GOVERNOR RICK SCOTT UNVEILS HIS 2014-15 RECOMMENDED BUDGET

In January, Governor Rick Scott unveiled his "It's Your Money Tax Cut Budget" recommendations for fiscal year 2014-15. The following funding, $89.3 million, was included as allocations to Florida Housing Finance Corporation (Florida Housing):

- A total of $69.3 million for the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) program. This will go toward the construction or rehabilitation of affordable housing units. A minimum of 20 percent of housing units developed with this funding will be set aside for persons with special needs, persons with developmental disabilities and the elderly.

- A total of $20 million for the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program. This funding will be disbursed to local governments as an incentive to create partnerships to produce, prepare and preserve affordable housing for very low- to low- and moderate-income families.

"We are appreciative of the funding Governor Scott recommended to support affordable housing programs in our state," said Steve Auger, executive director for Florida Housing. "Financially supporting affordable homeownership and rental housing opportunities demonstrates his belief that providing safe and decent housing is an important part of stimulating economic growth and development."

Florida's regular legislative session convened on Tuesday, March 4, and will continue for 60 working days, per Florida Statutes.

FLORIDA HOUSING BOARD OF DIRECTORS ANNOUNCE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In January, the Florida Housing Board of Directors began the process of updating and revising the Corporation's strategic plan. Last revised in 2009, the plan provides a road map of how resources and programs will be targeted in the coming years. Additionally, the Board will use the plan to review current affordable housing trends and conditions, and to establish meaningful and accountable programmatic performance measures, all while aligning Florida Housing's priorities with the state's Strategic Plan for Economic Development.
Given that Florida Housing's many partners have a critically important role in making affordable housing delivery a success, Board Chairman Barney Smith is requesting public input to inform and enhance the 2014 plan. At a recent special Board retreat to launch the process, Chairman Smith invited public comment on a number of questions such as:

- What are the essential issues affecting the provision of affordable housing in Florida today and what will they be in the coming years?
- What should Florida Housing and our many partners do to address these issues?
- How should we use our limited resources in the near and long term to best address Florida's most crucial affordable housing needs?

The strategic planning process is expected to take six to nine months to complete, with agenda discussion items anticipated at each board meeting during this time frame. A copy of the strategic plan adopted in 2009, as well as a link to the Florida Housing webpages tracking the progress of the 2014 efforts, may be found here: [Florida Housing Strategic Planning Process](#).

**HARDEST-HIT FUND PROGRAM UPDATE**

In early 2010, the federal government allocated more than $1 billion in Hardest-Hit funding to the State of Florida to assist homeowners who were experiencing challenges with their mortgages. Florida Housing Finance Corporation (Florida Housing) administers the use of these funds through the creating and implementation of five programs; however, only three programs are accepting applications at this time. The Florida HHF programs are as follows: Unemployment Mortgage Assistance (UMAP) Program, Mortgage Loan Reinstatement Payment Program (MLRP), Modification Enabling Pilot Program (MEP), Principal Reduction Program (HHF-PR), and Elderly Mortgage Assistance Program (ELMORE). Only the UMAP, MLRP and ELMORE programs are accepting applications.

To date, nearly $400 million in total Florida HHF program funding has been encumbered across all five programs.

The UMAP Program has committed more than $200 million to provide temporary payment assistance to qualified unemployed or underemployed homeowners. Homeowners who are eligible for and participate in this program can have their first mortgage paid directly to their mortgage lender. The UMAP will provide up to 12 months of payments (with a cap of $24,000), or until the homeowner can resume payments, whichever comes first. Unemployed or underemployed homeowners who qualify for the UMAP may also be eligible to receive up to $18,000 to help pay all or some of the arrearages prior to the monthly mortgage being paid.

Through the MLRP, nearly $142 million has helped to satisfy all or some of any past due amounts owed on qualified homeowners' first mortgages. Up to $25,000 is available as a one-time payment to the mortgage servicer and the homeowner(s) must have experienced or be recovering from at least a 10-percent reduction in household income.

