



Affordable Housing Advisory Committees Return

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Up until now, affordable housing advisory committees were only statutorily required to develop an initial affordable housing incentive plan. Once this plan was complete, many communities disbanded their committees. With HB 1375, passed in the 2007 legislative session, the committees are back and bigger than before.



A key improvement to the process is a new requirement that the advisory committee be cooperatively staffed by the local housing department and the local planning department to ensure an integrated approach to the work of the advisory committee.

Now, after the initial review of established policies and procedures, ordinances, land development regulations, and adopted local government comprehensive plan and recommending specific actions or initiatives to encourage or facilitate affordable housing, each committee must submit a report every three years that includes recommendations on and evaluates the implementation of, affordable housing incentives in eleven specific areas.

1. The processing of approvals of development orders or permits, as defined in s. 163.3164(7) and (8), for affordable housing projects is expedited to a greater degree than other projects.
2. The modification of impact-fee requirements, including reduction or waiver of fees and alternative methods of fee payment for affordable housing.
3. The allowance of flexibility in densities for affordable housing.
4. The reservation of infrastructure capacity for housing for very-low-income persons, low-income persons, and moderate-income persons.
5. The allowance of affordable accessory residential units in residential zoning districts.
6. The reduction of parking and setback requirements for affordable housing.
7. The allowance of flexible lot configurations, including zero-lot-line configurations for affordable housing.
8. The modification of street requirements for affordable housing.

- 9. The establishment of a process by which a local government considers, before adoption, policies, procedures, ordinances, regulations, or plan provisions that increase the cost of housing.
- 10. The preparation of a printed inventory of locally owned public lands suitable for affordable housing.
- 11. The support of development near transportation hubs and major employment centers and mixed-use developments. The advisory committee recommendations may also include other affordable housing incentives identified by the advisory committee.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE CHANGED

The law now requires the committees to have eleven members in various categories, up from the previous nine (this does not apply in small counties). In addition to the nine categories previously included in the SHIP statute, each committee must also have as members one citizen who represents employers within the jurisdiction and one citizen who represents essential services personnel, as defined in the local housing assistance plan. The committee must include:

- (a) One citizen who is actively engaged in the residential home building industry in connection with affordable housing.
- (b) One citizen who is actively engaged in the banking or mortgage banking industry in connection with affordable housing.
- (c) One citizen who is a representative of those areas of labor actively engaged in home building in connection with affordable housing.
- (d) One citizen who is actively engaged as an advocate for low-income persons in connection with affordable housing.
- (e) One citizen who is actively engaged as a for-profit provider of affordable housing.
- (f) One citizen who is actively engaged as a not-for-profit provider of affordable housing.

- (g) One citizen who is actively engaged as a real estate professional in connection with affordable housing.
- (h) One citizen who actively serves on the local planning agency pursuant to s. 163.3174.

- (i) One citizen who resides within the jurisdiction of the local governing body making the appointments.
- (j) One citizen who represents employers within the jurisdiction.
- (k) One citizen who represents essential services personnel, as defined in the local housing assistance plan.

OPTIONAL COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES ADDED

At the request of the local government, the advisory committees may provide:

- The provision of mentoring services to affordable housing partners including developers, banking institutions, employers, and others to identify available incentives, assist with applications for funding requests, and develop partnerships between various parties.
- The creation of best practices for the development of affordable housing in the community.



THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS MAY ALSO INCLUDE OTHER AFFORDABLE HOUSING INCENTIVES IDENTIFIED BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE. LOCAL GOVERNMENTS THAT RECEIVE THE MINIMUM ALLOCATION UNDER THE STATE HOUSING INITIATIVES PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM SHALL PERFORM THE INITIAL REVIEW, BUT MAY ELECT TO NOT PERFORM THE TRIENNIAL REVIEW.

The Florida Housing Finance Corporation will begin rulemaking shortly to implement these changes.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE

The Florida Housing Coalition is uniquely qualified to provide assistance in all areas addressed by the statutory changes, including how to best structure the committee's review process, incentives, partnerships, and all aspects of development and financing of development. The workshop trainings will be directed to local government staff, committee members and their partners. The Florida Housing Coalition will also be available for on-site technical assistance with both local government staff and committee members, as well as their private sector partners. Call 1-800-677-4548 for assistance. 