


Memorandum



Date: April 8, 2022

To: Directors Liu, Gomez, Cleckley, Munoz and Coley

From: Daniella Levine Cava
Mayor 

Subject: Finding Solutions to the Affordability Crisis for Miami-Dade Residents

Since the beginning of my administration, we have sought to streamline existing processes to create new affordable and workforce housing units desperately needed in Miami-Dade County. Affordability is a growing challenge for so many of our residents, and I appreciate the work that your departments have already done to focus resources on accelerating the process and identifying new opportunities to act on what is within our immediate control.

We have also worked to bring more financial resources to accelerate the construction timelines that have lagged in years past and established new and creative programs for affordable homeownership and important financial mechanisms to help lower-income homeowners stay secure in their homes.

Due to these reforms, we are on track to see completion of 9,000 to 16,000 new affordably priced homes and apartments in our community over the next two years.

Even with all of these initiatives, it is clear that we need to double-down on these efforts and find additional avenues for meeting the needs of our community. Therefore, I am directing you to evaluate your current staffing needs, any procedural delays caused by unnecessary redundant or inefficient processes, and the time it takes from initial review to development approval. With your findings and recommendations, Miami-Dade County will roll out the Building Blocks program, a phased approach to solving the ongoing affordability crisis.

Please report back to me with a set of recommendations and a plan that includes:

- Establishment of a cross-departmental special unit focused exclusively on affordable housing and workforce housing projects seeking zoning and building approvals from Miami-Dade, including infill housing;
- Methods to decrease the time it takes to review traffic plans, water and sewer extensions, and other development approvals incidental to construction permitting;
- Processes to accelerate the review of delinquent developers of Infill Housing Program properties and initiate "claw-back" provisions;
- Recommendation of ways to utilize the Architecture and Engineering Equitable Distribution Program and the County's Miscellaneous Construction Programs to facilitate speedier construction of county-led affordable and workforce housing projects;

- Acceleration of “pilot” projects for homeownership opportunities;
- Identification of opportunities to accelerate access to capital that would also speed up delivery of affordable and workforce housing developments;
- Identification of any internal policies, processes, or procedures to accelerate the review and approval of affordable and workforce housing.

Additionally, since many of these developments are reviewed and approved at the municipal level, I am extending an offer for Miami-Dade County to directly assist all cities’ Planning and Zoning Departments and Building Officials in the review of qualifying affordable housing and workforce housing development projects within their jurisdictions. Please communicate this offer to your municipal counterparts.

Similarly, we must accelerate the clearance of liens on properties where we can, to allow for the successful redevelopment of often blighted properties into affordable or workforce housing. Again, we need to partner with our municipalities to do the same.

Please continue to work in partnership with each other to identify additional opportunities for internal collaboration and present your recommendations and solutions to me by April 15th. With your help, I look forward to launching the solutions-based Building Blocks program and I applaud your commitment to supporting our residents most in need.

c: Honorable Chairman Jose “Pepe” Diaz and Members, Board of County Commissioners
 Geri-Bonzon Keenan, County Attorney
 Gerald K. Sanchez, First Assistant County Attorney
 Jess M. McCarty, Executive Assistant County Attorney
 Office of the Mayor Senior Staff
 Jennifer Moon, Chief, Office of Policy and Budgetary Affairs
 Yinka Majekodunmi, Commission Auditor
 Basia Pruna, Director, Clerk of the Board