The Principal Reduction (HHF-PR) program provides up to $50,000 to eligible homeowners who owe at least 125 percent of their home’s current market value or more on their current first mortgage - commonly known as being "underwater." To date, nearly $77 million has been dispersed on behalf of homeowners in the program.

The most recently launched Florida HHF program is the Elderly Mortgage Assistance Program (ELMORE) that uses a portion of Hardest-Hit funds for a reverse mortgage program to assist seniors who are in arrears in their reverse mortgage. The program provides up to $25,000 to pay past due and future property charges.

For a complete description and terms of assistance for the Florida HHF Programs and other foreclosure prevention assistance that may be available, please [click here](#) to visit Florida Housing’s website.

First announced on February 19, 2010, by the US Department of the Treasury (Treasury), the "Housing Finance Agency (HFA) Innovation Fund for the Hardest-Hit Housing Markets" (HFA Hardest-Hit Fund) provides federal funding to states hardest hit by the aftermath of the burst of the housing bubble. To date, $7.6 billion has been infused into the HFA Hardest-Hit Fund for 18 states and the District of Columbia; Florida's allocation stands at more than $1 billion. The goal is to help create sustainable homeownership in our state.
ELMORE SUCCESS IN FLORIDA

By Brandy Bauer, National Council on Aging

Like many older adults, "Jane," 73, wants to remain in her home and community as she ages. That's why she took out a home equity conversion mortgage (HECM)—one of the most popular forms of reverse mortgages available to older homeowners.

Yet, when a storm caused extensive damage to her Southeast Florida home, Jane was unable to maintain her insurance, and soon was facing a default amount of more than $5,000. When she received notice last November of a court hearing for the sale of her property scheduled in January, she knew she had to act quickly.

To the Rescue

Fortunately, Jane's mortgage company alerted her to a new program that is helping to save seniors in her situation from foreclosure. Florida Housing's Elderly Mortgage Assistance Program (ELMORE) assists HECM borrowers in Florida who, as a result of a hardship, have fallen behind on their property tax or homeowner's insurance payments.

The mortgage company connected Jane with Jennifer Pascale, a counselor in a network of free HUD-approved specialists supported by a new partnership between Fannie Mae and the National Council on Aging (NCOA).

Six weeks later, Jane received over $12,000 in assistance from ELMORE—enough to cover her default amount, legal fees, and to pay ahead 12 months of her 2014 taxes and insurance. She also received help from Rebuilding Together, a national nonprofit that rehabilitates homes for those in need, to make post-storm repairs on her home.

Spread the Word

ELMORE was created in cooperation with Fannie Mae, the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, and the U.S. Department of the Treasury to help reverse mortgage borrowers save their homes. The program is funded via $25 million in federal monies allotted to Florida from the Treasury's Hardest-Hit Fund.

Florida homeowners with reverse mortgages who want to see if they qualify for the ELMORE program should first contact their reverse mortgage servicer. If the servicer is unable to assist, a homeowner should then contact the toll-free ELMORE Application and Information Line at 1-(800)-631-3534 to apply and/or receive more information on the program.

Additionally, visit the ELMORE program website at www.FloridaELMORE.org or www.KnowYourOptions.com/reverse for more information.

Editor's note: Reprinted with permission from Fannie Mae and the National Council on Aging (NCOA). The toll-free number listed was updated from the original publication of the article.

GROUND BREAKINGS AND RIBBON CUTTINGS

Fountains at Pershing Apartments

In conjunction with the December Board meeting that was held in Orlando, Florida Housing staff and Board members toured The Fountains at Pershing Park, an elderly rental community. The 92-unit development, built by Southern Affordable Development, used assistance through federal housing tax credits and the federal Tax Credit Assistance Program (TCAP)—all obtained through Florida Housing. Construction was funded by a loan from Bank of America for $1.8 million and $5.3 million in Tax Credit Exchange Program (TCEP) funds from Florida Housing.

