.12 – The City will permit density bonuses for affordable housing developments provided that between 15% and 25% of the total units are reserved as affordable housing units.

Such bonuses shall not exceed 50% of the density permitted by the Future Land Use Map and shall not include properties located in the Coastal Storm Area. The density bonus shall be established by ordinance in the Community Development Code. (FLUE)

Policy C.1.9.1 – The City will permit density bonuses for affordable housing developments provided that between 15% and 25% of the total units are reserved as affordable housing units. Such bonuses shall not exceed 50% of the density permitted by the Future Land Use Map and shall not include properties located in the Coastal Storm Area. The density bonus shall be established by ordinance in the Community Development Code. (Housing Element)

Consistent with the *Comprehensive Plan* and previous AHAC recommendations, the *Community Development Code* contains affordable housing incentives under Section 3-920 that include a density bonus. Within Section 3-920, there is a requirement for a pre-application meeting to determine a project's eligibility for the density bonus. Subsection "A. Affordable Housing Density Dwelling Units" contains specific criteria and simplified formulas for calculating the additional density available to affordable housing projects. The *Community Development Code* outlines the procedures for review and approval, percentages of affordable units, standards such as compatibility and green design, and required covenants to maintain affordability. Recently, the Planning & Development Department added language to the City's affordable housing incentives to provide more clarity regarding the density bonus provision. Density allowances are typically confirmed with City staff during pre-application Building Plan Review Committee (BPRC) meetings.

In addition to the Density Bonus, the *Community Development Code* establishes flexibility criteria for specific uses requiring additional development review. Such uses fall into two categories: Flexible Standard Development and Flexible Development.

Flexible Standard Development – Typically requires Level One approval, which involves review by City staff only, including the Development Review Coordinator and Development Review Committee.

Flexible Development – Typically requires Level Two approval, which involves review by the Community Development Board. Some applications may warrant additional review, in which case Level Three approval is required. Level Three approval involves greater complexity and requires action by the City Council.

In some cases, affordable housing projects also fall under the flexible development criteria for the specific zoning district in which the project is located, which typically require Level Two approval. For example, Section 2-704 defines infill flexibility criteria for the Commercial zoning district, which includes Flexibility Criteria F.5.d, "...the proposed use provides for the provision of affordable housing."

Additionally, the City of Clearwater maintains a "Public Amenities Incentive Pool" (Section C-301) and application process whereby applicants can request additional density in return for projects located

in Character Districts designated by the Downtown Redevelopment Plan that also provide for eligible public amenities identified within that plan.

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continues the following recommendations from the 2021 LHS report with no changes:

- 3.1 *Continue to provide allowance of density flexibility for affordable housing developments.*
- 3.2 *Maintain specific parameters to grant density flexibility for affordable housing projects as allowed in the Community Development Code within the different zoning districts.*
- 3.3 *Continue to define the density allowance for an affordable housing project as part of a pre-application meeting prior to formal submission of the civil/site engineering requirements.*

Implementation:

Recommendations 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 are already implemented by the *Comprehensive Plan* or *Community Development Code* and will be continued. The effectiveness of existing policies will be more fully evaluated through the *Comprehensive Plan* update process in 2023, which will include analysis by City staff and public hearings by City Council that may result in *Comprehensive Plan* amendments.

2.1.4 Infrastructure Capacity

Strategic Incentive No. 4 (Florida Statute)

The reservation of infrastructure capacity for housing for very-low-income persons, low-income persons, and moderate-income persons.

Meeting Synopsis:

The City’s infrastructure capacity was not identified as an affordable housing barrier during meetings with the AHAC and City staff. 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. During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, the committee reviewed and agreed to continue the previous recommendation of “no recommendation” from the 2021 LHS report with no changes.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

The City of Clearwater does not require reservation of infrastructure capacity specific to housing for very-low-income, low-income, and moderate-income persons. The City is nearly built-out and has excess capacity for its public facilities. Consistent with the City’s *Comprehensive Plan*, the Planning & Development Department closely monitors all concurrency requirements so that adequate infrastructure is in place prior to development:

Policy I.1.3.2 – The City shall determine, prior to the issuance of development orders, whether sufficient capacity of essential public facilities to meet the minimum standards for levels of service for the existing population and a proposed development will be available concurrent with the impacts of the proposed development. The applicable water supplier shall be consulted prior to the issuance of a building permit to ensure potable water will be available prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy. (Capital Improvements Element)

Since 2021, no changes in City policy or practice regarding the reservation of infrastructure capacity have occurred (neither for affordable housing nor other types of development).

AHAC Recommendations:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC makes no change to the following as previously approved:

We do not recommend that the City of Clearwater include the reservation of infrastructure capacity for housing for very-low-income persons, low-income persons, and moderate-income persons as an incentive for the provision of affordable housing.

Implementation:

Not applicable (no recommendation)

2.1.5 Accessory Dwelling Units

Strategic Incentive No. 5 (Florida Statute)

Affordable accessory residential units.

Meeting Synopsis:

During the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022, the AHAC discussed allowing accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and tiny homes, and flexibility for other alternative housing types such as co-housing as potential incentives for affordable housing. Co-housing was discussed as an option for seniors and young professionals that cannot afford a larger apartment unit or single-family residence. Such alternative housing types may encourage a diverse supply of housing types and mix of income levels consistent with the guiding principles of the LHS report.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, the committee continued Recommendations 5.1 and 5.2 with no changes. Recommendation 5.1 is already implemented by the *Community Development Code*. Recommendation 5.2 is partially implemented and will be revisited during the City's *Comprehensive Plan* update process in 2023. Changes were proposed to Recommendation 5.3, focusing on the committee's intention to consider incentives for other alternative housing types such as co-housing beyond traditional accessory dwelling units. These changes were reviewed and agreed to by the committee.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

The City allows for the provision of accessory dwelling units in nonresidential zoning districts, including the City’s Commercial (“C”), Tourist (“T”), Downtown (“D”), Office (“O”), Institutional (“I”), and Industrial Research and Technology (“IRT”) districts, as described in the *Community Development Code*.

Regarding the allowance of accessory residential units in residential zoning districts, the Housing Element of the City’s *Comprehensive Plan* was recently updated to provide for expanded housing options, including tiny homes, and to exempt accessory dwelling units from density provisions if consistent with neighborhood character:

Policy C.1.1.2 – The City shall create provisions within the Community Development Code for expanding housing options that meet the changing needs of residents in terms of unit sizes, housing types, levels of affordability, and locations, while preserving existing housing, including “missing middle” housing types such as tiny houses, cottages, duplexes, courtyard housing, and small apartment buildings, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs). (Housing Element)

Policy C.1.1.8 – To provide additional and diverse housing options integrated into existing neighborhoods, accessory dwelling units shall be exempt from density provisions and allowed in certain residential zoning districts compliant with Community Development Code provisions which provide for consistency with neighborhood character. Such accessory dwelling units cannot be used for short-term rental purposes. (Housing Element)

Although adopted by policy, these actions have not been fully implemented as standards in the *Community Development Code*. The implementation of these policies will be reviewed during the next update to the City’s *Comprehensive Plan* during 2023. The *Comprehensive Plan* update process in 2023 will afford City staff the opportunity to consider other alternative housing type policies, including co-housing, based on regional examples and best practices.

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modifies the following recommendations from the 2021 LHIS report with changes as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 5.1 *Continue to allow for accessory dwelling units in nonresidential zoning districts as described within the City’s Community Development Code.*
- 5.2 *Revisit with City Council Comprehensive Plan Policy C.1.1.2 and Policy C.1.1.8 to consider allowing one accessory dwelling unit on a residential lot of any size provided that certain criteria are met. Such criteria may include:*
 - *Maximum unit size, parking standards, setback, and height requirements to facilitate review and to ensure neighborhood compatibility, which may be presented using a pattern book or similar means to expedite approval.*

- *Occupancy/tenure requirements so that the principal dwelling unit remains owner-occupied, the accessory dwelling unit is not used for short-term rental, and the number of occupants is limited to that which is reasonable for the unit size.*

5.3 ~~**Expand the definition of accessory dwelling unit to include tiny homes and**~~ **Provide flexibility for** other alternative unit types, **such as co-housing,** to incentivize unconventional solutions to address affordable housing needs **and support aging-in-place** within existing neighborhoods.

Implementation:

Recommendation 5.1 is already implemented by the *Community Development Code* and will be continued. Recommendation 5.2 and 5.3 will be implemented through the *Comprehensive Plan* update process, which will include analysis by City staff and public hearings by City Council that may result in *Comprehensive Plan* amendments.

2.1.6 Parking Reductions

Strategic Incentive No. 6 (Florida Statute)

The reduction of parking and setback requirements for affordable housing.

Meeting Synopsis:

No discussion regarding parking reductions occurred during the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, the committee reviewed and agreed to continue the previous recommendations from the 2021 LHS report with no changes.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

The Housing Element of the City’s *Comprehensive Plan* supports the reduction of parking and setback requirements for affordable housing through the following policies:

Policy C.1.9.2 – Allow flexibility with regard to setbacks and off-street parking to accommodate density bonuses associated with affordable housing developments provided the project design does not detract from the established or emerging character of the immediate vicinity. (Housing Element)

Policy C.1.9.3 – Allow flexibility with regard to off-street parking for projects containing affordable housing units located within 1000 feet of a transit stop. (Housing Element)

In general, the City’s *Community Development Code* establishes parking flexibility criteria for specific uses requiring additional development review. For example, attached dwellings, residential infill projects, comprehensive infill redevelopment projects, or other uses that could provide affordable

housing, may qualify as Level Two uses and allow for flexible development standards, including reduced parking and setbacks.

More specifically, the *Community Development Code* allows for the reduction of parking requirements for affordable housing if the project is located near a transit stop:

Article 3, Division 9, Section 3-920.B. Affordable housing parking reductions – Any reduction in required off-street parking shall only apply to those dwelling units which are certified by the City’s Economic Development and Housing Department as affordable housing. All other dwelling units not certified as affordable housing shall meet the minimum off-street parking requirements set out for the use in the applicable zoning district. Certified affordable housing projects may be eligible for a reduction in the required off-street parking consistent with the following:

- a. The parking requirement may be reduced to between one and one-half (1.5) and one (1) space per unit for projects located within 1,000 feet of a transit stop if the affordable housing units are designated for senior citizens or disabled persons.*
- b. For all other affordable housing projects, the parking requirement may be reduced to between one and one half (1.5) and one and one quarter (1.25) space per unit for projects located within 1,500 feet of a transit stop with 30-minute or more frequent service during peak hours and 60-minute or more frequent service during off-peak hours.*
- c. The distance a site is from a transit stop shall be measured from the nearest point of exit from the parcel based upon the shortest route of ordinary pedestrian travel.*

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continues the following recommendations from the 2021 LHis report with no changes:

- 6.1 *Continue to allow flexible setback requirements for affordable housing developments.*
- 6.2 *Continue to tie reductions of off-street parking requirements to proximity and access to alternative modes of transportation, including transit, sidewalks, trails, or other options.*

Implementation:

Recommendations 6.1 and 6.2 are already implemented by the *Comprehensive Plan* or *Community Development Code* and will be continued. The effectiveness of existing policies will be more fully evaluated through the *Comprehensive Plan* update process, which will include analysis by City staff and public hearings by City Council that may result in *Comprehensive Plan* amendments.

