



# Message From the CEO

ASHON NESBITT

At the end of 2022 we saw a housing market continuing to feel the effects of the pandemic. Rents continued to soar as many assistance programs wound down, causing communities to look for ways to prevent homelessness by implementing tenant protections. Low mortgage interest rates contributed to the unexpected, overheated homeownership market of 2021 but also allowed for gains in minority homeownership. As interest rates began to climb in the second half of 2022 home prices remained elevated, significantly decreasing affordability, and causing us to ask the question how can we continue to close the racial gap in homeownership in this new market? After a relatively quiet start to the hurricane season, we experienced Hurricanes Ian and Nicole, causing major damage on both the West and East coasts, as well as inland areas across our Heartland and Central Florida, though sparing the Panhandle, which is still recovering from storms in previous years. With this as the backdrop, the Coalition held our first in-person Annual Conference since 2019 with record attendance, and our organization has implemented a leadership change after years of succession planning.

As the new CEO, I am honored, humbled, and eager to lead this great organization in continuing our mission to bring together resources and advocates so that all Floridians have an affordable home in a suitable living environment. We will continue to champion best practices to expand the production of housing that is affordable for all and effectively preserve housing so that Florida's affordable housing stock continues to grow. We recognize that you – our partners and members – are co-workers with us in accomplishing this mission. We view the training, technical assistance, and consulting we provide as more than services but as an investment and opportunity to partner with you to grow your capacity and effectiveness. Lastly, we will continue to serve in our role as a thought leader on housing policy, and increasingly so, as we cultivate new

and invigorate existing relationships with other statewide and regional organizations.

Housing cost burden, when a household pays more than 30% of its income towards housing, is affecting a growing number of households. According to our 2022 Home Matters Report, over 2 million low-income households are cost-burden in our state. You can check out the report to see how your community

“I am honored, humbled, and very eager and excited to lead this great organization.”

fairs in cost burden and whether the most prevalent occupations in your community can afford median rents or home prices. While homelessness has decreased over the last ten years, the growing cost-burden issue combined with limited supply has heightened housing instability.

Addressing these issues requires strategies that address communities' immediate and long-term needs. Understanding immediate needs requires intentional and sustained community engagement efforts. Also, the pandemic has the potential to leave a legacy of key programs and policies such as local tenant protections,

permanent rental assistance strategies, incentives for property owners, and eviction prevention measures. Greater coordination among agencies and having housing at the table in disaster planning and preparedness is setting the stage for a quicker, more resilient recovery from recent hurricanes. Long-term, we expect to see a higher emphasis on the value of land use regulations at both the state and local levels to accelerate the production of more housing, emphasizing such solutions as missing middle housing, and adaptive reuse and redevelopment of commercial properties. Expanding the number of properties where housing production can take place can bring more resources – land, financial, and knowledge – to the cause of affordable housing.

**HOME MATTERS:**  
Florida's Premier  
Resource for  
Housing Cost Burden

See page 13 for more information



<sup>1</sup> <https://flhousing.org/z-publications/home-matters-florida-report-2022/>