The property has set aside 20 percent of the apartment homes for households earning less than 33% of the area median income (AMI), and 69 percent of the apartment homes for households earning less than 60% of the AMI.
Duval Park: Permanent Supportive Housing for Veterans with Special Needs

By Katherine Osevala

In a quiet, yet convenient, corner of St. Petersburg, Florida, construction on a new community will soon begin. Duval Park will be an 88-unit development serving veterans with special needs, specifically those transitioning from facilities within a Veterans Administration (VA) hospital or medical center. This development offers veterans and their families permanent, supportive housing and integration into a more self-sufficient lifestyle. Heading the project are collaborators Boley Centers, Blue Sky Communities LLC, ServiceSource and Carteret Management Corporation. Blue Sky will be responsible for managing the development, construction and lease-up phases of the development, which will use Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) and State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) funds. Carteret, along with Boley Centers, will manage the operations of the development, while the coordination and provision of supportive housing services for the residents will be managed by Boley Centers and ServiceSource.

Duval Park seeks to support wounded veterans who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan, and are transitioning out of Bay Pines VA Medical Center, James Haley Veterans Hospital, and the Tampa Polytrauma/Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation Center. Suffering from both physical disabilities—some resulting from traumatic brain injuries—and mental health conditions, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, these veterans wish to live a more independent life; however, they still require healthcare and supportive services. Duval Park will provide veterans with a permanent residence, aid in finding employment and continued access to community-based services. Boley Centers’ Director of Housing Development Jack Humburg expresses this vision: “We are proud to be a part of Duval Park, a development that serves veterans and their families and allows residents to acquire long term leases.”

Duval Park will offer private apartments to serve a broad range of veterans of all incomes, with 40 percent of its units for individuals and families with incomes at or below 60% of the area median income (AMI). In addition, Duval Park will help to combat the difficulties female veterans encounter when trying to find supportive housing, as there are very few housing options in Florida available to them. All residents will have private units and Duval Park also expects to serve single-parent families.

Intentional Design

Each building at Duval Park will be one- or two-stories high to allow for 30 percent of the units to be a “higher standard” of accessibility for residents in wheelchairs. The developer has committed to achieve green building certification through the National Green Building Standard (LEED), making the development both environmentally sustainable and energy efficient. To provide a campus feel, an 8,000-square-foot green space will be located in the center of the property and is expected to contain a resident-approved memorial or art piece.

The preliminary total development cost for Duval Park is approximately $17.2 million, with LIHTC, SAIL and an Extremely Low Income Supplemental Loan from Florida Housing.

Supportive Services

On-site services will be offered at Duval Park, with ServiceSource acting as the lead service provider. The Warrior Bridge Program will assist with job placement, temporary financial assistance, family support, transportation and links to outside support services. Many veterans transitioning out of a hospital have few personal possessions. The Warrior Bridge Program includes the “Veterans’ Mall” that provides household items, cookware, toiletries and business attire free of charge to residents. Boley Centers will also implement their Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program that provides necessary employment training and education along with tools, clothing and transportation options, such as gas cards and bus passes to veterans.

In addition to the on-site services, Duval Park is conveniently located to allow access to outside supportive services. There are two major veterans’ medical centers in the area—Bay Pines VA Medical Center and James A. Haley Veterans’ Hospital that includes the Tampa Polytrauma/Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation Center. Since these centers are in close proximity, residents of Duval Park will have access to a wide range of services close by, including dental and eye care, pharmacy services, radiation oncology, physical medicine and rehabilitation, surgery services, and mental health services. The Tampa Polytrauma/Traumatic Brain Injury Rehabilitation Program is one of only five facilities in the county designed specifically to serve veterans with severe injuries to more than one organ system. This program allows them to build basic skills for an independent life and career, in addition to receiving healthcare. Both hospitals include comprehensive healthcare services for women.

Residents at Duval Park will have access to public transportation to access these vital services, or they can use the Veterans Transportation Services or private transportation provided by Boley Centers. In addition to Duval Park’s closeness to healthcare, there are several convenient amenities in the vicinity, such as grocery stores, pharmacies and a K-12 charter school.