2.1.7 Flexible Lot Configurations

Strategic Incentive No. 7 (Florida Statute)

The allowance of flexible lot configurations, including zero-lot-line configurations for affordable housing.

Meeting Synopsis:

No discussion regarding flexible lot configurations occurred during the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, the committee reviewed and agreed to continue the previous recommendations from the 2021 LHS report with no changes.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

A legal lot of record, by definition, has fixed boundaries by a plat recorded in the Official Records of Pinellas County. It is therefore assumed that this incentive is intended to address flexible site plan configurations, rather than single flexible lot configurations. The City currently allows for site plan flexibility through the development review process, as supported by the City's *Community Development Code* and Article 2. Zoning Districts therein, which establishes flexibility criteria for specific uses. Such criteria may allow for more flexible site plan configurations but may also require an improved site plan to document how the flexibility will result in better design and/or appearance.

The allowance of flexible site plan configurations, including zero-lot line configurations for affordable housing, must be sensitive to the character and context of existing neighborhoods. To this end, the City's incentives for affordable housing include compatibility criteria in conjunction with the density bonus as follows:

Article 3, Division 9, Section 3-920.A.3.c.i. Compatibility Criteria –

...

- b. Proportionality and scale of the proposed development shall be consistent with the community character of the immediate vicinity of the parcel proposed for development.*
- c. The overall aesthetics of the proposed development shall be compatible with or an improvement to the community character as determined by the community development coordinator.*
- d. The scale and coverage of the proposed development shall be compatible with adjacent properties. If the overall bulk is larger than the surrounding buildings, the bulk may be reduced with the help of design elements such as step backs and setbacks...*

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continues the following recommendation from the 2021 LHS report with no changes:

- 7.1 Continue to allow flexible lot configurations for affordable housing developments while remaining sensitive to the character and context of existing neighborhoods.*

Implementation:

Recommendation 7.1 is already implemented by the *Community Development Code* and will be continued.

2.1.8 Modification of Street Requirements

Strategic Incentive No. 8 (Florida Statute)

The modification of street requirements for affordable housing.

Meeting Synopsis:

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.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

The City's general standards for streets are defined in Article 3, Division 19, Section 3-1904 of the *Community Development Code*:

Article 3, Division 19, Section 3-1904. Streets – Generally –

- A. The functional classification, arrangement, character, extent, width and location of all streets shall conform to the thoroughfare element of the comprehensive plan and shall be considered in their relation to existing and planned streets, topographical and environmental conditions, public convenience and safety, and their appropriate relationship to the proposed use of the land to be served by such streets.*

Section 3-1904 also specifies minimum right-of-way and lane designations for each classification of roadway, including neighborhood roads. A minimum pavement width of 24 feet plus curb is required for all neighborhood roads, 26 feet plus curb for all local roads, and 37 feet for all collector roads. These requirements are in place to maintain public health and safety.

Moreover, the City's *Community Development Code* requires that all streets be improved by a developer with paving, curbs or gutters, and sidewalks or on-street parking where necessary. These standards apply to all development, including affordable housing projects. Since the City of Clearwater is nearly built-out, the City's infrastructure system is already in place and it is not likely that affordable housing projects will need to provide local or collector roads. At most, such projects may require the provision of neighborhood roads internal to the site.

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC makes no change to the following as previously approved:

Because such standards are in place to benefit public health and safety, we do not recommend that the City utilize the modification of street requirements as an incentive for affordable housing.

Implementation:

Not applicable (no recommendation)

2.1.9 Pre-Adoption Policy Consideration

Strategic Incentive No.9 (Florida Statute)

The establishment of a process by which a local government considers, before adoption, policies, procedures, ordinances, regulations, or plan provisions that increase the cost of housing.

Meeting Synopsis:

No specific issues with the City’s current pre-adoption policy consideration process were identified during meetings with the AHAC and City staff. The current process is working.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, one minor change to Recommendation 9.1 was proposed, focusing on the committee’s intention to act more affirmatively on the previous recommendation. The minor change proposed to Recommendations 9.1 was reviewed and agreed to by the committee. Recommendation 9.2 was continued with no change.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

The Economic Development & Housing Department typically reviews City policies, procedures, and regulations that may affect the cost of housing as part of its annual reporting for the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program and the Federal Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) programs.

Moreover, the Economic Development & Housing Department typically receives new City *Comprehensive Plan* and *Community Development Code* provisions and ordinances for comment and participates in the City’s review process prior to adoption. This review process is maintained as a regular agenda item during Senior Executive Team bi-monthly meetings.

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continues the following recommendations from the 2021 LHIS report with minor changes as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 9.1 As part of its annual reporting, the Economic Development & Housing Department ~~should~~ will continue to review all regulations and ordinances that may affect the cost of housing.
- 9.2 Continue the review process maintained by the Senior Executive Team through which any new regulatory instrument created in the City (Ordinances, regulations, etc.) can be evaluated for its effect on housing affordability.

Implementation:

Recommendations 9.1 and 9.2 are already implemented through either state and federal reporting requirements or regular City staff meetings, which will be continued.

2.1.10 Inventory of Public Lands

Strategic Incentive No. 10 (Florida Statute)

The preparation of a printed inventory of locally owned public lands suitable for affordable housing.

Meeting Synopsis:

The inventory of public lands was discussed during the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022. The committee noted that many of the properties on the “Affordable Housing Inventory List” are too small, which limits the scale of affordable housing development that can occur. Small parcels are a barrier to affordable housing. The committee noted the need for larger parcels to effectively support affordable housing developments. The committee also suggested potential coordination with Pinellas County’s inventory to identify unincorporated properties near or within the City’s limits (e.g., enclaves) that could provide affordable housing opportunities in the area. City staff commented that the City has increased the minimum lot size for donated properties to address this issue.

At the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, changes proposed to Recommendations 10.1, 10.2, 10.4, and 10.5 were reviewed and agreed to by the committee. These changes convey the committee’s intention to act more affirmatively on the previous recommendations. Recommendation 10.3 was continued with no changes.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

The City of Clearwater is nearly built out. Most of the vacant parcels remaining are less than one acre in size. Due to the lack of land to develop affordable housing, the City offers flexibility through the *Community Development Code* to help developers utilize existing sites for infill and redevelopment projects. To facilitate affordable housing projects, the City keeps an inventory of publicly owned land suitable for affordable housing titled, “Affordable Housing Inventory List”, which is published on the City’s website:

<https://www.myclearwater.com/government/city-departments/affordable-housing/resources-for-developers>

The Affordable Housing Inventory List is maintained by *Comprehensive Plan* policy:

Policy C.1.2.6 - The City shall identify vacant and underutilized city-owned property that may be deemed surplus property and make it available for the development of affordable housing. (Housing Element)

The Affordable Housing Inventory List is State mandated by Section 166.0451, F.S. and is triennially updated. Updates occurred in 2009 by City Resolution #09-41 (November 5, 2009), in 2013 by City Resolution #13-10 (June 6, 2013), in 2016 by City Resolution #16-14 (June 16, 2016), and in 2019 by City Resolution #19-10 (June 20, 2019). As of 2022 under City Resolution #22-13 (June 16, 2022), there were eight (8) parcels suitable for the development of affordable housing:

1. 1454 S. Martin Luther King, Jr. Ave.
2. 1408 Monroe Ave.
3. 1415 Taft Ave.
4. 1002 Grant St.
5. 1004 Grant St.
6. 1007 Marshall St.
7. 1006 Grant St.
8. 406 Vine Ave.

Future updates to the inventory list may include lots not zoned residential that may be appropriate for affordable housing.

Since 2017, the Planning & Development Department has implemented a foreclosure program targeting properties with substantial code violations. As a result, several properties have been donated for affordable housing development (see Recommendation 10.4).

More recently, the City's Economic Development & Housing Department improved its procedure to make publicly owned land available to prospective developers and non-profit agencies to construct affordable housing. Previously lot disposition occurred on a first-come, first-served basis. In 2021, the City drafted a lot disposition policy to establish how the City notifies capable developers of available lots and distributes those lots through a public vetting process. The lot disposition policy establishes a clear and transparent process for donating appropriate City-owned lots to developers for the creation of affordable housing. The new lot disposition policy utilizes a small committee to choose lots to be made available, seek proposals from developers for the lots, then review/score the proposals to see who has the best ideas for the donated land. Nonprofit developers are included as well as minority and small developers. The City will advertise opportunities on the Economic Development & Housing Department website and reach out directly to those known to be interested. In 2021, the AHAC added Recommendation 10.5 regarding the lot disposition policy. To date, one lot has been sold and the City is preparing to sell another.

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modifies the following recommendations from the 2021 LHS report with changes as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 10.1 *The Economic Development & Housing Department ~~should~~ **will** continue to maintain the inventory of publicly-owned land suitable for the development of affordable housing.*
- 10.2 *Continue to publish the public land inventory owned by the City for affordable housing, ~~and a link to Pinellas County's inventory,~~ on the City's webpage for prospective developers and non-profit agencies for developing affordable housing.*
- 10.3 *Continue to make publicly-owned land available to prospective developers and non-profit agencies for developing affordable housing.*

- 10.4 *The Economic Development & Housing Department ~~should~~ **will** coordinate with the Planning & Development Department to identify properties having repeat code violations that may be suitable for rehabilitation, acquisition, or demolition for affordable housing.*
- 10.5 ~~Develop a new~~ **Continue to monitor the** *policy/procedure for distribution of city owned lots. Consider including energy efficient items **and related emerging technologies** into the scoring matrix to support environmentally friendly development in partnership with the Greenprint 2.0 timeline.*

Implementation:

Recommendations 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, and 10.5 will continued to be implemented by City staff of the Economic Development & Housing Department. Recommendation 10.4 will continue to be implemented by City staff of the Planning & Development Department through ongoing coordination with the Economic Development & Housing Department.

2.1.11 Proximity to Transportation, Employment & Mixed-Use Development

Strategic Incentive No. 11 (Florida Statute)

The support of development near transportation hubs and major employment centers and mixed-use developments.

