

Executive Summary

The objectives and policies of the Housing Element of the Immokalee Master Plan represent an initial draft to develop a plan to provide safe, standard, affordable housing for this Community.

The objectives and policies do not require the County to build affordable housing but rather to provide the incentives and tools necessary for housing organizations and private developers to construct new housing that is affordable in the current market place of high land costs and rising construction costs and fees.

Objective 1 New Housing Construction to meet current deficit

- ü Provide start up costs for a Community Land Trust to make sure that over time the housing units remain affordable.
- ü Provide the necessary credit and housing counseling to ensure that very low, low and moderate households have the necessary credit to obtain home mortgages.

Objective 2 Regulatory Reform

- ü Develop new land development regulations for Immokalee that will reduce or remove requirements that impact the cost of developing affordable housing.
- ü Provide a streamlined process that includes a waiver of permit fees, waiver/deferral of impact fees and a true fast track process.
- ü Acquire land that can be used as a mitigation bank for environmental regulations, particularly with regard to panther habitat, with credits provided for projects that develop affordable housing.
- ü Provide staffing resources in an Immokalee Community Development Office.

Objective 3 Housing Repair and Maintenance

- ü Develop a program to inform residents of available programs that assist with home repair.

Objective 4 Removal and Replacement of Substandard and dilapidated housing.

- ü Establish a program that tracks progress of the repair or removal of units that are identified as substandard, deteriorated or dilapidated.
- ü Develop a relocation program for individuals that need temporary or permanent relocation to standard housing.
- ü Provide incentives to property owners who remove substandard units and redevelop their property.

Objective 5 Establish “Neighborhoods of Special Concern” for incentives for intensive revitalization activities.

Objective 6 Provide adequate housing for special needs groups in Immokalee, including the disabled, homeless, and farm worker population.

GOAL

SAFE, HEALTHFUL, STANDARD, AFFORDABLE HOUSING SHALL BE PROVIDED FOR ALL RESIDENTS OF THE IMMOKALEE COMMUNITY

Objective 1: In order to meet the current housing deficit and to provide standard housing, 1600 housing units, both ownership and rental, will be developed by 2011 for residents that make less than 150% of the median household income. 1000 of these units will be targeted to residents that make less than 80% of the median household income.

Policy 1.1:

By 2009, the Board of County Commissioners will provide start up funding for a not for profit organization to establish a Community Land Trust with a goal of 300 acres for affordable housing available within the Immokalee area. The land included in the Community Land Trust can be vacant tracts as well as infill properties.

Policy 1.2:

Land owned by the local and state government will be identified and evaluated for donation to the Community Land Trust.

Policy 1.3:

Land donated by private developers to the Community Land Trust may be used as mitigation for affordable housing requirements and/or as a charitable donation under the federal tax code.

Policy 1.4:

Land that has tax liens or other local governmental liens shall be identified and evaluated for donation and/or purchase for inclusion in the Community Land Trust.

Policy 1.5:

The Collier County Housing & Grants Section and/or local housing organizations will provide homebuyer counseling and a home maintenance program for new homebuyers or those facing foreclosure.

Objective 2:

The Board of County Commissioners shall adopt new Land Development Regulations for the Immokalee Community, within 1 year after the adoption of the Immokalee Master Plan that will include incentives for the development of affordable housing.

Policy 2.1:

The Immokalee Land Development Regulations will be developed to promote quality affordable housing while limiting the impact of increased costs of development related to landscaping requirements, minimum unit size, restrictions on accessory units, open space & building coverage requirements, and environmental restrictions.

Policy 2.2:

The Board of County Commissioners will waive permitting fees and provide a fast track process with a maximum timeline for processing each type of development order for projects that are 100% affordable housing.

Policy 2.3:

The Board of County Commissioners will provide a streamlined process for no- interest waiver and/or deferral of impact fees that requires that the individual recipient is income eligible and the cost of the housing unit falls within the required guidelines.

Policy 2.4:

The Board of County Commissioners will consider purchasing land with funds from Conservation Collier or other County funds, for a mitigation bank for primary and secondary panther habitat or other required environmental mitigation, that nonprofit organizations who are building affordable housing will be able to use as credit to meet their environmental mitigation requirements.

Policy 2.6

The Board of County Commissioners will re-open and staff the Community Development office in Immokalee to offer local permitting, plan review and code enforcement. The Immokalee Office should also include staffing for the Community Redevelopment Agency and the Enterprise Zone Development Authority.

