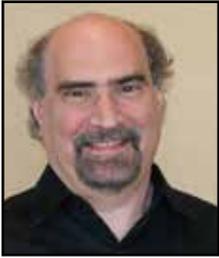


# SHIP is Needed in Today's Housing Market



by Stan Fitterman

## For Homeownership

Just as local governments adjusted their SHIP program to meet their community's needs during the housing boom, they too can adjust to meet the needs of our current housing market.

Foreclosures in Florida are still quite high. According to RealtyTrac, Florida posted the highest foreclosure rate in the nation in 2012, eclipsing Nevada for the first time. Twenty percent of the nation's foreclosure activity centered on Florida in 2012 with nearly 306,000 properties in some stage of foreclosure or bank owned. While the federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) was able to help some Florida communities assist the market with acquiring, rehabbing, and reselling foreclosed units, this assistance was limited to very specific target areas. In addition, these funds have largely been expended with only at most 50 percent of the relatively small NSP3 left to be expended before February 2014.

When foreclosures rise, neighborhoods suffer. Research conducted by the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland has shown that a home that is simply foreclosed, but not vacant, lowers neighboring property values by up to 3.9 percent. However, if a home is foreclosed, tax delinquent, and vacant, it can lower neighboring property values by nearly two and a half times that amount. A fully funded SHIP program could assist communities by continuing to help the market repair and resell these foreclosed properties. This would not only benefit low-income families who continue to be priced out of the market, but it would also help maintain housing values for nearby property owners. Additionally, SHIP goes where NSP could not. A number of our nonprofit housing

providers around the state have found that NSP target areas were not expansive enough to provide families with the housing opportunities that can be provided by SHIP. Florida's NSP grantees will be able to use NSP program income to match SHIP dollars to continue to provide affordable housing in Florida.

## For Aging in Place

Nearly every SHIP program has a homeowner emergency repair program. Typically, the homeowner is elderly and has long ago paid off the mortgage. But living on a fixed income, Social Security, or disability payments, there is no money for making the life and safety repairs that will enable the homeowner to age in place. Too often, the only alternative for a very low income elderly homeowner who does not have the funds to make habitability repairs is institutionalization in a nursing facility. That is usually a poor outcome for both the homeowner and society. Keeping an elderly member of the community in her home is win-win.



*SHIP funds can be used for modifications / retrofits to keep a person living in the least restrictive setting.*

## For Persons with Special Needs and Homeless Veterans

SHIP plays an important role in helping people with special needs live in the least restrictive settings. Sometimes all that is needed to keep a person who is

no longer ambulatory in their home are retrofits or modifications that make the home wheelchair accessible. SHIP can also be used in combination with other resources to provide supportive housing for persons who would otherwise be homeless. For veterans, in particular, SHIP can provide the one time move-in funds, such as security and utility deposits that HUD-VASH recipients need to get into an apartment. HUD-VASH provides the on-going rent and case management services to the formerly homeless veteran. [HNN](#)