Meeting Synopsis:

No specific issues with the City’s current policies regarding proximity to transportation, employment, and mixed-use development were identified during meetings with the AHAC and City staff. The City’s current policies remain acceptable to the committee. However, during the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, one minor change was proposed to Recommendation 11.1 to change the word, “should” to “will” to affirmatively act on the recommendation.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, the minor change proposed to Recommendation 11.1 was reviewed and agreed to by the committee.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

Generally, the City promotes areas suitable for affordable housing through the Future Land Use Element (FLUE) of the *Comprehensive Plan*. The FLUE contains a number of policies related to activity centers and transit hubs as part of the City’s overall design structure. Such policies include:

Policy A.2.2.7 – Residential land uses shall be sited on well-drained soils, in proximity to parks, schools, mass transit and other neighborhood-serving land uses. (FLUE)

Policy A.5.4.4 – Missouri Avenue from Drew Street to Belleair Road. The creation of affordable housing and mixed-use development should be supported, and lot consolidation and streetscape improvements should be encouraged. [Activity Center] (FLUE)

Policy A.5.4.7 – South Fort Harrison Avenue from A Street to E Street. Amendments to the Future Land Use Plan and Zoning Atlas may be considered to promote affordable housing, mixed-use development, and to support the emerging character of the area and Morton Plant Hospital. [Activity Center] (FLUE)

Policy A.6.8.7 – Create mixed-use, higher density, livable communities through design, layout and use of walkability techniques within existing and proposed transit corridors, including planned PSTA, Pinellas County MPO and TBARTA lines and potential station locations. (FLUE)

Additionally, the FLUE includes the Objective A.6.10 policy series, which establishes transit-oriented land use designations and design standards:

Policy A.6.10.8.b(4) – Provide a mixture of housing types affordable to households with a range of incomes within [transit] station areas. (FLUE)

The Housing Element of the *Comprehensive Plan* also supports the location of assisted housing near major activity centers:

Policy C.1.4.2 – Assisted housing should be located in close proximity to employment centers, mass transit services, parks, and commercial centers. (Housing Element)

Additionally, both the City's *Comprehensive Plan* and *Community Development Code* allow flexibility in parking for affordable housing projects if located near a transit stop (see Housing Element Policy C.1.9.3 as well as *Community Development Code* Article 3, Division 9, Section 3-920.B. for the City's "affordable housing parking incentive").

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continues the following recommendation from the 2021 LHS report with one minor change as shown in strikethrough/underline:

11.1 The City ~~should~~ will maintain and implement Future Land Use Element policies A.2.2.7; A.5.4.4; A.5.4.7; A.6.8.7; A.6.10.8; and C.1.4.2 of the City's *Comprehensive Plan*.

Implementation:

Recommendation 11.1 is already implemented by the *Comprehensive Plan* and will be continued.

2.2 Additional Incentives

The following provides synopses of the City's current practices regarding affordable housing and outlines the AHAC's evaluation of recommendations related to incentives for the provision of affordable housing not cited in Section 420.9076, F.S. These recommendations were previously approved in 2021 but were evaluated and, if necessary, revised in 2022 to address current affordable housing barriers.

2.2.1 Adaptive Reuse

Meeting Synopsis:

No discussion regarding adaptive reuse occurred during the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, the committee reviewed and agreed to continue the previous recommendations from the 2021 LHS report with no changes.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

The City continues to allow for adaptive reuse if allowed within the zoning district where the affordable housing project is located.

Of note, under Florida House Bill 1339 (June 2020), local governments may now approve affordable housing development by right on any parcel zoned for residential, industrial, or commercial use.

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continues the following recommendation from the 2021 LHS report with no changes:

- 12.1 *Continue to allow “adaptive reuse” involving the conversion of surplus and/or outmoded buildings including old churches, school buildings, hospitals, train stations, warehouses, factories, etc. to mixed uses where permitted by zoning district.*

Implementation:

Recommendation 12.1 is already implemented by the *Community Development Code* and will be continued.

2.2.2 Land Development Code

Meeting Synopsis:

No specific issues with the City’s *Community Development Code* were identified during meetings with the AHAC and City staff. The current standards remain acceptable. City staff clarified during the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, that the *Community Development Code* section referenced in Recommendation 13.1 pertains to the affordable housing density bonus; however, the “other criteria” thereunder are not currently codified.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, the committee reviewed and agreed to continue Recommendation 13.1 with one minor change, replacing the word, “encourage” with the word, “incentivize”.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

Design standards for affordable housing projects are generally addressed by *Community Development Code* Article 3, Division 9, Section 3-920.A.3.c.i-iii. [Compatibility Criteria, Design Criteria, Green

Building Criteria]; however, the “other” criteria referenced in the 2017 AHAC Recommendation 13.1 are not addressed by Section 3-920.A.3.c.i-iii.

The 2014 AHAC identified the *Community Development Code’s* treatment of nonconforming development as a barrier, citing the cost of bringing older properties “up-to-code” as prohibitive to affordable housing. As a result of the 2014 AHAC recommendation to allow certain exceptions to the 50 percent limitation on nonconforming structures, Article 6 of the *Community Development Code* was modified and adopted as Section 6-102.F.1-6. in June 2015. Because Recommendation 13.2 was successfully implemented, Recommendation 13.2 was not continued by the 2017 AHAC. Only Recommendation 13.1 (design standards) was continued.

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continues the following recommendation from the 2021 LHS report with one minor change as shown in strikethrough/underline:

13.1 Continue to ~~encourage~~ incentivize developers to address recommended design standards for affordable housing developments consistent with Sec. 3-920.A.3.c.i-iii. of the City of Clearwater Community Development Code. Other criteria could include but are not limited to:

- Provide direct and visual access to open space for residents.
- Consider play areas when developing family housing.
- Provide nighttime outdoor illumination for safety.
- Use landscape standards and buffers to screen nuisances and to separate public and private areas.
- Centrally-locate common facilities.
- Use Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) when practical and financially feasible.

Implementation:

Recommendation 13.1 is partially implemented by the *Community Development Code*. City staff will continue to consider “other criteria” for potential amendments to Sec. 3-920.A.3.c.i-iii. of the *Community Development Code* in support of affordable housing.

2.2.3 Communication and Marketing of Affordable Housing

Meeting Synopsis:

No discussion regarding communication and marketing of affordable housing occurred during the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, the committee reviewed and agreed to modify previous Recommendation 14.1 by amending and adding bullets under the recommendation. The modified recommendation conveys the committee’s intent to communicate affordable housing successes and outcomes with developers and other City boards and committees.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

The Economic Development & Housing Department continues to develop materials to better market its services to prospective developers of affordable housing. The Economic Development & Housing Department works with the Public Communications Department to create awareness of affordable housing programs through marketing materials, presentations, and press releases.

The City's "Affordable Housing" webpage is a one-stop resource for affordable housing developers and persons seeking housing assistance:

<https://www.myclearwater.com/government/city-departments/affordable-housing>

The webpage publishes plans and reports produced by the Housing Division, as well as information on the City's homeless prevention initiatives.

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modifies the following recommendation from the 2021 LHS report with changes as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 14.1 *Continue to improve current communication channels and marketing materials to reach different stakeholders interested in affordable housing. Some of the suggested actions include but are not limited to:*
- *Conduct an educational campaign, in conjunction with regular City communications, to rebrand affordable housing as workforce housing that supports the diverse needs of residents through a variety of unit/product types compatible with the City's neighborhoods.*
 - *Partner with Amplify Clearwater and others to broadly promote the benefits of, and opportunities for, affordable housing development in the City **and to communicate successes.***
 - *Prepare, **update, and keep current** marketing materials for the general public in order to promote the different housing programs that the City offers, including homebuyer education and down payment assistance to support homeownership.*
 - *Prepare, **update, and keep current** marketing materials that help developers and the general public to understand the application criteria, permitting process, and the number of incentives available for rehabilitation and new construction of affordable housing units in the City.*
 - *Make accessible to the public an inventory and a map of suitable residential vacant land available for development.*
 - *Include a section on the City's webpage called, "Affordable Housing & Community Development," specifically dedicated to the promotion of affordable housing.*
 - ***Share outcomes and analytics with appropriate City boards and committees.***

Implementation:

City staff of the Economic Development & Housing Department will develop the educational campaign to rebrand affordable housing and form a partnership with Amplify Clearwater to promote the City's Affordable Housing webpage and content thereon. In coordination with the Public Communications Department, City staff will improve marketing of affordable housing incentives, including communication of affordable housing successes and outcomes with developers and other City boards and committees.

2.2.4 Financing

Meeting Synopsis:

Financing was discussed during the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022. The AHAC discussed other financing incentives for affordable housing, included federal assistance and grant programs. Multiple factors contribute to housing costs and the menu of federal assistance and grant programs is everchanging. The committee suggested providing information about the recent Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022 and other financial incentives that would be helpful to residents and developers on the City's website. Coordination with the Hometown Heroes initiative was also mentioned, as was the potential to seek financial compensation from the State of Florida.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, the committee further discussed financing, including potential use of general fund dollars for affordable housing. Financial assistance with energy and cost efficiency improvements was also discussed. Although no changes were proposed to Recommendations 15.1 and 15.2, the committee reviewed and agreed to continue these recommendations. These recommendations were considered general enough to capture the incentives discussed during the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

The Economic Development & Housing Department continues to leverage funds with other non-profit housing providers (e.g., Habitat for Humanity, Foundations, Affordable Housing Developers, Development Corporations, CHDOs, etc.) to finance the development of affordable housing, and continuously seeks relationships with new qualified organizations. City staff also seeks new public-private partnerships to help offset public investment and reduce private developer costs, as well as partnerships with other local governments (e.g., Pinellas County) to co-fund impactful projects.

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continues the following recommendations from the 2021 LHis report with no changes:

- 15.1 *Diversify financial strategies to contribute to the new construction and maintenance of affordable housing.*
- 15.2 *Evaluate the feasibility of reducing/paying code violation liens on lots suitable for affordable housing development.*

Implementation:

Recommendations 15.1 will continue to be implemented by City staff of the Economic Development & Housing Department, with further attention to making information available on the City's website. Recommendation 15.2 will require a change to City Council policy and feasibility of implementation will need to be further evaluated.

2.2.5 Partnerships

Meeting Synopsis:

During the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022, the AHAC discussed several third-party barriers to affordable housing that require partnerships outside of local government.

The AHAC discussed investor real estate, short-term rentals such as Airbnb, and general inflation as barriers to affordable housing. It was noted that investors take affordable housing off the market, drive-up costs, and compete with residents and affordable housing developers to buy properties.

The AHAC discussed the length of time to process Down Payment Assistance (DPA) loans, particularly related to the timing of inspections and closings. The length of time is prohibitive to making repairs, and contracts are lost over simple problems. Many of the issues identified were related to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements. The committee suggested moving inspections to earlier in the process or focusing on basic four-point inspections (e.g., insurable roof, electric, plumbing, etc.) and pre-approval for the first-time homebuyer as being essential.

The AHAC discussed the rising costs of homeowner insurance and property taxes, which are particularly problematic for the elderly living on fixed incomes.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, the committee reviewed and agreed to modify previous Recommendation 16.1 by adding a new bullet under the recommendation. The modified recommendation addresses the issue of DPA loans and inspection timing to facilitate closings. Partnerships to address third-party barriers were already referenced in a previous bullet, which will be continued.

Evaluation of Existing Strategy:

The Economic Development & Housing Department strives to keep an updated list of affordable housing units and maintains a list of housing partners on the City's website at:

<https://www.myclearwater.com/government/city-departments/affordable-housing/resources-for-residents>

The Department also partners with other affordable housing providers to offer mentoring and technical training, and to address topics such as foreclosure, Fair Housing, and other relevant issues. The Department continues to improve its partnerships with local lenders, continues to work closely with Pinellas County to seek mutual opportunities for the development of affordable housing, and monitors statewide initiatives through the City's lobbyist.

