

HOUSING ELEMENT

Introduction

The purpose of the Housing Element is to provide a framework for developing plans and programs by local governments to assist in the provision of suitable housing for current and future residents of Miami-Dade County. The Element establishes goals, objectives, and policies aimed at guiding both the public and private efforts to deliver housing. It provides for adequate sites for future housing, particularly housing for extremely low, very low, low and moderate-income families, including workforce housing. It analyzes current housing trends and problems in Miami-Dade County and it presents policies and programs aimed at attaining the housing goals and objectives.

The Housing Element has been developed to meet the requirements of Chapter 163, *Florida Statutes* (F.S.). It builds on a long history of innovative housing planning and programming by Miami-Dade County which, since 1957, has been a home rule charter county. The Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources therefore serves as a regional agency, and housing needs and goals in this Element are presented for the entire County, including the 34 municipalities.

The Housing Element addresses needs that must be met for the most part by the private sector. Other Elements of this Plan deal with development programs that are primarily public sector responsibilities -- the street and highway system, mass transit, parks, playgrounds, water, waste disposal, and other utilities and capital improvements which are the responsibility of Miami-Dade County and other local governments. Housing is different, as local governments today build little or no new housing. Instead, they provide plans, programs, and development regulations (zoning, building codes, etc.) to guide the private sector in the development of new housing, and maintain fair housing ordinances and housing structural and health codes which set minimum standards. Funding is also provided as incentives for the development of affordable housing, including affordable workforce housing.

References to affordable housing and income limit categories that are made throughout the Housing Element are based on standard definitions developed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), which are used to determine eligibility for many of the County's housing programs. In this context, affordability is defined as housing costs that are 30% or below a household's annual income. Households whose housing expenses exceed 30% of their annual income are considered cost burdened.

The extremely low, very low, low and moderate income limit categories presented in the Housing Element represent the maximum income one or more persons or a family may earn, as a percent of the area median income (AMI) in order to qualify for certain housing assistance programs. Below are the income limits as defined by HUD standards, state regulations and Miami-Dade County policies:

- Extremely Low: At or below 30% of the AMI
- Very Low: 30.01 to 50% of the AMI
- Low: 50.01% to 80% of the AMI
- Moderate: 80.01% to 120% of the AMI (The moderate income limit for Miami-Dade County's Documentary Surtax Program includes up to 140% of the AMI.)

In addition to the above categories, the Housing Element also provides a workforce housing category, which is defined as housing that is affordable to persons or families whose total household income is at or below 140% of the AMI. Although workforce housing incorporates all the income categories described above, it differs from other forms of affordable housing in that it seeks to address the housing needs of the workforce. Such housing is generally located near employment centers and within close proximity of transit services. This form of housing allows for employment based housing, which is housing provided by employers for their workers. It also encourages public-private partnerships in the development of such projects.

The Adopted Components of this Element include the goals, objectives, and policies contained herein and the Housing Element monitoring program.

An overall affordability analysis was done in the 2010 EAR Report, which matched income distribution to housing cost distribution. In 2000, 49.1 percent of renter-occupied units were affordable and, by 2011, this had dropped to 32.8 percent. The same pattern held for owner-occupied units; 63.7 percent were affordable in 2010, and 52.9 percent in 2011. The 2010 EAR Report points out that these trends are likely to continue in Miami-Dade County. If the projected demographic makeup, income distribution, wage rates, poverty levels and sources of economic and population growth persist, it virtually assures that insufficient affordable housing will remain a serious problem in Miami-Dade County well into the future.

GOAL 1

ENSURE THE PROVISION OF HOUSING THAT WILL BE AFFORDABLE TO ALL CURRENT AND FUTURE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY RESIDENTS, REGARDLESS OF HOUSEHOLD TYPE OR INCOME.

Objective HO-1

Promote housing choice for all Miami-Dade County citizens regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, family composition, disability or sexual orientation.

Policies

- HO-1A. Continue to enforce existing housing federal, state and local regulations that prohibit housing discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, sex, family composition, disability or sexual orientation.
- HO-1B. Miami-Dade County housing assistance provider agencies should carry out equal opportunity fair housing activities where applicable and to the degree possible.

Objective HO-2

Ensure that by the year 2030 there is sufficient land capacity to accommodate a variety of housing types including manufactured homes, with special attention directed to affordable units for extremely low, very low, low, and moderate-income households, including workforce housing.