Objective 3:

By 2008, Collier County will provide a comprehensive program for housing rehabilitation for the units identified in the Immokalee Housing Condition Inventory that are in need of maintenance and repair.

Policy 3.1:

The Collier County Housing and Grants Section will notify the property owners of housing units identified in the Housing Condition Inventory that are in need of maintenance and repair of the programs that are available to assist with home repair.

Policy 3.2:

The Collier County Housing & Grants Section will continue to partner with housing organizations to rehabilitate housing units in need of repair.

Objective 4:

By 2008, Collier County shall implement a comprehensive program for the repair or removal and replacement of the housing units identified in the Immokalee Housing Condition Inventory that are severely substandard, dilapidated and/or deteriorated units

Policy 4.1:

The Comprehensive Planning Department will maintain a data base of the units identified as dilapidated, substandard or deteriorated in the Immokalee Housing Condition Inventory and track progress on repair and/or removal and replacement housing.

Policy 4.2:

The Code Enforcement Department will conduct an inspection of units that have been identified in the Immokalee Housing Study as substandard, dilapidated or deteriorated pursuant to the Minimum Housing Code or the Unsafe Building Code.

Policy 4.3:

Property owners who voluntarily agree to remove their units that are unsafe or deteriorated beyond repair will be able to apply for funds from the SHIP Program for demolition and tipping fees at the County Landfill.

Policy 4.4:

Property owners who remove substandard units will be considered as improved property and will be permitted replacement units at the same density level or higher subject to the Affordable Housing Density Bonus, subject to county review for health and safety requirements.

Policy 4.5:

The Code Enforcement Department shall review and amend where necessary, the Minimum Housing Code and the Unsafe Building Code to insure that inconsistencies with interpretations of the Ordinances are removed, that the enforcement process is streamlined and buildings are not permitted to be vacant and boarded up for more than one year.

Policy 4.6:

By 2008, the Housing and Grants Section and the local housing organizations will develop a housing relocation plan for occupants of units that are determined to be substandard and unable to be repaired. The relocation plan will include the development of housing units for relocation purposes.

Policy 4.7

Review and revise, where necessary, the Community Redevelopment Plan to ensure that it is consistent with the Immokalee Master Plan.

Objective 5:

The Community Redevelopment Agency will establish “Neighborhoods of Special Concern” to encourage revitalization and infill housing construction in neighborhoods with substandard housing conditions and dilapidated commercial buildings.

Policy 5.1:

The Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) with recommendations of the CRA Advisory Board will identify “Neighborhoods of Special Concern” as part of the Immokalee Community Redevelopment Plan.

Policy 5.2:

The Community Redevelopment Agency, in partnership with affected property owners, will initiate zoning changes as necessary to modify zoning requirements including: setbacks, open space requirements, building size, re platting to provide effective utilization of infill properties utilizing the density bonus provisions.

Policy 5.3:

The Board of County Commissioners will ensure that street and sidewalk improvements, stormwater drainage improvements and improvement of public parks are addressed within the “Neighborhoods of Special Concern” and included in the Capital Improvement Plan.

Policy 5.4:

Code Enforcement will undertake a pro-active code enforcement program within the identified “Neighborhoods of Special Concern”.

Policy 5.5

Housing organizations will establish a program to purchase infill properties for redevelopment with new affordable housing with funding secured through CDBG, HOME and other public and private sector funding sources.

Objective 6:

Promote the development and maintenance of safe, adequate housing for all populations and special needs groups in Immokalee.

Policy 6.1:

The County Health Department shall be responsible for preparing an annual report to the Board of County Commissioners and the Community Redevelopment Agency Advisory Board on the condition of licensed migrant labor camps in Immokalee to ensure safe and sanitary living conditions.

Policy 6.2

Encourage local agricultural growers to work in partnership with housing organizations to provide affordable and suitable housing for migrant and seasonal workers.

Policy 6.3

The Continuum of Care will assist the homeless providers with emergency shelter needs, supportive services, homelessness prevention and a transitional housing plan.

Policy 6.4

The Housing and Grants Section will work with nonprofit organizations, which assist the disabled and/or elderly, to identify homes that need to be retrofitted to remove barriers and make them accessible.

Other issues for discussion:

Extend Urban Boundary to the North and South for affordable housing

Consider amendments to the Rural Lands Stewardship Program during the review of that program in June 2008 as follows:

- Ø Require less commercial development for 100% affordable housing projects.
- Ø Do not require projects that are 100% affordable housing to buy density credits.
- Ø Reduce open space requirements for 100% affordable housing projects from 35% to 25%.