AHAC Recommendation:

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modifies the following recommendation from the 2021 LHis report with changes as shown in strikethrough/underline:

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

- *Prepare, advertise, and maintain an inventory of affordable housing providers/developers and any other related organization.*
- *Encourage partnerships between current and new affordable housing developers for mentoring and technical training.*
- *Encourage and support joint development opportunities between the private sector and non-profits to develop affordable housing.*
- *Engage lenders in an ongoing discussion with the City relative to underwriting and credit standards, technology solutions, as well as the development of financial products in an effort to maximize the financing options available to potential first-time homebuyers through conventional and other lenders.*
- *Coordinate with Pinellas County joint programs for the provision of affordable housing, including the Pinellas County Countywide Housing Strategy and Advantage Pinellas Housing Compact.*
- *Monitor, and encourage citizens to lobby for, the development of statewide legislative initiatives to gauge the local impact of their provisions.*
- *Coordinate with the private sector and non-profits to provide homebuyer education, home warranties and other strategies that reduce the ongoing maintenance risk of homeownership.*
- *Increase down payment assistance loan amounts to be viable for the homebuyer while remaining financially feasible for the continued operation of the City's program.*
- **Improve the timing of Housing Quality Standards inspections to facilitate closings on homes with down payment assistance loans, if feasible under funding source requirements.**
- *Partner with the private sector and non-profits to address third-party barriers to affordable housing and to identify appropriate incentives to reduce labor and material costs for developers and maintenance and insurance costs for homeowners.*

Implementation:

Recommendation 16.1 is already implemented by City staff of the Economic Development & Housing Department through ongoing public and private partnerships, which will be continued. Efforts to reduce the maintenance risk of homeownership and to address third-party barriers to affordable housing will require further coordination with these partners. City staff will coordinate with and closely monitor regional and statewide affordable housing initiatives. In response to recommendations from the 2022 AHAC, City staff will work with the Neighborhood and Affordable

Housing Advisory Board (NAHAB) to address the issue of inspection timing to facilitate closings on homes with DPA loans, if feasible under funding source requirements.

APPENDIX A: City of Clearwater Resolutions

- A.1 Resolution #08-15, AHAC Members**
- A.2 Resolution #14-26, AHAC Members**
- A.3 Resolution #17-34, AHAC Members**
- A.4 Resolution #20-50, AHAC Members**
- A.5 Resolution #22-19, AHAC Members**
- A.6 Resolution #09-41, Affordable Housing Inventory List**
- A.7 Resolution #13-10, Affordable Housing Inventory List**
- A.8 Resolution #16-14, Affordable Housing Inventory List**
- A.9 Resolution #19-10, Affordable Housing Inventory List**
- A.10 Resolution #22-13, Affordable Housing Inventory List**

APPENDIX B: Affordable Housing in Clearwater

B.1 Housing Affordability

Affordability refers to the capacity that all income levels have to access a “decent and adequate” housing unit within the housing market, either for rental or ownership. One measurement of affordable housing is the percentage of annual income that a household pays toward housing-related costs. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines “Cost Burdened” as when a household spends more than 30% of their income on housing costs. However, for some State programs the burden could be up to 35% depending on a specific household’s capacity. A household that pays more than 50% of its annual income toward housing costs is considered by HUD to be “Severely Cost Burdened.”

According to estimates sourced from the Shimberg Center for Affordable Housing and Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse, in 2020, 39% of the City’s households pay more than 30% of their income for housing. By comparison, 35% of households statewide are cost-burdened. Approximately 18% of the City’s households pay more than 50% of income for housing.

The City of Clearwater’s *Comprehensive Plan* defines affordable housing in Policy C.1.2.5 of the Housing Element:

“C.1.2.5 – Define Affordable Housing as any residential dwelling unit leased or owned by a household with a household income of one hundred twenty percent (120%) or less of the adjusted area median family income for Pinellas County, Florida, as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The rental rates for leased Workforce Affordable Housing Units shall not exceed the rates published by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation for annual “Maximum Rents by Number of Bedroom Unit” for the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). For non-rental units, the sales price may not exceed ninety percent (90%) of the average area price for the Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater MSA, as established by the annual revenue procedure which provides issuers of qualified mortgage bonds, as defined in Section 143(a) of the Internal Revenue Code, and issuers of mortgage credit certificates, as defined in Section 25(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, with the nationwide average purchase price for the residences located in the United States.”

B.2 Barriers and Incentives

According to HUD, a regulatory barrier is "a public regulatory requirement, payment, or process that significantly impedes the development or availability of affordable housing without providing a commensurate health and/or safety benefit."² Understanding barriers is the first step to transform them into incentives for the supply of affordable housing. The AHAC conducted a comprehensive overview of

² Stowell, C; Shelburne, M. (2004). Responding to HUD’s Affordable Communities Initiative: Will It Make a Difference? The Practitioner Planner, American Planning Association, Winter 2004.

affordable housing barriers to understand potential relationships of what, from the City’s perspective, could be done to incentivize the supply of affordable housing.

This comprehensive approach helped the AHAC to look beyond the analysis required by Section 420.9076, F.S. and to prioritize recommendations. In that sense, the recommendations of the AHAC targeted areas and barriers within the domain of the City of Clearwater’s basic responsibilities: provide policy direction through the City’s *Comprehensive Plan*; provide incentives through the *Community Development Code*; and facilitate information and the permitting process.

Chart 1 summarizes potential barriers to affordable housing.

Chart 1: Affordable Housing Barriers



B.3 Issues in Supplying Affordable Housing

Built-out communities, such as Clearwater, have pressures for the provision of affordable housing due to increasing land values; limited availability of vacant developable land; skyrocketing construction costs due to inflation and demand for building material supplies; and labor market imbalances. In addition, other third-party costs of home acquisition (i.e., property taxes and insurance) create a financial burden for citizens.

Beginning in 2008 and most recently in 2021, the AHAC identified the most significant issues for the provision of affordable housing in the City. The following summarizes the significant issues that are relevant in 2022:

- ***Size of City-Owned Properties (Barrier).*** Because the City of Clearwater is mostly built-out, affordable housing development opportunities are limited due to the lack of available land. In 2022, the AHAC discussed the Inventory of Public Lands (i.e., City-owned property list) that is updated annually during the LHS process. The committee noted that many of the properties on the list are too small, which limits the scale of affordable housing development that can occur. Small parcels are a barrier to affordable housing. The committee noted the need for larger parcels to effectively support affordable housing developments. The committee also suggested potential coordination with Pinellas County's Inventory of Public Lands to identify unincorporated properties near or within the City's limits (e.g., enclaves) that could provide affordable housing opportunities in the area. To address this barrier, the City recently increased the minimum lot size for donated properties.
- ***Alternative Housing Types/Co-Housing (Incentive).*** In 2022, the AHAC discussed allowing for Co-Housing and flexibility for other alternative housing types such as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as potential incentives for affordable housing. Co-Housing was discussed as an option for seniors and young professionals that cannot afford a larger apartment unit or single-family residence. Such alternative housing types may encourage a diverse supply of housing types and mix of income levels consistent with the guiding principles of the LHS report.
- ***Investor Real Estate/Short Term Rentals Competition (Barrier).*** In 2022, the AHAC discussed investor real estate, short-term rentals such as Airbnb, and general inflation as barriers to affordable housing. It was noted that investors take affordable housing off the market, drive-up costs, and compete with residents and affordable housing developers to buy properties.
- ***DPA Loans, Length of Time for Inspections/Closing (Barrier).*** In 2022, the AHAC discussed the length of time to process Down Payment Assistance (DPA) loans, particularly related to the timing of inspections and closings. The length of time is prohibitive to making repairs, and contracts are lost over simple problems. Many of the issues identified were related to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements for financial assistance. The committee suggested moving inspections to earlier in the process or focusing on basic four-point inspections (e.g., insurable roof, electric, plumbing, etc.) and pre-approval for the first-time homebuyer as being essential.

Appendix

- **Homeowner Insurance/Property Taxes (Barrier).** In 2022, the AHAC discussed the rising costs of homeowner insurance and property taxes, which are particularly problematic for the elderly living on fixed incomes.
- **Federal Assistance/Grants (Incentive).** In 2022, the AHAC discussed other incentives to affordable housing, included federal assistance and grant programs. The committee suggested providing information about the recent Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022 and other incentives that would be helpful to residents and developers on the City's website. Coordination with the Hometown Heroes initiative was also mentioned, as was the potential to get financial compensation from the State of Florida.

APPENDIX C: Values, Principles and Vision

C.1 The Value of Affordable Housing

The AHAC discussed and confirmed the value that affordable housing brings to the City's development. The AHAC found that affordable housing in the City of Clearwater:

A) Supports a dynamic and competitive economy.

There is an intrinsic relationship between a dynamic economy and affordable housing. The existence of affordable housing units is a variable that supports business location thus job creation. The City, which is nearly built-out, has the opportunity to capitalize on its existing urban fabric through urban renewal and infill development. Such investment in the City would have positive impacts on the local economy and increase Clearwater's ability to compete with other cities.

B) Improves social well-being and build sense of community.

Housing is a fundamental human need. Consideration of social well-being, including long-term housing stability, is imperative for the future of the City. There is a need for improved job opportunities, as well as for a simple, understandable process for achieving housing, especially for those in low to moderate-income households. Education and motivation for home ownership are also important aspects of the City's future.

C) Ensures that the City's workforce can live within the City.

There is a growing need for affordable "workforce" housing within the community, specifically for police, fire, and other service employees. There is also a need to draw the workforce back into the City to reduce commute distances, to reduce crime, and to restore a sense of pride in the community.

C.2 Principles for Clearwater's Affordable Housing

The AHAC discussed, confirmed, and amended the principles that provision of affordable housing in the City of Clearwater should embrace. The AHAC found that affordable housing in the City of Clearwater should be:

1) Affordable over the long-term.

Affordable housing is readily available and reasonably priced. Mortgage rates for affordable housing are structured to allow people to keep their homes over the long-term and to age in place. Rental rates for affordable housing are fair and reasonable. The cost of maintaining a home (e.g., fees, maintenance, etc.) is practical.

2) Diverse supply that provides for a mix of income levels and the diverse needs of residents.

Affordable housing is comprised of diverse unit types that support a mix of income levels and the diverse needs of residents, incorporating rental and ownership opportunities.

- 3) **Designed to be sustainable, well-designed energy and cost efficient, and to minimize physical barriers to accessibility.**

Affordable housing uses innovative and sustainable materials and technologies. Floor plans are designed for “living” and construction materials, including fixtures, are energy and cost efficient. Structures are safe, functional, and accessible.

- 4) **In aesthetic character with the surrounding neighborhood.**

Affordable housing blends into the architectural fabric and aesthetic character of the community. Public open spaces are designed for safety and visibility but well-landscaped. Fences or other barriers are architectural and transparent.

- 5) **Strategically-located and pedestrian-oriented with access to mass transit, open spaces, educational institutions, and employment or workforce training opportunities.**

Affordable housing is located near civic centers, educational institutions, and employment opportunities. Residents enjoy pedestrian-oriented facilities with access to mass transit and open spaces.