Policies

- HO-2A. Periodically conduct an analysis of the sufficiency of the supply of developable land using most recent housing data and population projections in order to assess more accurately the County's residential land needs.
- HO-2B. Allow manufactured homes within residential areas throughout the County, provided they meet design and building standards and are generally compatible with the surrounding residential development.
- HO-2C. Foster a diversity of affordable housing types defined by the County's Comprehensive Development Master Plan to include single-family detached housing, single-family attached and duplex housing, multi-family housing and manufactured homes.
- HO-2D. Continue to promote zoning code changes that allow housing product opportunities such as accessory apartments, single room occupancy units (SRO's), elderly residential hotels, and the mixing of unit types.
- HO-2E. The Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources will prepare and apply a series of innovative methods for increasing public awareness of the accessory apartment provision in the zoning code and promoting its use.

Objective HO-3

Assist the private sector in providing affordable housing products in sufficient numbers for existing and future residents throughout the County by the year 2030 to extremely low, very low, low and moderate-income households, including workforce housing.

Policies

- HO-3A. Provide additional administrative and, where applicable, fiscal incentives for new developments to ensure the inclusion of a wide spectrum of housing options, particularly for extremely low, very low, low, and moderate-income households, including workforce housing.
- HO-3B. Continue to investigate methods for providing affordable residential dwelling units and to review, evaluate and streamline those aspects of planning, zoning, permitting and building codes that may unduly restrict or increase the cost of housing.
- HO-3C. Provide administrative and technical support to non-profit housing development corporations to construct new housing either for sale or rent to extremely low, very low, low, and moderate-income persons, including workforce housing.

- HO-3D. Continue to develop programs and other innovative ways to reduce financing costs.
- HO-3E. Encourage interlocal agreements among adjacent jurisdictions, for the provision of affordable housing opportunities within their region if not within their jurisdiction, especially for extremely low, very low, low, and moderate-income residents, including workforce housing.
- HO-3F. Develop a strategy and implement measures to promote and strengthen the inclusionary zoning program which involves private sector developments in the provision of workforce housing. Builders and developers who participate in this program will be entitled to exceed CDMP density ranges and certain other land use provisions according to provisions set forth in the Land Use Element.
- HO-3G. The Department of Regulatory and Economic Resources will work with other appropriate departments to consider development of a housing linkage program which applies to commercial and industrial projects above a certain size.
- HO-3H. Continue to explore ways to reduce barriers such as liens and encumbrances on County properties, lack of public infrastructure, and other obstacles that inhibit the development of affordable housing.
- HO-3I. Encourage the development of residential housing units through infill and expansion of redevelopment opportunities in urbanized areas with existing infrastructure.

Objective HO-4

Develop ways to broadly communicate accurate information about public and private affordable housing development, especially extremely low, very low, low, moderate-income, and workforce housing, throughout the County.

Policies

- HO-4A. Adopt a communication strategy, including media, visual presentations, photos and site plans, to disseminate information of successful workforce housing projects blended with market rate housing in order to illustrate the feasibility of this concept.
- HO-4B. Solicit participation from the community at large in developing design guidelines and site plans for affordable housing through workshops, outreach meetings and design charrettes with local architects and potentially affected neighbors and/or community associations.

GOAL II

THROUGHOUT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IDENTIFY AND PROVIDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FROM WITHIN THE EXISTING HOUSING STOCK AND ENSURE ITS EFFICIENT USE THROUGH REHABILITATION AND RENOVATION, AND FACILITATE ADAPTIVE CONVERSION OF NON-RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURES TO HOUSING USE FOR EXTREMELY LOW, VERY LOW, LOW, AND MODERATE-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS, INCLUDING WORKFORCE HOUSING.

Objective HO-5

Reduce the number of substandard housing units in the County by encouraging the rehabilitation or conservation of the existing housing stock, including historic structures, and provide that an increased number of extremely low, very low, low and moderate-income, and workforce units comes from housing rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of non-residential structures.

Policies

- HO-5A. Consistently enforce minimum building and housing code standards throughout the County so that all new and rehabilitated housing, public or private, is in compliance.
- HO-5B. Continue federally funded housing development assistance, maintenance and neighborhood improvement programs, especially in eligible low income areas.
- HO-5C. Continue to use existing housing assistance funding for maintenance and rehabilitation programs for eligible publicly and privately owned single and multi-family units, including those for the elderly and disabled.
- HO-5D. Identify, conserve and protect historically significant housing and stabilized neighborhoods from the intrusion of incompatible land uses that would adversely affect neighborhood character or existing structures, pursuant to the provisions of the Miami-Dade County Historic Preservation Ordinance.
- HO-5E. Review current demolition processes and suggest modifications if they inhibit the rehabilitation of housing for low income and work force households or the adaptive reuse of non-residential structures for such housing.

