

## **ATTAINABLE HOUSING VISION**

Broward County includes a wide range of housing types, from large lot single family “estates” to multi-family high rise towers and group homes. Although the Broward County Land Use Plan accommodates a wide range of residential density, the attainability of housing for large segments of our population has become an increasing challenge. The challenge of housing attainability came to be recognized as a crisis during the County’s housing “bubble” between 2003 and 2007. The “bubble” resulted in rapid housing appreciation and, consequently, a severe lack of housing affordable to those in moderate to lower income ranges. There was also significant conversion of rental apartments to condominiums. Incomes of Broward County residents still lag behind the price of housing. The 2014 Broward County Affordable Housing Needs Assessment found that nearly 50 percent of all households in Broward County (330,624 households) are cost-burdened, meaning they pay in excess of 30 percent of their incomes on housing costs. The Needs Assessment also found that the majority (54 percent) of Broward County’s workers are employed in lower wage service sector occupations with hourly wages equivalent to 40 to 60 percent of the median household income. In this light, the County is committed to support and employ a variety of policies and programs to maximize the attainability of housing for persons and households of moderate to lower incomes.

### **STRATEGY AH-1: Support sustainable funding sources to develop and/or rehabilitate attainable housing.**

Attainable housing is generally defined as housing that is affordable to households that earn 120% or less of median area-wide income. Due in part to the County’s “built-out” character, resulting in higher land costs, and a workforce significantly employed in the lower wage service sector, the traditional ability of the private market to supply attainable housing has become challenging. In this light, funding strategies to produce attainable housing has increasingly included governmental agencies, as well as non-profits.

Implementation Activities include:

- Broward County shall establish a countywide affordable housing linkage fee to be assessed on new non-residential development. The premise of a

housing linkage fee is that new non-residential development will generate a range of occupations with wage rates that will, in turn, create the demand for new housing at various affordability levels. Funding from a linkage fee will be used to construct or rehabilitate housing for very-low, low, and moderate income persons.

- Broward County shall continue to support full State-level funding to help address attainable housing needs and implementing a needs-based system to fund such housing projects and programs. The County also supports State legislation to provide a “local documentary stamp tax” program dedicated to affordable housing.

**STRATEGY AH-2: Support private, non-profit, and governmental sector development of housing which utilizes construction techniques affording significant costs savings, while meeting the Florida Building Codes, including resiliency to hurricane-level storms.**

Modern manufactured/modular/prefabricated construction techniques may afford significant savings for housing costs in comparison to traditional techniques used in south Florida, such as concrete block construction. Such housing units may have an appearance and safety features generally no different than units constructed using more common methods, and may include a variety of density types, including multi-family.

Implementation Activities include:

- Broward County will not enact regulations or policies inhibiting the placement of housing that may afford significant cost savings in comparison to traditional techniques used in south Florida, and encourage municipalities to include such housing within their jurisdictions.
- Broward County will seek opportunities to support or fund the development housing that may afford significant cost savings in comparison to traditional techniques used in south Florida via its attainable housing funding programs and initiatives, or in partnership with other agencies and jurisdictions.

**STRATEGY AH-3:** The Broward County Land Use Plan shall include an Attainable Housing Density Bonus Program, including promoting a supply of smaller, traditionally attainable units, such as efficiency/studio occupancy units.

Many jurisdictions throughout the United States have adopted a “density bonus” program as an incentive for developers to construct new attainable housing units. In such programs, a developer obtains the ability to construct additional “market rate” units in exchange for including “attainable” units.

Implementation Activities include:

- The attainable housing bonus for market rate units may be higher if the developer commits to including “very-low” or “low” income housing units, in comparison to constructing “moderate,” or “work-force” income units.
- Bonuses may also be higher if the attainable units are located in areas preferred for (re)development near transit and rail stations, or are part of projects which will further additional land use plan priorities.
- Bonus attainable housing units will be restricted to remain such for a defined period in exchange for the bonus market rate units.
- Smaller “efficiency” or “studio” units, which have often served a demand for attainable units, will be addressed as part of a “bonus density” program.

**STRATEGY AH-4:** Municipalities should adopt a comprehensive strategy to ensure a sufficient supply of attainable housing to help meet the needs of our population and economy.

Ensuring a supply of attainable housing to meet the current and future needs of Broward County’s residents and economy is in the best interests of all, including municipalities. Municipalities which seek County approval of additional residential density should adopt a comprehensive strategy to ensure a sufficient supply of attainable housing.

Implementation Activities include:

- Amendments to the Broward County Land Use Plan which propose new residential units should not be adopted unless the municipality has an attainable housing strategy that has been approved by the municipality and the Broward County Planning Council.

- A municipal attainable housing strategy shall be based on existing housing supply, considering very-low, low, and moderate income households.
- To receive Planning Council approval, a municipal attainable housing strategy must demonstrate that the municipality has enacted policies and cost feasible programs which will reasonably address needed attainable housing supply in consideration of the municipality's population and future land uses.
- Municipal strategies must use County-wide median household income as a maximum threshold to estimate projected attainable housing needs.

**Supporting policy and implementation guidelines for the outlined strategies are included in Section 2 of the Broward County Land Use Plan, and, as may be appropriate, the County's Housing Element.**