- 6) **Incentivized to promote incorporation of affordable housing into all non-affordable housing developments.**

Affordable housing is incentivized to promote the construction of mixed-income housing developments that incorporate both affordable and non-affordable housing units into the same project.

C.3 Vision

In order to develop a vision for affordable housing as part of the Local Housing Incentive Strategies, the AHAC summarized the value of providing affordable housing for the City as well as the principles. The following statement summarizes the AHAC’s vision of affordable housing for the City:

*The City of Clearwater will ~~encourage~~ **incentivize** the development of a diverse supply of housing that is safe, affordable, sustainable, and ~~well-designed energy and cost efficient~~, that blends into the **aesthetic** character of all the City’s neighborhoods proximate to public amenities and employment opportunities, which supports an inclusive community and the diverse needs of residents.*

APPENDIX D: Advisory Committee Meeting Summaries

D.1 AHAC Meeting #1, September 13, 2022

2022 Update of Local Housing Incentive Strategies

AHAC Meeting #1 | September 13, 2022 | 9:00 a.m.

Council Chambers, Main Library (100 N. Osceola Ave.)

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 2021. An 11-member Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) representing various affordable housing interests was appointed by the City Council on September 1, 2022, to evaluate and update the 2021 LHIS report. The first meeting with the AHAC was held on September 13, 2022, at Council Chambers, Main Library (100 N. Osceola Ave.). Ten (10) AHAC members, City staff, and the City's consultant attended the meeting:

- Maria (Gaby) Camacho Representative of those areas of labor engaged in home building in connection with affordable housing
- Robyn Fiel Representative of the banking or mortgage industry in connection with affordable housing
- Peter Scalia An advocate for low-income persons in connection with affordable housing
- Lindsay Dicus-Harrison Representative of those who are actively engaged as a real estate professional in connection with affordable housing
- Carmen Santiago A citizen who resides within the City of Clearwater
- Camille Hebting (Chair) Representative of employers within the City of Clearwater
- Kevin Chinault Representative of a not-for-profit provider of affordable housing
- Pierre Cournoyer Representative of the residential home building industry
- Bruce Rector Member serving on the local planning agency
- Kathleen Beckman A locally elected official (City Councilmember)
- Denise Sanderson City of Clearwater, Economic Develop. & Housing, Director
- Terry Malcolm-Smith City of Clearwater, Economic Develop. & Housing, Housing Coordinator
- Gina Clayton City of Clearwater, Planning and Development, Director
- Patricia Sullivan City of Clearwater, Board Reporter
- Amanda Warner Wade Trim, Planner (City's Consultant)
- Sarah Mastison Wade Trim, Planner (City's Consultant)

One (1) AHAC member was not in attendance: Jacqueline Rivera (representative of essential services personnel).

The purpose of the first AHAC meeting was to educate the new committee on the City's existing LHIS report, review its values, principles and vision, as well as identify current barriers and potential incentives related to the facilitation of affordable housing in the City of Clearwater. The first AHAC meeting was publicly advertised on the City's Granicus system, held in-person with opportunity for public comment, and recorded for later viewing on the City's Granicus system.

Welcome and Introductions

AHAC Chair, Camille Hebting, called the meeting to order, conducted a roll call of attendance, and introduced the Consultant. The Consultant explained the purpose of the meeting and provided an overview of the agenda for the meeting, to include a presentation and facilitated committee discussion.

Summary of Presentation to AHAC

The Consultant presented an overview of the LHS update process, including the history and duties of the AHAC, meeting requirements, schedule of events toward approval/submittal, definitions of affordable housing, and components of the LHS report. The overview was presented in Microsoft PowerPoint format. AHAC members were notified of a schedule change, moving the public hearing from Tuesday, November 8, 2022 to Monday, November 7, 2022, to avoid conflicts with election day. The committee acknowledged and confirmed the schedule change. The final schedule of events presented to the AHAC included:

- August 2022 – City designates staff and selects AHAC members
- September 1, 2022 – City Council appoints members to AHAC
- September 13, and October 11, 2022 – AHAC meets to update LHS report
- November 7, 2022 – AHAC holds public hearing to approve updated LHS report
- December 1, 2022 – City Council holds public hearing to approve updated LHS report for submittal to Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC)
- December 31, 2022 – Deadline to submit LHS report to FHFC
- March 31, 2023 – City Council to adopt amendments to LHAP to incorporate LHS
- May 2, 2023 – Submit amended LHAP with proof of City Council approval to FHFC

The Consultant presented the values statements of the 2021 LHS report and invited feedback from the AHAC members on whether the values still resonate with current affordable housing issues in the City of Clearwater. The committee discussed whether “mixed-income housing” should be added as a value. Because mixed-income housing is potentially covered by value, “C. Ensures that the City’s workforce can live within the City,” the Consultant suggested that language regarding mixed-income housing might be better suited to the principles section of the LHS report. The committee then tabled the discussion of mixed-income housing until the principles section was discussed later in the meeting. The AHAC deemed all other values in the 2021 LHS report still relevant to affordable housing in the City of Clearwater. These values will be continued in the 2022 LHS report.

The Consultant presented the principle statements of the 2021 LHS report and invited feedback from the AHAC members on whether the principles still resonate with current affordable housing issues in the City of Clearwater. The AHAC discussed and directed the Consultant to edit several principles, including current principle #2, #3, and #4, and to consider a new principle #6.

The discussion surrounding mixed-income housing continued regarding current principle #2 and whether requiring mixed-income housing in all developments could be too limiting or create additional barriers to affordability. Ultimately, the AHAC directed the Consultant to add a new principle #6 to read, “Incorporate affordable housing into all non-affordable housing developments.”

Regarding current principle #3, the AHAC discussed the vagueness of the term, “well-designed” and suggested replacing it with the term, “energy efficient” or “cost-efficient” to address that aspect of affordability. The AHAC suggested that current principle #3 be edited to read, “Designed to be sustainable, energy and cost efficient, and to minimize physical barriers to accessibility.”

Regarding current principle #4, the AHAC discussed whether requiring development to be “in character with the surrounding neighborhood” could be too limiting or create additional barriers to affordability. The committee’s discussion focused on different aspects of neighborhood compatibility, from building construction and size/type to architectural design. After much discussion, the Consultant noted that the focus of the committee’s discussion seemed to favor aesthetic compatibility over other aspects of compatibility, and the Consultant suggested that current principle #4 be edited to read, “In aesthetic character with the surrounding neighborhood.” The AHAC tabled further discussion of the principle statements until the next meeting, when the Consultant brings back the edited principle statements for the AHAC’s consideration.

The Consultant presented the vision statement of the 2021 LHS report and invited feedback from the AHAC members on whether the vision still resonates with current affordable housing issues in the City of Clearwater. The AHAC tabled discussion of the vision statement until the next meeting, when the Consultant brings back the edited principle statements for the AHAC's consideration.

As a result of AHAC direction, the Consultant will bring back edited language specific to the principle statements discussed (i.e., current #2, #3, and #4, and new #6) for consideration by the AHAC at the next meeting scheduled for October 11, 2022.

Committee Discussion

During the meeting, AHAC members were asked to discuss any perceived barriers to affordable housing that presently exist, as well as potential incentives to reduce these barriers. Members were asked to consider barriers and incentives with regard to City programs/procedures, the City's Comprehensive Plan, and the City's Community Development Code. The following provides a summary of the committee's discussion of current issues affecting the provision of affordable housing in the City of Clearwater.

Size of City-Owned Properties (Barrier)

The AHAC discussed the City-owned property list that is updated annually during the LHS process. The committee noted that many of the properties on the list are too small, which limits the scale of affordable housing development that can occur. Small parcels are a barrier to affordable housing. The committee noted the need for larger parcels to effectively support affordable housing developments. The committee also suggested potential coordination with Pinellas County's inventory and unincorporated properties near or within the City's limits (e.g., enclaves) that could provide affordable housing opportunities in the area. City staff commented that the City has increased the minimum lot size for donated properties to address this issue.

Alternative Housing Types/Co-Housing (Incentive)

The AHAC discussed allowing for Co-Housing and flexibility for other alternative housing types such as Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as potential incentives for affordable housing. Co-Housing was discussed as an option for seniors and young professionals that cannot afford a larger apartment unit or single-family residence. Such alternative housing types may encourage a diverse supply of housing types and mix of income levels consistent with the guiding principles of the LHS report.

Investor Real Estate/Short Term Rentals Competition (Barrier)

The AHAC discussed investor real estate, short-term rentals such as Airbnb, and general inflation as barriers to affordable housing. It was noted that investors take affordable housing off the market, drive-up costs, and compete with residents and affordable housing developers to buy properties.

DPA Loans, Length of Time for Inspections/Closing (Barrier)

The AHAC discussed the length of time to process Down Payment Assistance (DPA) loans, particularly related to the timing of inspections and closings. The length of time is prohibitive to making repairs, and contracts are lost over simple problems. Many of the issues identified were related to HUD requirements. The committee suggested moving inspections to earlier in the process or focusing on basic 4-point inspections (e.g., insurable roof, electric, plumbing, etc.) and pre-approval for the first-time homebuyer as being essential.

Homeowner Insurance/Property Taxes (Barrier)

The AHAC discussed the rising costs of homeowner insurance and property taxes, which are particularly problematic for the elderly living on fixed incomes.

Federal Assistance/Grants (Incentive)

The AHAC discussed other incentives to affordable housing, included federal assistance and grant programs. The committee suggested providing information about the recent Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) of 2022 and other

Appendix

incentives that would be helpful to residents and developers on the City’s website. Coordination with the Hometown Heroes initiative was also mentioned, as was the potential to get financial compensation from the State of Florida.

Benchmarking (General)

The AHAC discussed benchmarking, generally. The committee requested information about the number of affordable housing units that have been added to the inventory in recent years (e.g., 2017-2022), including how many units were produced versus preserved. Additionally, the committee asked about potential coordination with the Five-Year Consolidated Plan for CDBG and HOME (i.e., HUD programs). The committee also requested information about other jurisdictions’ AHAC recommendations to identify other creative incentives that could be considered for implementation in the City of Clearwater.

AHAC Meeting Format/Time (General)

The AHAC discussed whether future meetings should be held at different times or more frequently to allow for more public input. The committee was advised that the minimum meeting requirements are set by Florida Statute, but that adjustments beyond the minimums could be considered in the future.

Public Comment

AHAC Chair, Camille Hebbing, invited public comment and asked if anyone was there to speak publicly. Only one person requested to speak publicly during the first AHAC meeting and commented that energy efficiency is important to lower the cost of living, referencing the Clearwater Greenprint 2.0 report. The same person also commented that the City should consider leveraging City incentives with other incentives (e.g., Federal IRA of 2022, etc.).

Next Steps

After the committee discussion, the Consultant referenced the 2021 LHIS report that was previously completed by City staff. The Consultant requested that AHAC members review the 2021 LHIS report as to whether past recommendations should be continued, modified, or removed as part of the LHIS update.

