



Legislation Text

File #: ID#17-4105, **Version:** 1

SUBJECT/RECOMMENDATION:

Recommend City Council approval of the 2017 Local Housing Incentive Strategy (LHIS) Report developed by the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC)

SUMMARY:

Florida Statute Section 420.9076 states that counties and cities receiving State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program funds are required to appoint an eleven member Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC). The statute further provides that the committee be made up of members from a specific industry or a specific group as identified in the statute. The requirement was largely met through the use of the City's existing Neighborhood and Affordable Housing Advisory Board (NAHAB). The City Council adopted Resolution No. 17-34 that created and appointed the AHAC.

The duties of the AHAC included reviewing policies and procedures, ordinances, land development regulations and the City's adopted comprehensive plan and recommending specific actions or initiatives to encourage or facilitate affordable housing.

Per state statute, at a minimum, the AHAC reviewed and made recommendations on the following:

- (a) The processing of approvals of development orders or permits, as defined in F.S.163.3164 (7) and (8), for affordable housing projects is expedited to a greater degree than other projects.
- (b) The modification of impact-fee requirements, including reduction or waiver of fees and alternative methods of fee payment for affordable housing.
- (c) The allowance of flexibility in densities for affordable housing.
- (d) The reservation of infrastructure capacity or housing for very-low income persons, low-income persons, and moderate-income persons.
- (e) The allowance of affordable accessory residential units in residential zoning districts.
- (f) The reduction of parking and setback requirements for affordable housing.
- (g) The allowance of flexible lot configurations, including zero-lot-line configurations for affordable housing.
- (h) The modification of street requirements for affordable housing.
- (i) 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.
- (j) The preparation of a printed inventory of locally owned public lands suitable for affordable housing.
- (k) The support of development near transportation hubs and major employment centers and mixed-use developments.

In August 2017, the Economic Development and Housing Department contracted with Wade Trim, Inc. to help facilitate the process. Wade Trim coordinated the preparation of the Local Housing Incentive Strategy report in cooperation with the City's staff and the AHAC. The LHIS encompasses the definition, vision, strategic focus areas and incentive recommendations in order to facilitate the development and preservation of affordable housing in the City of Clearwater. The AHAC convened on three separate occasions in order to develop and identify the value of affordable housing, identify the principles for Clearwater's affordable housing and develop

a vision statement to be included as part of the LHIS.

The report highlights an affordable housing vision statement that was derived from input by committee members. Additionally, the AHAC members focused on the values that affordable housing brings to the City of Clearwater. The themes identified centered on the values that affordable housing supports a dynamic and competitive economy, improves the social well being that builds a sense of community, and ensures that the City's workforce can live within the City limits.

Furthermore, the AHAC also discussed and confirmed the principles that the provisions of affordable housing in the City of Clearwater should embrace: affordability over the long term, diversity that provides for a mix of income levels, sustainability, accessibility for persons with physical barriers, well-designed, in character with the surrounding neighborhood, strategically-located, and pedestrian-oriented with access to mass transit and open space.

In summary, the report recommends the City continues in large part the strategies, with minor changes and clarifications, from the 2014 LHIS Report. One new recommendation was added for Council consideration:

- (1) Recommendation 10.4 - The Economic Development and Housing Department should coordinate with the Planning and Development Department to identify properties having repeat code violations that may be suitable for rehabilitation, acquisition or demolition for affordable housing.

The LHIS report is due every three years on December 31st of the year preceding the submission of the Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP). The report must be submitted to the City Council by December 31, 2017.

The City Council is being asked to review the LHIS recommendations that were approved by the AHAC on November 28, 2017. By March 31, 2018, the City Council will be asked to adopt an amendment to the LHAP to incorporate the strategies it will implement for the City. The amendment must include, at a minimum, the State required incentive strategies specified above.

Upon approval, the City of Clearwater is required to notify the State of its adoption of an amendment to its LHAP to incorporate the incentive strategies. The notice must also include a copy of the approved amended plan in order to comply with the SHIP programs participation guidelines.