



## **Affordable Housing Expedited Permitting Policy**

The City of Fort Pierce administers the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program, which was established by the State with the enactment of the Sadowski Affordable Housing Act. The SHIP Program is created for the purpose of providing funds to counties and eligible municipalities as an incentive for the creation of local housing partnerships, to expand production of and preserve affordable housing, to further the housing element of the local government comprehensive plan specific to affordable housing, and to increase housing related employment.

Under Florida Statutes, the program requires participating local governments to provide assurances that permits for affordable housing projects are expedited to a greater degree than other projects.

Applicants may receive expedited permitting of an application based on confirmed development of affordable housing through one of the following means:

- Project is receiving assistance under a Federal or State Housing program, such as HOME, SHOP, CDBG, Low Income Housing Tax Credits, or SHIP.
- Project is receiving assistance through a local housing program.
- Project is being developed by a not-for-profit organization with a sales price not to exceed the most recent HUD HOME/Housing Trust Fund Homeownership Sales Price Limits.

### **Policy Purpose**

The Affordable Housing Expedited Permitting Policy is created to articulate the guidance by which the City of Fort Pierce may approve requests for expedited permitting.

### **Application Process Requirements**

Application to the Affordable Housing Expedited Permitting process is initiated when an applicant completes the Expedited Permitting Form located on the City's website requesting to be considered for expedited permitting. The form is completed prior to project initiation and submitted to the Planning and Zoning Department for review and approval or denial. City staff may ask for additional documentation to complete the review.

- Applicants complete the Expedited Permitting Request form and provide attestation.
- Applicants select the appropriate program funding source.
- Applicants noting "other" under applicable program must provide agency name and affordable program that will be providing funding for the project.
- Applicants must have an authorized agency representative signoff on the application.
- Applicants may be required to provide proof of unit sales price or rent rates.

- Applicants may be required to provide a copy of the development agreement with the City, where applicable.
- Applicants may be required to provide other documents determined necessary by city staff to complete the review of the request.

## **Procedure**

Upon receipt of a completed request form, Planning and Zoning staff will complete the following:

- Review and verify the information provided on the form and any required documents.
- Determine eligibility based on the project funding source indicated on the form and criteria of the development agreement, if required.
- Upon completing eligibility review, the applicant will be notified of approval or denial along with a copy of the completed form attached. The applicant must include a copy of the approved form with their DPCR application.
- If a denial letter is issued, the letter will identify the reason(s) for denial, methods for remediation (if applicable), and a timeframe for remediation. Remediation is not available for denials based upon not meeting income qualifying criteria for funding sources or projects.

Upon receipt of a completed and approved request form, Building staff will complete the following:

- Accept the completed and approved form along with the DPCR application.
- Route the application and construction plans for architectural pre-review during the DPCR process at no charge to the applicant resulting in an expedited review to a greater degree than other projects.
- Upon DPCR final approval and subsequent application of a building permit application, building staff will route the application and plans for expedited plan review at no charge to the applicant. Plans will be handled in a next-in-line manner by both the permit technician for processing and the plans examiner for review resulting in an expedited review to a greater degree than other projects.

Applications are processed on a first qualified, first-served basis. A first qualified, first-served applicant is an applicant that has completed the form, provided required supporting documentation and has received approval from the Planning and Zoning Department.

Requests for reasonable accommodation to ensure access to the procedure may be submitted to the City of Fort Pierce Building Department.

## **Fair Housing and Non-Discrimination**

It is the policy of the City of Fort Pierce to affirmatively further fair housing and provide services in compliance with federal, state and local laws. All services associated with this process shall be made available without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or marital status.

## **Effective Date**

The policies governing the requests for expedited permitting go into effect July 1, 2023.