



Building and Sustaining Community -- Unique, Vibrant, Diverse

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VIA EMAIL

Florida Housing Finance Corporation
c/o Trey Price
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RE: 2018/2019 Miami-Dade RFA

Dear Mr. Price,

I am writing to you regarding the existing affordable housing crisis in the City of Miami Beach. Our organization, Miami Beach Community Development Corporation ("MBCDC"), and others like it, need Florida Housing's assistance with this crisis. The MBCDC has existed for over 35 years with its focus and sole mission of being able to provide affordable housing to low-income residents of the City of Miami Beach.

Most of the properties in our portfolio are in grave need of rehabilitation or redevelopment assistance. As expected, the oversupply of luxury condos has taken a toll on all major tourist destinations in Miami-Dade, and specifically on the working class residents of the City of Miami Beach. To comprehend the gravity of the need for affordable housing in the City of Miami Beach, the median rent in Miami Beach is \$2,013 versus the median rent in Miami-Dade County which is \$1,386. As a community-based organization that has the same mission and goals as Florida Housing, we want to advocate for Florida Housing's consideration of the following:

1) A preference for rehabilitation in the City of Miami Beach. Miami Beach is almost fully developed, and density increases are not feasible. As a result, the current Miami-Dade RFA effectively eliminates the creation of new affordable housing in Miami Beach since existing land is economically out of reach for a tax credit financed development. It has been almost 20 years since new affordable units through the 9% competitive application process were funded in Miami Beach. Rehabilitation developments generally have lower construction costs and allow for areas such as the City of Miami Beach, that have extremely high land prices, to be redeveloped; and

2) Require fewer total units and increase the total development cost for new construction developments located in the City of Miami Beach. If new construction is feasible, the current zoning and density in place heavily restricts developers from achieving the minimum 75-unit total needed for areas in Miami-Dade County located north of SW 224th Street. Similar to the RFA for proposed developments in Monroe County which have very strict zoning and density requirements along with high land costs, we recommend that FHFC require fewer total units for proposed developments in the City of Miami Beach and increase the total development costs for these developments.

MIAMI BEACH COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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Most of the existing affordable housing properties in the City of Miami Beach were originally built in the early to mid-1900s. From experience, we can tell you that the operations and maintenance costs alone for the upkeep of these historic properties is onerous. Many of these properties do not meet the FHFC definition of preservation which leaves community organizations such as ours with basically no FHFC funding options. The preference of a rehabilitation development in the City of Miami Beach and allowing new construction developments in the City of Miami Beach to be able to achieve fewer total units will bring extremely necessary new affordable units to this area.

We appreciate your consideration.

Regards,



Beatriz Cuenca-Barberio
MBCDC Executive Director

CC Monica Matteo-Salinas, MBCDC Chairwoman
Donna Gunther, MBCDC Deputy Director
Shahrzad Emami, Esq. Advocacy Director, Affordable Housing and Community Development