The second AHAC meeting will be held on October 11, 2022, at 9:00 a.m. at the Main Library (100 N. Osceola Avenue) Council Chambers. During this second AHAC meeting, City staff and the Consultant will respond to questions generated during the first AHAC meeting or through review of the City’s current practices, and then facilitate AHAC discussion of critical recommendations for inclusion in the 2022 LHIS report.

The committee is hereby reminded that 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.

D.2 AHAC Meeting #2, October 11, 2022

2022 Update of Local Housing Incentive Strategies

AHAC Meeting #2 | October 11, 2022 | 9:00 a.m.

Council Chambers, Main Library (100 N. Osceola Ave.)

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 2021. An 11-member Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) representing various affordable housing interests was appointed by the City Council on September 1, 2022, to evaluate and update the 2021 LHIS report. The first meeting with the AHAC was held on September 13, 2022. The second meeting with the AHAC was held on October 11, 2022, at Council Chambers, Main Library (100 N. Osceola Ave.). Ten (10) AHAC members, City staff, and the City's consultant attended the meeting:

- Maria (Gaby) Camacho Representative of those areas of labor engaged in home building in connection with affordable housing
- Robyn Fiel Representative of the banking or mortgage industry in connection with affordable housing
- Peter Scalia An advocate for low-income persons in connection with affordable housing
- Jacqueline Rivera Representative of essential services personnel
- Carmen Santiago A citizen who resides within the City of Clearwater
- Camille Hebting (Chair) Representative of employers within the City of Clearwater
- Kevin Chinault Representative of a not-for-profit provider of affordable housing
- Pierre Cournoyer Representative of the residential home building industry
- Bruce Rector Member serving on the local planning agency
- Kathleen Beckman A locally elected official (City Councilmember)
- Denise Sanderson City of Clearwater, Economic Develop. & Housing, Director
- Chuck Lane City of Clearwater, Economic Develop. & Housing, Assistant Director
- Terry Malcolm-Smith City of Clearwater, Economic Develop. & Housing, Housing Coordinator
- Gina Clayton City of Clearwater, Planning and Development, Director
- Patricia Sullivan City of Clearwater, Board Reporter
- Amanda Warner Wade Trim, Planner (City's Consultant)
- Sarah Mastison Wade Trim, Planner (City's Consultant)

One (1) AHAC member was not in attendance: Lindsay Dicus-Harrison (representative of those who are actively engaged as a real estate professional in connection with affordable housing).

The purpose of this second AHAC meeting was to review the LHIS process and schedule; confirm updates to the affordable housing principles and vision statement; continue to review and discuss the contemporary barriers identified by the AHAC during the first meeting on September 13, 2022; receive direction on whether to maintain, modify, or remove any recommendations from the 2021 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, Camille Hebting, called the meeting to order, conducted a roll call of attendance, and introduced City staff and the Consultant.

Approval of AHAC Meeting Minutes from September 13, 2022

The AHAC reviewed and approved the meeting minutes from September 13, 2022, by motion, second, and unanimous vote.

Summary of Presentation to AHAC

Chuck Lane, Assistant Director of the Economic Development & Housing Department, addressed the committee and provided City staff responses to items discussed during the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022. Mr. Lane reported that 854 affordable housing units were added since 2017, through a combination of down payment assistance, rehabilitation, and new construction. Mr. Lane provided information about the City's Affordable Housing Inventory List (i.e., list of City-owned properties), discussed timing considerations pertaining to the AHAC meetings, and discussed inclusionary zoning. Regarding inclusionary zoning, Mr. Lane discussed the City's current affordable housing incentives (e.g., density bonus) and the requirement under Florida Statute to offset the cost of affordable housing for the developer. Mr. Lane furthered that the City should understand all costs associated with incentives, but not deter the development of affordable housing.

The AHAC then discussed the need for mixed income housing. The committee also discussed moving the meeting times to later in the day and additional advertising in the future to encourage citizen participation. Mr. Lane informed that committee that e-comments may be submitted in advance of the meeting as another opportunity for input.

Amanda Warner, Wade Trim Planner (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:

- August 2022 – City designates staff and selects AHAC members
- September 1, 2022 – City Council appoints members to AHAC
- September 13, and October 11, 2022 – AHAC meets to update LHS report
- November 7, 2022 – AHAC holds public hearing to approve updated LHS report
- December 1, 2022 – City Council holds public hearing to approve updated LHS report for submittal to Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC)
- December 31, 2022 – Deadline to submit LHS report to FHFC
- March 31, 2023 – City Council to adopt amendments to LHAP to incorporate LHS
- May 2, 2023 – Submit amended LHAP with proof of City Council approval to FHFC

In response to the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022, the Consultant proposed specific changes to the affordable housing principles and vision statement as requested by the committee. These changes are shown below (in underline and strikethrough).

Affordable Housing Principles

...

3. Designed to be sustainable, well-designed energy and cost efficient, and to minimize physical barriers to accessibility.

...

4. In aesthetic character with the surrounding neighborhood.

...

6. Incentivized to promote incorporation of affordable housing into all non-affordable housing developments.

Affordable Housing Vision

The City of Clearwater will encourage the development of a diverse supply of housing that is safe, affordable, sustainable, and ~~well-designed energy and cost efficient~~, that blends into the aesthetic character of all the City's neighborhoods proximate to public amenities and employment opportunities, which supports an inclusive community and the diverse needs of residents.

The AHAC discussed and accepted the proposed changes to the existing principles #3, and #4, and new principle #6, and the proposed changes to the vision statement. New principle #6 was modified to begin with the word, "incentivize" in response to Mr. Lane's address at the beginning of the meeting.

The Consultant then presented the barriers and incentives to affordable housing identified at the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022, and in response to comments received from City staff regarding the City's current practices. Proposed changes to the existing recommendations within the 2021 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 2021 LHS report, those recommendations were highlighted.

Committee Discussion

During the second meeting, the Consultant facilitated AHAC discussion of recommendations for inclusion in the 2022 LHS report. The discussion focused on strategies to address the affordable housing barriers and incentives identified by the AHAC during the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022. Such barriers and strategies included size of City-owned properties, alternative housing types/co-housing, investor real estate/short-term rentals, DPA loans and the length of time for inspections/closings, homeowner insurance/property taxes, and federal assistance/grants. 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

The "Request for Expedited Permit Processing for Affordable Housing Activity" form was discussed, along with the duration of single-family permit reviews. Although recent amendments to Recommendation 1.1 require reviews of single-family permit applications to be completed in four days of the initial submittal and three days of all subsequent submittals, committee member Gaby Camacho stated that the actual review time has proved to be longer. City staff responded that permit volume often impacts review times. The designation of an "Affordable Housing Advocate" was discussed as a means of expediting the review process, as was the creation of an affordable housing "dashboard" on the City's website.

The AHAC also discussed whether any single-family developers have submitted template plans for pre-screening to expedite the permit review process. City staff responded that although regularly encouraged, no template plans have been submitted. The AHAC discussed the potential of purchasing template plans to make available as an incentive for affordable housing.

Changes proposed to Recommendations 1.1, 1.2, and 1.4 were reviewed and agreed to by the committee. These changes focus on the committee's intention to either continue or act more affirmatively on the previous recommendations.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modified the following recommendations from the 2021 LHS report with changes as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 1.1 *Continue to use the "Request for Expedited Permit Processing for Affordable Housing Activity" form to fast-track affordable housing projects. Projects submitted with this form will receive priority during the permit review process. ~~Continue to strive to~~ by completing reviews of single-family permit reviews within four days of the initial submittal and within three days of all subsequent submittals.*

Appendix

- 1.2 The Assistant Director of Economic Development & Housing and Permit Manager ~~should will~~ continue to be the primary and secondary points of contact when submitting affordable housing projects. Through close coordination, these two staff positions ~~should will~~:
- Create and oversee an affordable housing “One Stop Streamline Permitting Process.”
 - Act as a liaison between the developer and all departments involved in the review and permitting process.
 - Organize and participate in the pre-application meetings.
 - Provide necessary information and forms to the developer to avoid delays during the application and review process.
 - Create a process and definitive project requirement checklist for affordable housing projects for each level of review and stage of permitting.
 - Create a definitive but feasible review timeline for affordable housing projects considering variables such as the type, size and impact in the community depending on the level of review and stage of permitting.
 - Release to the applicant and all City departments involved at once, written statements for additional requirements and project determinations.
 - Track the review process through the City’s online ePermit system.
 - Report to the developer the status of the application.
- 1.3 Continue to improve customer service toward potential project applicants by:
- Maintaining a positive attitude
 - Offering a quick response time via email or phone calls
 - Making available project requirements and forms
 - Providing a list of potential mentors experienced in affordable housing development
 - Utilizing new technology to enhance administrative efficiencies and to educate developers about the City’s affordable housing incentives and permitting process by means of link sharing, web forms, videos/webinars, virtual meetings/forums, and other tools
- 1.4 ~~Publish~~ **Review and annually update** a brochure ~~or and~~ other informational handouts **to be published** in a prominent location on the City’s Affordable Housing webpage that explains the City’s development approval and permitting process to developers, including but not limited to:
- Relationship between City and County policies and the regulation of land use, density, and intensity
 - City-sponsored incentives for affordable housing such as the “Request for Expedited Permit Processing for Affordable Housing Activity” form, Affordable Housing Density Bonus, Parking Reductions, and Nonconforming Exemption for Affordable Housing
- 1.5 Encourage affordable housing developers of single-family homes to submit frequently used template plans for pre-screening by the Building Official to further expedite the staff permit review process.

2) **Modification of Fees**

Changes to the AHAC’s previous recommendations were proposed, focusing on the committee’s intention to either continue or act more affirmatively on previous recommendations. Additionally, discussion surrounding Recommendation 2.2 proposed adding benchmarking language such as “on par” with other municipalities in Pinellas County to achieve fee competitiveness.

Changes proposed to Recommendations 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 were reviewed and agreed to by the committee. The previous 2021 recommendation regarding development of a new Parks & Recreation impact fee structure to reduce or waive impact fees for affordable housing was completed; therefore, that recommendation is removed.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modified the following recommendations from the 2021 LHS report with changes as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 2.1 *Coordinate with Pinellas County, ~~as feasible,~~ regarding data-based rate flexibility within the multi-modal impact fee to support the provision of affordable housing.*
- 2.2 *Continue to assess the financial, legal, and administrative feasibility of reducing, refunding, or redefining (by unit size) the costs of impact fees and/or permitting fees related to the development of affordable housing with the goal of being on par with other municipalities in Pinellas County.*
- 2.3 *The Planning & Development Department will ~~recommend amending~~ continue to implement the fee Schedule of Fees Rates and Charges ordinance to provide for a reduction in the Plan Review and Permit Fees for single-family homes.*
- 2.4 *The Economic Development & Housing Department will ~~develop a policy~~ continue to assist with the payment of Plan Review and Permit Fees and impact fees utilizing state and federal funds designated for affordable housing.*

3) **Flexible Densities**

The committee reviewed and agreed to continue the previous recommendations from the 2021 LHS report with no changes.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued the following recommendations from the 2021 LHS report with no changes:

- 3.1 *Continue to provide allowance of density flexibility for affordable housing developments.*
- 3.2 *Maintain specific parameters to grant density flexibility for affordable housing projects as allowed in the Community Development Code within the different zoning districts.*
- 3.3 *Continue to define the density allowance for an affordable housing project as part of a pre-application meeting prior to formal submission of the civil/site engineering requirements.*

4) **Infrastructure Capacity**

The City's infrastructure capacity was not identified as an affordable housing barrier during meetings with the AHAC and City staff. 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 committee reviewed and agreed to continue the previous recommendation of "no recommendation" from the 2021 LHS report with no changes.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC made no change to the following as previously approved:

We do not recommend that the City of Clearwater include the reservation of infrastructure capacity for housing for very-low-income persons, low-income persons, and moderate-income persons as an incentive for the provision of affordable housing.