Overall, Duval Park will be a supportive community that offers veterans with special needs a stable and independent lifestyle. Using on-site support programs and easy access to off-site services, veterans will have the opportunity to transition back into education and employment, allowing them to develop skills, achieve full independence and reach their personal goals. Construction on Duval Park is expected to be completed by spring 2015.
## MULTIFAMILY PROGRAMS UPDATE

### Florida Housing's 2014 Funding Timeline (Tentative - all dates subject to change)

Florida Housing will issue several requests for application (RFAs) during the coming months. Below is the tentative schedule for those RFAs:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competitive Solicitation Number</th>
<th>Subject of Competitive Solicitation</th>
<th>Estimated Funding Offered</th>
<th>Issue Date</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Scoring Period</th>
<th>Review Committee (Discussion)</th>
<th>Review Committee (Make Reco(s) to the Board)</th>
<th>Request Board Approval of Reco(s) at Scheduled Board Meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFA 2014-104</td>
<td>Preservation of existing affordable housing developments</td>
<td>$5,369,334 (HC)</td>
<td>Feb 7</td>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>March 8-April 22</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>April 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFA 2014-105</td>
<td>Financing to build or rehabilitate smaller permanent supportive housing properties for persons with developmental disabilities</td>
<td>$1,983,009 Grant Funding (unallocated balance from RFA 2013-005)</td>
<td>Feb 28</td>
<td>March 28</td>
<td>March 28-April 25</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>April 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFA#-TBD</td>
<td>Rehabilitation or revitalization of public housing authority developments</td>
<td>$1.7 million (HC)</td>
<td>Late March</td>
<td>Late April</td>
<td>May-June</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>June 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RFA#-TBD</td>
<td>High Priority - Homeless</td>
<td>$2.2 million (HC-High Priority and)</td>
<td>Late March</td>
<td>Late April</td>
<td>May-June</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>June 13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Florida Housing’s "What’s Developing” Newsletter

| RFA#-TBD | Financing of affordable multifamily housing units for extremely low income persons | $10 - $11 million (SAIL) | April | May | May-June | TBD | TBD | June 13 |
| RFA#-TBD | Financing of small affordable multifamily housing developments in rural areas | $20 million (HOME) | April | May | June-July | TBD | TBD | August 8 |
| EHCL Applications | Elderly Housing Community Loan (EHCL) Program | $2.5 million (SAIL) | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD | TBD |

EHCL = Elderly Housing Community Loan Program
HC = Housing Credits Program
HOME = HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME-rental) Program
MMRB = Multifamily Mortgage Revenue Bond (Tax-Exempt Bonds) Program
Non-Competitive HC = Non-Competitive Housing Credits (4% HC) to be used with Tax-Exempt Bond-financed Developments
RFA = Request for Applications
RFP = Request for Proposals
SAIL = State Apartment Incentive Loan Program
SAIL ELI Gap = SAIL funding provided to finance required set-aside units for Extremely Low-Income Households

Florida Housing Asset Management and Compliance Updates

Florida Housing sponsors compliance training workshops throughout the year. These workshops pertain to compliance rules and regulations, completion of the Tenant Income Certification and Program Report, and may provide a forum to discuss changes and updates to housing programs. The 2014 workshop locations and dates are as follows:

- March 28 in Tampa;
- June 6 in Tallahassee;
- August 15 in Orlando; and
- November 14 in Fort Lauderdale.

To download workshop registration forms, or for the workshop presentation, please click here.

April 30, 2014, is the due date for the Annual Owners Certificate (AOC-1) for the reporting period January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2013. Owners with developments that received Housing Credit (HC), Tax Credit Exchange Program (TCEP) or Tax Credit Assistance Program (TCAP) funding must certify annually throughout the federal Compliance Period. Owners that fail to certify as required by Treasury Regulation 26CFR 1.42-5(c) (1), or disclose non-compliance in the certification and documentation with the requirements of IRC Section 42, are in non-compliance. For owners that received HCs, non-compliance will be reported to the IRS on Form 8823. The reporting requirement begins with the carryover allocation (or final allocation if credits are issued in conjunction with tax-exempt bond financing) and the AOC-1 must be executed by a person who has legal signing authority on behalf of the owner entity. The executed AOC-1 should be submitted via email to Compliance.Reporting@floridahousing.org. Click here to download a copy of the AOC-1 form from the website.
**HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAMS UPDATE**