Objective HO-6

Increase affordable housing opportunities for extremely low, very low, low, moderate-income households, including workforce housing options, within reasonable proximity to places of employment, mass transit and necessary public services in existing urbanized areas.

Policies

- HO-6A. Promote the location of housing for extremely low, very low, low, and moderate-income households, including workforce housing options, near employment centers or premium transportation services through the application of CDMP planning provisions and cooperation with County agencies which provide affordable housing.
- HO-6B. Continue to use financial incentives provided under federal, state and local government programs to attract industries to locate in or near infrastructure-ready infill sites in very low, low and moderate-income residential areas and to employ residents of these areas.
- HO-6C. Priority should be given to assisting affordable workforce housing projects which are proximate to employment concentrations, mass transit, or have easy access to a range of public services.

- HO-6D. Miami-Dade County shall continue to identify sites adequate for workforce housing and promote the development of such sites according to the “Miami-Dade County Affordable Workforce Housing Plan, 2008 to 2015” adopted by Resolution No. R-746-08 on July 1, 2008 and adopted by reference in the CDMP.
- HO-6E. Improve the administrative procedures and practices to preserve existing government-assisted affordable housing projects and work proactively with property owners to facilitate the renewal of soon-to-expire agreements.

Objective HO-7

Miami-Dade County shall support the preservation and enhancement of existing mobile home communities as an additional source of affordable housing options for extremely low through moderate income households and encourage residents and builders to incorporate energy and natural resource conservation strategies into housing design, site plan design, and improvements for existing mobile homes.

Policies

- HO-7A. Miami-Dade County will support programs that assist residents of existing mobile home communities in purchasing their parks and forming resident owned communities.
- HO-7B. Miami-Dade County shall develop a program and applicable regulations allowing the replacement of existing mobile home units with mobile homes, manufactured homes, or modular homes, provided the replacement residential units meet applicable design and building standards.
- HO-7C. Miami-Dade County shall encourage the renovation, rehabilitation, or replacement, of existing mobile home units to ensure that housing units in mobile home communities comply with all applicable health, safety, and building standards.
- HO-7D. All legal nonconforming uses and structures in existing mobile home parks shall be allowed to be renovated or rehabilitated, if they comply with plans of record, and applicable building codes.
- HO-7E. Any official action that requires a public hearing to develop or redevelop mobile home park sites to residential or non-residential uses shall, at a minimum, require the following:
- a. Demonstration that the proposed development action would not cause the displacement of mobile home owners or that there is suitable affordable housing available for all affected mobile home owners. Housing affordability shall be determined using the definition of affordability and income limit categories described in the Housing Element of the CDMP and updated annually by HUD.
 - b. Description of actions that will be taken to assist mobile home owners in finding suitable housing for relocation, including referrals to public and private affordable housing resources.
 - c. Actions that will be taken to minimize the hardship related to relocation.

- HO-7F. Miami-Dade County shall develop a program providing for the designation of at least 20% of the future development or redevelopment of a mobile home park for affordable housing, where financially feasible. Affordable housing shall be determined using the definitions described in the Housing Element of the CDMP.
- HO-7G. Miami-Dade County shall develop procedures for coordinating County services related to mobile home parks, including activities related to the closing of mobile home parks and the relocation of its residents.

GOAL III

ALL VARIATIONS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING PRODUCTS IN MIAMI-DADE COUNTY SHOULD BE PROVIDED THROUGH THE MOST ECONOMICALLY FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVES, WHILE ENSURING THAT SITE LOCATIONS, SITE AND HOUSING DESIGNS, AND BUILDING PRACTICES FOSTER ENERGY AND LAND CONSERVATION.

Objective HO-8

Bring about housing design and development alternatives that are aesthetically pleasing, encourage energy efficiency and enhance the overall health, safety and general welfare of County residents.

Policies

- HO-8A. Ensure that growth management, housing design, and development alternatives form an integral part of a community of functional neighborhoods and town centers that promote community identity, and enhance the overall quality of life.
- HO-8B. Continue supporting development of innovative and cost-efficient housing construction techniques, materials and manufacturing methods.
- HO-8C. Promote programs designed to enhance neighborhood safety in order to help prevent possible housing deterioration by crime.
- HO-8D. The County shall continue to encourage new legislation that promotes energy efficiency, use of alternative energy and conservation alternatives, in the construction and rehabilitation of new and existing buildings.
- HO-8E. The County shall promote affordable utility costs for new public housing projects by utilizing Florida Green Building Coalition construction standards or other acceptable standards, and through the incorporation of alternative energy technologies into low-income weatherization programs.
- HO-8F. The County should discourage the practice of illegal housing conversions, additions, or unpermitted new residential construction through a program which includes: strong public communications; aggressive inspections; penalties; and, information on affordable housing programs.