5) **Accessory Dwelling Units**

The committee continued Recommendations 5.1 and 5.2 with no changes. Recommendation 5.1 is already implemented by the *Community Development Code*. Recommendation 5.2 is partially implemented and will be revisited during the City's *Comprehensive Plan* update process in 2023. Changes were proposed to Recommendation 5.3, focusing on the committee's intention to consider incentives for other alternative housing types such as co-housing beyond traditional accessory dwelling units. These changes were reviewed and agreed to by the committee.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modified the following recommendations from the 2021 LHis report with changes as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 5.1 *Continue to allow for accessory dwelling units in nonresidential zoning districts as described within the City's Community Development Code.*
- 5.2 *Revisit with City Council Comprehensive Plan Policy C.1.1.2 and Policy C.1.1.8 to consider allowing one accessory dwelling unit on a residential lot of any size provided that certain criteria are met. Such criteria may include:*
 - *Maximum unit size, parking standards, setback, and height requirements to facilitate review and to ensure neighborhood compatibility, which may be presented using a pattern book or similar means to expedite approval.*
 - *Occupancy/tenure requirements so that the principal dwelling unit remains owner-occupied, the accessory dwelling unit is not used for short-term rental, and the number of occupants is limited to that which is reasonable for the unit size.*
- 5.3 *~~Expand the definition of accessory dwelling unit to include tiny homes and~~ Provide flexibility for other alternative unit types such as co-housing to incentivize unconventional solutions to address affordable housing needs and support aging-in-place within existing neighborhoods.*

6) **Parking Reductions**

The committee reviewed and agreed to continue the previous recommendations from the 2021 LHis report with no changes.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued the following recommendations from the 2021 LHis report with no changes:

- 6.1 *Continue to allow flexible setback requirements for affordable housing developments.*
- 6.2 *Continue to tie reductions of off-street parking requirements to proximity and access to alternative modes of transportation, including transit, sidewalks, trails, or other options.*

7) **Flexible Lot Configurations**

The committee reviewed and agreed to continue the previous recommendations from the 2021 LHis report with no changes.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued the following recommendation from the 2021 LHis report with no changes:

- 7.1 *Continue to allow flexible lot configurations for affordable housing developments while remaining sensitive to the character and context of existing neighborhoods.*

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 following as previously approved:

Because such standards are in place to benefit public health and safety, we do not recommend that the City utilize the modification of street requirements as an incentive for affordable housing.

9) **Pre-Adoption Policy Consideration**

One minor change to Recommendation 9.1 was proposed, focusing on the committee’s intention to act more affirmatively on the previous recommendation. The minor change proposed to Recommendations 9.1 was reviewed and agreed to by the committee. Recommendation 9.2 was continued with no change.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued the following recommendations from the 2021 LHIS report with minor changes as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 9.1 *As part of its annual reporting, the Economic Development & Housing Department ~~should~~ will continue to review all regulations and ordinances that may affect the cost of housing.*
- 9.2 *Continue the review process maintained by the Senior Executive Team through which any new regulatory instrument created in the City (Ordinances, regulations, etc.) can be evaluated for its effect on housing affordability.*

10) **Inventory of Public Lands**

Changes proposed to Recommendations 10.1, 10.2, 10.4, and 10.5 were reviewed and agreed to by the committee. These changes convey the committee’s intention to act more affirmatively on the previous recommendations. Recommendation 10.3 was continued with no changes.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modified the following recommendations from the 2021 LHIS report with changes as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 10.1 *The Economic Development & Housing Department ~~should~~ will continue to maintain the inventory of publicly-owned land suitable for the development of affordable housing.*
- 10.2 *Continue to publish the public land inventory owned by the City for affordable housing, and a link to Pinellas County’s inventory, on the City’s webpage for prospective developers and non-profit agencies for developing affordable housing.*
- 10.3 *Continue to make publicly-owned land available to prospective developers and non-profit agencies for developing affordable housing.*
- 10.4 *The Economic Development & Housing Department ~~should~~ will coordinate with the Planning & Development Department to identify properties having repeat code violations that may be suitable for rehabilitation, acquisition, or demolition for affordable housing.*
- 10.5 *~~Develop a new~~ Continue to monitor the policy/procedure for distribution of city owned lots. Consider including energy efficient items and related emerging technologies into the scoring matrix to support environmentally friendly development in partnership with the Greenprint 2.0 timeline.*

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

One minor change was proposed to Recommendation 11.1 to change the word, “should” to “will” to affirmatively act on the recommendation.

During the second AHAC meeting on October 11, 2022, the minor change proposed to Recommendation 11.1 was reviewed and agreed to by the committee.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued the following recommendation from the 2021 LHIS report with one minor change as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 11.1 The City ~~should~~ will maintain and implement Future Land Use Element policies A.2.2.7; A.5.4.4; A.5.4.7; A.6.8.7; A.6.10.8; and C.1.4.2 of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

12) Additional - Adaptive Reuse

The committee reviewed and agreed to continue the previous recommendations from the 2021 LHIS report with no changes.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued the following recommendation from the 2021 LHIS report with no changes:

- 12.1 Continue to allow "adaptive reuse" involving the conversion of surplus and/or outmoded buildings including old churches, school buildings, hospitals, train stations, warehouses, factories, etc. to mixed uses where permitted by zoning district.

13) Additional - Land Development Code

The committee reviewed and agreed to continue Recommendation 13.1 with one minor change, replacing the word, "encourage" with the word, "incentivize".

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued the following recommendation from the 2021 LHIS report with one minor change as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 13.1 Continue to ~~encourage~~ incentivize developers to address recommended design standards for affordable housing developments consistent with Sec. 3-920.A.3.c.i-iii. of the City of Clearwater Community Development Code. Other criteria could include but are not limited to:
- Provide direct and visual access to open space for residents.
 - Consider play areas when developing family housing.
 - Provide nighttime outdoor illumination for safety.
 - Use landscape standards and buffers to screen nuisances and to separate public and private areas.
 - Centrally-locate common facilities.
 - Use Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) when practical and financially feasible.

14) Additional - Communication/ Marketing

The committee reviewed and agreed to modify previous Recommendation 14.1 by amending and adding bullets under the recommendation. The modified recommendation conveys the committee's intent to communicate affordable housing successes and outcomes with developers and other City boards and committees.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modified the following recommendation from the 2021 LHIS report with changes as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 14.1 Continue to improve current communication channels and marketing materials to reach different stakeholders interested in affordable housing. Some of the suggested actions include but are not limited to:
- Conduct an educational campaign, in conjunction with regular City communications, to rebrand affordable housing as workforce housing that supports the diverse needs of residents through a variety of unit/product types compatible with the City's neighborhoods.
 - Partner with Amplify Clearwater and others to broadly promote the benefits of, and opportunities for, affordable housing development in the City and to communicate successes.

- *Prepare, **update, and keep current** marketing materials for the general public in order to promote the different housing programs that the City offers, including homebuyer education and down payment assistance to support homeownership.*
- *Prepare, **update, and keep current** marketing materials that help developers and the general public to understand the application criteria, permitting process, and the number of incentives available for rehabilitation and new construction of affordable housing units in the City.*
- *Make accessible to the public an inventory and a map of suitable residential vacant land available for development.*
- *Include a section on the City's webpage called, "Affordable Housing & Community Development," specifically dedicated to the promotion of affordable housing.*
- ***Share outcomes and analytics with appropriate City boards and committees.***

15) **Additional – Financing**

The committee further discussed financing, including potential use of general fund dollars for affordable housing. Financial assistance with energy and cost efficiency improvements was also discussed. Although no changes were proposed to Recommendations 15.1 and 15.2, the committee reviewed and agreed to continue these recommendations. These recommendations were considered general enough to capture the incentives discussed during the first AHAC meeting on September 13, 2022.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC continued the following recommendations from the 2021 LHIS report with no changes:

- 15.1 *Diversify financial strategies to contribute to the new construction and maintenance of affordable housing.*
- 15.2 *Evaluate the feasibility of reducing/paying code violation liens on lots suitable for affordable housing development.*

16) **Additional - Partnerships**

The committee reviewed and agreed to modify previous Recommendation 16.1 by adding a new bullet under the recommendation. The modified recommendation addresses the issue of DPA loans and inspection timing to facilitate closings. Partnerships to address third-party barriers were already referenced in a previous bullet, which will be continued.

Upon review of current City practices, the AHAC modified the following recommendation from the 2021 LHIS report with changes as shown in strikethrough/underline:

- 16.1 *Develop public and private partnerships for the provision of affordable housing:*
 - *Prepare, advertise, and maintain an inventory of affordable housing providers/developers and any other related organization.*
 - *Encourage partnerships between current and new affordable housing developers for mentoring and technical training.*
 - *Encourage and support joint development opportunities between the private sector and non-profits to develop affordable housing.*
 - *Engage lenders in an ongoing discussion with the City relative to underwriting and credit standards, technology solutions, as well as the development of financial products in an effort to maximize the financing options available to potential first-time homebuyers through conventional and other lenders.*
 - *Coordinate with Pinellas County joint programs for the provision of affordable housing, including the Pinellas County Countywide Housing Strategy and Advantage Pinellas Housing Compact.*

Appendix

- *Monitor, and encourage citizens to lobby for, the development of statewide legislative initiatives to gauge the local impact of their provisions.*
- *Coordinate with the private sector and non-profits to provide homebuyer education, home warranties and other strategies that reduce the ongoing maintenance risk of homeownership.*
- *Increase down payment assistance loan amounts to be viable for the homebuyer while remaining financially feasible for the continued operation of the City's program.*
- **Improve the timing of Housing Quality Standards inspections to facilitate closings on homes with down payment assistance loans, if feasible under funding source requirements.**
- *Partner with the private sector and non-profits to address third-party barriers to affordable housing and to identify appropriate incentives to reduce labor and material costs for developers and maintenance and insurance costs for homeowners.*

Public Comment

AHAC Chair, Camille Hebting, asked if anyone from the public wished to speak. A written comment was read into the record by Patricia Sullivan, Board Reporter, regarding the allowance of ADUs in residential districts, the need for rental/utility assistance, homeowner rehabilitation, and energy efficiency to offset housing costs.