**Florida Housing Introduces New Conventional Loan Program**

Florida Housing's Single Family program office recently debuted a new homeownership program called the Florida HFA Preferred Loan Program (FL HFA Preferred). This program is structured as a forward delivery TBA (to-be-announced) Program using an investment banker, Raymond James, to hedge the loan pipeline and act as the Purchaser of Mortgage Backed Securities (MBS) created from program loans. This structure allows Florida Housing to offer continuous mortgage lending to qualified homebuyers through participating lenders throughout the state at competitive market interest rates.

The program serves first time homebuyers statewide, who credit qualify for a mortgage, satisfy first time homebuyer requirements, income and purchase price requirements, and complete homebuyer education through an approved education provider. This first mortgage program is currently offered only as a HFA Preferred Conventional Loan, which is a first mortgage affordable lending product offered by Fannie Mae to state housing finance agencies (HFAs). The FL HFA Preferred offers reduced costs to qualified borrowers and does not have loan level price adjustments (LLPAs,) as do standard conventional loans; it also offers the added benefit of reduced mortgage insurance costs. Private mortgage insurance companies offer borrowers lower mortgage insurance rates (charter minimums) in conjunction with this affordable product.

Down payment assistance also is available using Florida Housing's Florida Assist program; the assistance is offered as a 0-percent deferred payment second mortgage loan to qualified applicants. These second mortgage funds are deferred for the life of the first mortgage or until such time that the borrower(s) vacate the home as their primary residence.

**HOUSING POLICY UPDATE**

**Multifamily Energy Retrofit Program**

[Click here](#) for information about Florida Housing's new Multifamily Energy Retrofit Program (MERP).

**SPECIAL PROGRAMS UPDATE**

**Foreclosure Counseling Program Update**

The Florida Housing's Foreclosure Counseling Program (FCP) now has more than 55 HUD-approved housing counseling agencies throughout the state that are capable of providing foreclosure counseling to potentially thousands of homeowners who are in jeopardy of losing their homes. Many of these agencies also participate in the National Foreclosure Mitigation Counseling Program through Florida Housing, or other intermediaries, to provide basic counseling that can then be enhanced by extended counseling services through FCP with the purpose of obtaining loan modifications for program participants.
Making Home Affordable® Update

Florida Housing recently concluded its work in the pilot program Making Home Affordable® Outreach and Intake Project, administered through NeighborWorks® America (NeighborWorks). The program's purpose was to provide funding for outreach to expand the flow of information to the public regarding services that are available for foreclosure counseling. Events were held throughout the state, as well as advertising on the radio and internet. Now that the program has concluded, applicants for foreclosure prevention counseling can be served through Florida Housing's Foreclosure Counseling Program (FCP) and/or National Foreclosure Mitigation Counseling (NFMC).

State Housing Initiative Program (SHIP) Update

Nearly $40 million in SHIP funding for the 2013-14 year has been distributed to 119 local governments to be used for activities outlined in the Local Housing Assistance Plans (LHAP) for each entity. For this funding year, there is a requirement for the local governments to use at least 20 percent of their funds to assist households with special needs. In order to meet this requirement, local governments have established and enhanced their partnerships with various organizations, such as the Agency for Persons with Disabilities, Volunteers for America, Cerebral Palsy Association, Local ARC offices and Centers for Independent Living. Funds are being used to provide home rehabilitation, down payment assistance for homebuyers, emergency repairs, and accessibility for homeownership and rental units. For more information, contact your local SHIP office.

NCSHA CONNECTION

The National Council of State Housing Agencies (NCSHA) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization created by the nation's state HFAs more than 30 years ago to coordinate and leverage federal advocacy efforts for affordable housing issues. What began as a small group of executive directors meeting annually now has grown into a powerful national association and advocate in Washington, D.C., for HFAs and affordable housing. For more information, please visit the organization's website at www.ncsha.org.