

From: Vicki White
Sent: Wednesday, October 18, 2017 8:12 AM
To: 'Trey@floridahousing.org'
Subject: Affordable Housing workgroup

Dear Mr. Price,

I have some recommendations I would like to make to the Affordable Housing Workgroup:

Leave the State Housing Trust Fund alone. This fund can be used to meet the affordable housing needs in Florida in many ways, and yet for the past ten years the Legislature has taken money out of the trust fund for other uses. Meanwhile, the cost of housing has increased significantly, as has the state's population. On top of that, the state has lost affordable housing units. In the city I can think of at least two complexes that went market rate over the past five years. People may scoff at the idea of affordable housing, saying that providing it discourages initiative, but they fail to realize that the people who need to be able to afford to live where they work are the people they interface with on a daily basis- the customer service representative in utility billing helping you with your account, the CNA that made sure your mom had a clean bed and her lunch when she was in rehab, the guys that picked up your garbage this morning, and the team fixing the sidewalk by your house are a few examples that come to mind. To say that they don't deserve any better than to spend 50% (or more) of their monthly income on their housing is cruel.

Inclusionary zoning. I guess builders and developers have been fighting this one for years, and maybe they have some valid reasons for not wanting inclusionary zoning, but I think it would be another way to increase the supply of housing that is affordable. However, builders and developers still need to be able to make a profit, so there needs to be a combination of sticks and carrots to make this happen. California has a number of inclusionary zoning regulations in different areas, and some of the tools they use include donations of land or funding in lieu of building affordable units in a development, density bonuses tied to the number of affordable units built, and so on.

More support for extremely low income housing. Over the past 15 years or so the federal government has decreased the amount of funding to its subsidized rental programs, decreasing the amount of housing available to extremely low-income families. This includes people who are elderly, disabled, or handicapped. In the city we have been able to help a number of extremely low income people who are homeowners that own their homes free and clear, but since they are disabled, elderly, or handicapped, they do not have the money to repair their homes or increase their accessibility. We use our SHIP funds for housing rehab to preserve this affordable housing. However, that does not help elderly, disabled or handicapped people who are renters in search of something affordable, decent, safe and sanitary. Florida receives funding from the National Housing Trust Fund to serve extremely low income families, so the state needs to advocate for this program through its representatives in Congress.

Vicki White, MPA
Housing and Community Development Manager
City of Bradenton
101 12th St. W.
Bradenton, FL 34205
Phone: 941-932-9493
Fax: 941-932-9534