Next Steps

City staff and the Consultant will respond to the AHAC's direction to continue or modify recommendations as discussed at the second AHAC meeting held on October 11, 2022. City staff will present the updated 2022 LHS report at the AHAC public hearing on November 7, 2022, which will be publicly noticed in advance. Prior to the public hearing, the draft will be posted with the agenda on the City's website and provided to the AHAC for review. Once approved by the AHAC by affirmative majority vote at the public hearing, the updated 2022 LHS report will be submitted to the Clearwater City Council.

APPENDIX E: Summary of AHAC Recommendations

The following summarizes the AHAC's updated recommendations as outlined in Section II of the LHS report. The AHAC reviewed the City's current practices and met on November 7, 2022, to hear the following recommendations to incentivize the provision of affordable housing. Once approved by the AHAC, the recommendations were presented to City Council on December 1, 2022.

E.1 Expedited Review Process

Recommendation 1.1 Continue to use the "Request for Expedited Permit Processing for Affordable Housing Activity" form to fast-track affordable housing projects. Projects submitted with this form will receive priority during the permit review process by completing reviews of single-family permit reviews within four days of the initial submittal and within three days of all subsequent submittals.

Recommendation 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 affordable housing projects. Through close coordination, these two staff positions will:

- *Create and oversee an affordable housing "One Stop Streamline Permitting Process."*
- *Act as a liaison between the developer and all departments involved in the review and permitting process.*
- *Organize and participate in the pre-application meetings.*
- *Provide necessary information and forms to the developer to avoid delays during the application and review process.*
- *Create a process and definitive project requirement checklist for affordable housing projects for each level of review and stage of permitting.*
- *Create a definitive but feasible review timeline for affordable housing projects considering variables such as the type, size and impact in the community depending on the level of review and stage of permitting.*
- *Release to the applicant and all City departments involved at once, written statements for additional requirements and project determinations.*
- *Track the review process through the City's online ePermit system.*
- *Report to the developer the status of the application.*

Recommendation 1.3 Continue to improve customer service toward potential project applicants by:

- *Maintaining a positive attitude*
- *Offering a quick response time via email or phone calls*
- *Making available project requirements and forms*
- *Providing a list of potential mentors experienced in affordable housing development*

- *Utilizing new technology to enhance administrative efficiencies and to educate developers about the City's affordable housing incentives and permitting process by means of link sharing, web forms, videos/webinars, virtual meetings/forums, and other tools*

Recommendation 1.4 Review and annually update a brochure and other informational handouts to be published in a prominent location on the City's Affordable Housing webpage that explain the City's development approval and permitting process to developers, including but not limited to:

- *Relationship between City and County policies and the regulation of land use, density, and intensity*
- *City-sponsored incentives for affordable housing such as the "Request for Expedited Permit Processing for Affordable Housing Activity" form, Affordable Housing Density Bonus, Parking Reductions, and Nonconforming Exemption for Affordable Housing*

Recommendation 1.5 Encourage affordable housing developers of single-family homes to submit frequently used template plans for pre-screening by the Building Official to further expedite the staff permit review process.

E.2 Modification of Fees

Recommendation 2.1 Coordinate with Pinellas County regarding data-based rate flexibility within the multi-modal impact fee to support the provision of affordable housing.

Recommendation 2.2 Continue to assess the financial, legal, and administrative feasibility of reducing, refunding, or redefining (by unit size) the costs of impact fees and/or permitting fees related to the development of affordable housing with the goal of being on par with other municipalities in Pinellas County.

Recommendation 2.3 The Planning & Development Department will continue to implement the fee Schedule of Fees Rates and Charges ordinance to provide for a reduction in the Plan Review and Permit Fees for single-family homes.

Recommendation 2.4 The Economic Development & Housing Department will continue to assist with the payment of Plan Review and Permit Fees and impact fees utilizing state and federal funds designated for affordable housing.

E.3 Flexible Densities

Recommendation 3.1 Continue to provide allowance of density flexibility for affordable housing developments.

Recommendation 3.2 Maintain specific parameters to grant density flexibility for affordable housing projects as allowed in the Community Development Code within the different zoning districts.

Recommendation 3.3 Continue to define the density allowance for an affordable housing project as part of a pre-application meeting prior to formal submission of the civil/site engineering requirements.

E.4 Infrastructure Capacity

We do not recommend that the City of Clearwater include the reservation of infrastructure capacity for housing for very-low-income persons, low-income persons, and moderate-income persons as an incentive for the provision of affordable housing.

E.5 Accessory Dwelling Units

Recommendation 5.1 Continue to allow for accessory dwelling units in nonresidential zoning districts as described within the City's Community Development Code.

Recommendation 5.2 Revisit with City Council Comprehensive Plan Policy C.1.1.2 and Policy C.1.1.8 to consider allowing one accessory dwelling unit on a residential lot of any size provided that certain criteria are met. Such criteria may include:

- Maximum unit size, parking standards, setback, and height requirements to facilitate review and to ensure neighborhood compatibility, which may be presented using a pattern book or similar means to expedite approval.*
- Occupancy/tenure requirements so that the principal dwelling unit remains owner-occupied, the accessory dwelling unit is not used for short-term rental, and the number of occupants is limited to that which is reasonable for the unit size.*

Recommendation 5.3 Provide flexibility for other alternative unit types such as co-housing to incentivize unconventional solutions to address affordable housing needs and support aging-in-place within existing neighborhoods.

E.6 Parking Reductions

Recommendation 6.1 Continue to allow flexible setback requirements for affordable housing developments.

Recommendation 6.2 Continue to tie reductions of off-street parking requirements to proximity and access to alternative modes of transportation, including transit, sidewalks, trails, or other options.

E.7 Flexible Lot Configurations

Recommendation 7.1 Continue to allow flexible lot configurations for affordable housing developments while remaining sensitive to the character and context of existing neighborhoods.

E.8 Modification of Street Requirements

Because such standards are in place to benefit public health and safety, we do not recommend that the City utilize the modification of street requirements as an incentive for affordable housing.

E.9 Pre-Adoption Policy Consideration

Recommendation 9.1 As part of its annual reporting, the Economic Development & Housing Department will continue to review all regulations and ordinances that may affect the cost of housing.

Recommendation 9.2 Continue the review process maintained by the Senior Executive Team through which any new regulatory instrument created in the City (Ordinances, regulations, etc.) can be evaluated for its effect on housing affordability.

E.10 Inventory of Public Lands

Recommendation 10.1 The Economic Development & Housing Department will continue to maintain the inventory of publicly-owned land suitable for the development of affordable housing.

Recommendation 10.2 Continue to publish the public land inventory owned by the City for affordable housing, and a link to Pinellas County's inventory, on the City's webpage for prospective developers and non-profit agencies for developing affordable housing.

Recommendation 10.3 Continue to make publicly-owned land available to prospective developers and non-profit agencies for developing affordable housing.

Recommendation 10.4 The Economic Development & Housing Department will coordinate with the Planning & Development Department to identify properties having repeat code violations that may be suitable for rehabilitation, acquisition, or demolition for affordable housing.

Recommendation 10.5 Continue to monitor the policy/procedure for distribution of city owned lots. Consider including energy efficient items and related emerging technologies into the scoring matrix to support environmentally friendly development in partnership with the Greenprint 2.0 timeline.

E.11 Proximity to Transportation, Employment & Mixed-Use Development

Recommendation 11.1 The City will maintain and implement Future Land Use Element policies A.2.2.7; A.5.4.4; A.5.4.7; A.6.8.7; A.6.10.8; and C.1.4.2 of the City's Comprehensive Plan.

E.12 Adaptive Reuse

Recommendation 12.1 Continue to allow "adaptive reuse" involving the conversion of surplus and/or outmoded buildings including old churches, school buildings, hospitals, train stations, warehouses, factories, etc. to mixed uses where permitted by zoning district.

E.13 Land Development Code

Recommendation 13.1 Continue to incentivize developers to address recommended design standards for affordable housing developments consistent with Sec. 3-920.A.3.c.i-iii. of the City of Clearwater Community Development Code. Other criteria could include but are not limited to:

- *Provide direct and visual access to open space for residents.*
- *Consider play areas when developing family housing.*
- *Provide nighttime outdoor illumination for safety.*
- *Use landscape standards and buffers to screen nuisances and to separate public and private areas.*
- *Centrally-locate common facilities.*
- *Use Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) when practical and financially feasible.*

E.14 Communication and Marketing of Affordable Housing

Recommendation 14.1 Continue to improve current communication channels and marketing materials to reach different stakeholders interested in affordable housing. Some of the suggested actions include but are not limited to:

- *Conduct an educational campaign, in conjunction with regular City communications, to rebrand affordable housing as workforce housing that supports the diverse needs of residents through a variety of unit/product types compatible with the City's neighborhoods.*
- *Partner with Amplify Clearwater and others to broadly promote the benefits of, and opportunities for, affordable housing development in the City and to communicate successes.*
- *Prepare, update, and keep current marketing materials for the general public in order to promote the different housing programs that the City*

offers, including homebuyer education and down payment assistance to support homeownership.

- *Prepare, update, and keep current marketing materials that help developers and the general public to understand the application criteria, permitting process, and the number of incentives available for rehabilitation and new construction of affordable housing units in the City.*
- *Make accessible to the public an inventory and a map of suitable residential vacant land available for development.*
- *Include a section on the City's webpage called, "Affordable Housing & Community Development," specifically dedicated to the promotion of affordable housing.*
- *Share outcomes and analytics with appropriate City boards and committees.*

E.15 Financing

Recommendation 15.1 Diversify financial strategies to contribute to the new construction and maintenance of affordable housing.

Recommendation 15.2 Evaluate the feasibility of reducing/paying code violation liens on lots suitable for affordable housing development.

E.16 Partnerships

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

- *Prepare, advertise, and maintain an inventory of affordable housing providers/developers and any other related organization.*
- *Encourage partnerships between current and new affordable housing developers for mentoring and technical training.*
- *Encourage and support joint development opportunities between the private sector and non-profits to develop affordable housing.*
- *Engage lenders in an ongoing discussion with the City relative to underwriting and credit standards, technology solutions, as well as the development of financial products in an effort to maximize the financing options available to potential first-time homebuyers through conventional and other lenders.*
- *Coordinate with Pinellas County joint programs for the provision of affordable housing, including the Pinellas County Countywide Housing Strategy and Advantage Pinellas Housing Compact.*

Appendix

- *Monitor, and encourage citizens to lobby for, the development of statewide legislative initiatives to gauge the local impact of their provisions.*
- *Coordinate with the private sector and non-profits to provide homebuyer education, home warranties and other strategies that reduce the ongoing maintenance risk of homeownership.*
- *Increase down payment assistance loan amounts to be viable for the homebuyer while remaining financially feasible for the continued operation of the City's program.*
- *Improve the timing of Housing Quality Standards inspections to facilitate closings on homes with down payment assistance loans, if feasible under funding source requirements.*
- *Partner with the private sector and non-profits to address third-party barriers to affordable housing and to identify appropriate incentives to reduce labor and material costs for developers and maintenance and insurance costs for homeowners.*