



Leon County

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June 10, 2019

Mr. Trey Price
Executive Director
Florida Housing Finance Corporation
227 North Bronough Street, Suite 5000
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Dear Mr. Price:

I am writing to request that the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC) reconsider its proposal to designate Leon County a Limited Development Area (LDA). This designation would significantly impact our efforts to increase the inventory of affordable housing in the community. Unfortunately, the initial data used to make the LDA determination does not accurately reflect the present occupancy status of the properties identified, and it does not capture the true need for affordable housing in Leon County.


According to the data, six of the 16 properties funded by FHFC are below the expected occupancy rate. However, it should be noted that a majority of the six properties are mixed-income developments (a combination of affordable housing units and market rate units). After hearing of your decision, we reviewed the most recent occupancy data submitted by the property owners and found that the market rate units skew the overall data of two properties: The Greens at Old St. Augustine and Plantations at Killlearn. In addition, the most recent data for Casanas Village reported full occupancy.

We are committed to working with the owners of the remaining properties to address any management issues to improve the occupancy levels. This important effort would be in conjunction with our partners at the City of Tallahassee, the Housing Finance Authority of Leon County, area human services agencies, and the local real estate industry. We all recognize that affordable housing is still a critical need in our community.

Leon County Government is currently evaluating the process necessary to establish a community land trust for single family and multi-family housing developments. An LDA designation would significantly hinder these efforts by prohibiting community land trust projects access to financial resources available through FHFC.

Moreover, designating Leon County as an LDA assumes that we do not have an affordable housing need. In fact, the Shimberg Center for Housing Studies at the University of Florida, show that approximately 65% of renters in Leon County are "cost burden" which means they spend more than 30% of their incomes for housing.

I respectfully request that FHFC do not designate Leon County an LDA and that you work with us to address any housing concerns that could adversely impact our efforts to address the affordable housing needs in our community. You will find that we are extremely responsive and a great partner with a shared goal of addressing community housing needs.

Sincerely,

Jimbo Jackson
Chairman

cc: Shington Lamy, Director, Office of Human Services and Community Partnerships