HO-8G. Promote housing design that supports the conservation and preservation of areas with specific historic, architectural or cultural value while enhancing the neighborhood character.

Objective HO-9

Maintain the stock of suitable rural housing available to farm workers, as well as special housing for migrant farm workers.

Policy

HO-9A. Work with County employers and appropriate agencies to identify and provide adequate assistance in meeting seasonal migrant and rural farm worker affordable housing needs.

Objective HO-10

Provide for the special housing needs of the County's elderly, disabled, homeless, children in foster care, families in need, and others in need of specialized housing assistance.

Policies

HO-10A. Continue to provide, in accordance with Chapter 533, F.S. and applicable County codes, housing opportunities for the County's homeless, elderly, and disabled. Halfway houses and special needs congregate living facilities for such groups should be made available.

HO-10B. Monitor the status and location of group homes, foster-care facilities, adult congregate living facilities, halfway houses, and similar housing facilities consistent with Chapter 419 of the Florida Statutes to ensure wide accessibility and to avoid undue concentration in any area and expand community residential alternatives to institutionalization.

HO-10C. Continue to allow within residential areas, as a right provided in the Land Use Element, group homes and foster care facilities that are owner-occupied and contain six-or-fewer beds.

Objective HO-11

Continue governmental assistance to persons and families displaced and relocated by public projects and encourage private-sector assistance in relocating people displaced by private projects.

Policies

HO-11A. Provide safe, well built, and transit accessible affordable housing units prior to relocation to households displaced by public action.

HO-11B. Encourage the private sector to provide housing assistance to families and individuals displaced through private sector actions.

HO-11C. Assure the availability of suitable emergency shelters, transitional housing, and relocation programs for very low, low- and moderate-income populations who have lost their housing, especially when displacement occurs due to redevelopment or natural disaster.

Monitoring Program

This section of the Element outlines the substantive elements of Miami-Dade County's monitoring program pertinent to the objectives, policies, and parameters referenced in this Element.

Evaluation Assessment Review

For the purpose of evaluating and assessing the implementation of the Housing Element, each objective will be reviewed as follows to monitor the degree to which it has been reached.

Goal I, Objective HO-1.

Review anti-discrimination compliance and monitoring by the local agencies administering affordable housing programs.

Goal I, Objective HO-2.

The most recent census data will be utilized to compare the distribution of the number of units by value and type, by census tract or other appropriate area to the figures in previous years.

Goal I, Objective HO-3.

The most recent census data will be utilized to calculate "cost burden" by area and compared to data for prior periods so that changes can be noted. Cost burden is defined as a household which is devoting more than 30 percent of its income to housing costs. In addition, indicate the number of units that, directly or indirectly, resulted from County funding geared to increasing the number of affordable housing units.

Goal I, Objective HO-4.

The measure of achievement for this objective will consist of listing and describing the various means employed to inform the public about the characteristics of affordable housing and the development of it.

Goal II, Objective HO-5.

The number of units rehabilitated through the various Miami-Dade County sponsored or approved programs will be reported for the review period.

Goal II, Objective HO-6.

Information and data compiled by the specific agencies providing affordable housing, either rehab or new, will be acquired and the distributional pattern analyzed with respect to employment centers, mass transit, and important facilities and services. The most recent and prior periods' census data and corresponding land use figures will be utilized.

Goal II, Objective HO-7.

Inventory of existing mobile home communities to include: number of mobile home units; permits to renovate, rehabilitate or replace existing mobile home units; code violations per mobile home community; and number of mobile home communities that have closed or are

vacant. Description of County programs targeted toward low-income residents and affordable housing developers to incorporate sustainable site design, building practices, and residential upgrades.

Goal III, Objective HO-8.

Efforts to promote better housing design, construction methods, materials, energy conservation improvements or related matters will be reported on.

Goal III, Objective HO-9.

The status of rural and farm worker housing will be compared to that seven years before the EAR date, using the best available data.

Goal III, Objective HO-10.

Information and data compiled by the specific agencies dealing with these special client groups will be obtained and analyzed in order to evaluate success in meeting this objective.

Goal III, Objective HO-11.

The records of the agencies, which are responsible for relocation of displaced households, will be the basis for assessing this objective achievement.