


# Memorandum

## Housing Finance Authority

26750 U.S. Highway 19 North, Suite 110  
Clearwater, FL 33761  
Phone: 727-223-6418



**TO:** The Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board of County Commissioners

 **THROUGH:** Mark S. Woodard, County Administrator

**FROM:** Kathryn Driver, Executive Director, Housing Finance Authority of Pinellas County

**SUBJECT:** Housing Finance Authority of Pinellas County 2014 Annual Report

**DATE:** April 7, 2015

### Recommended Action:

I RECOMMEND THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS RECEIVE AND FILE THE 2014 ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY OF PINELLAS COUNTY.

### Summary Explanation/Background:

The Housing Finance Authority of Pinellas County (HFA) was established in 1982 under Part IV of Chapter 159, Florida Statutes and Pinellas County Code Section 2-386. The Housing Finance Authority's mission is to assure that financing for affordable housing remains available to the residents of Pinellas County. This report covers calendar year 2014.

### Fiscal Impact/Cost/Revenue Summary:

No County General Funds are required.

### Exhibits/Attachments Attached:

2014 Housing Finance Authority of Pinellas County Annual Report

**HOUSING FINANCE AUTHORITY OF PINELLAS COUNTY  
BOARD MEMBERS**

Rodney S. Fischer, Chairman  
Tasker Beal, Jr., Vice-Chairman  
Norris E. Counts, Secretary/Treasurer  
Robyn Fiel, Assistant Secretary  
Casey Cane, Assistant Secretary



**Kathryn Driver  
Executive Director**

March 11, 2015

Mr. John Morroni, Chairman and  
Members of the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners  
315 Court Street  
Clearwater, FL 33756

RE: 2014 Housing Finance Authority of Pinellas County Year in Review

Dear Honorable Chairman and Commissioners:

During the past year the Housing Finance Authority of Pinellas County (the "HFA") continued to adapt to the changes within Pinellas County and internal changes. We have adjusted well and are ready to continue strengthening our relationships with our many partners as we continue our mission to put keys in the hands of people, be they home owners or renters, and to improve the lives of Pinellas County citizens.

A brief overview of the HFA's 2014 initiatives and accomplishments follow in this report.

## **SINGLE FAMILY INITIATIVES**

### **First-Time Homebuyer Program**

During 2014, the HFA First-time Homebuyer Program served 196 families in Pinellas, Pasco, and Polk Counties. 191 of those families utilized the down payment assistance provided through the program. Leveraging a combination of HFA General Funds and HFA Housing Trust Funds with Florida Housing Finance Corporation funds we were able to provide \$1,608,500 in down payment/closing costs assistance. Average assistance was approximately \$9,932. The HFA worked with its team of professionals to structure its Single Family Housing Revenue Bonds, Series 2014 A-1 and A-2. The bonds were priced on September 10, 2014 and the bond issue closed on September 30, 2014. This was the first single family bond issue since December 2012. The HFA continues to originate its Home Key first mortgages and its Home Key down payment/closing costs assistance loans through its participating lenders via a continuous lending program. The continuous lending program will remain ongoing with plans that those loan pools will ultimately be delivered into another bond issue in mid-2015 or through the TBA market. Our ability to stay in the market with participating lenders is key to future single family bond issues.

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## Neighborhood Stabilization Program

The HFA continued administration of the federally funded Neighborhood Stabilization Programs (NSP) 1 and 3 under contract with Pinellas County, and the NSP2 program directly as a member of the Florida Suncoast Housing Partners, Inc. consortium. In 2014 13 newly constructed or rehabbed homes were sold to homebuyers earning below 120% of the Area Median Income. The table below shows the status of the single family properties in the Community Land Trust:

	NSP 1	NSP 2	NSP 3
# of homes sold	4	4	5
# of homes currently listed for sale	1	1	0
# of homes in new construction/rehab	5	2	1
# of vacant lots awaiting new construction	5	22	3
# of homes awaiting rehab	0	3	0

NSP1 census tracts include the Lealman area, a community that is designated as one of the five at-risk communities that Pinellas County is focusing resources in. Currently there are 3 new homes being constructed in the Lealman area and 4 more vacant lots that will have new homes constructed on them in 2015.

Construction of 27 new affordable rental units known as Townhomes at Creek Park located in Dunedin has commenced. The acquisition of this development was originally financed with NSP2 funds.

Since all grant funds have been expended, all three grant programs are relying on program income to complete the outstanding projects. Financing for the new construction of homes under the NSP1 and NSP 3 program are provided by the joint resources of the HFA and the County. We continue to work closely with County staff to develop solutions to leverage funds to finish the outstanding projects and close out the grants.

## MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING INITIATIVES

Pinellas Heights located at 11479 Ulmerton Road in Largo had its ribbon-cutting ceremony on May 9, 2014. This is a 153-unit affordable senior housing development, managed by the Pinellas County Housing Authority. All units are being rented to households having an annual income less than 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Sixty percent of the units are set-aside for households earning less than 50% AMI and 10% are reserved for households having an annual income less than 33% AMI. HFA Bonds and County Housing Trust Funds dollars were leveraged with other local, state and federal resources to provide the financing for this development. Pinellas Heights received the National Green Building Standard (NGBS) Silver Award. The NGBS certification provides independent, third-party verification that an apartment building is designed and built to achieve high performance in six key areas: Site Design, Resource Efficiency, Water Efficiency, Energy Efficiency, Indoor Environmental Quality, and Building Operation & Maintenance.

The HFA also worked with their team of professionals and Southport Development Services (Developer) on an acquisition/rehab project. The development was financed with proceeds of multi-family revenue bonds, 4% low-income housing tax credit equity, assumption of the existing subordinate financing as well as deferral of developer fees by the Developer. The financing allowed the Developer to acquire and rehabilitate the Clearwater Apartments. The property was originally constructed in 1984 and consists of 14 residential buildings and an office building configured on two scattered sites located approximately 2 miles apart. The primary site is located at 1000 North Keene Road in Clearwater and contains 9 buildings comprising 56 units as well as the office. The second site is located at 2657 State Road 590 in Clearwater and contains 6 buildings consisting of 34 units. The bond issue closed in August 2014. The development receives rental assistance from HUD in the form of a Housing Assistance Payment contract authorized under Section 8 of the Housing Act. The HAP contract period was extended to 2034 prior to bond closing.

### **Project Updates**

Existing multi-family projects of the HFA continue to operate well and have excellent occupancy rates, as shown by the table below.

<b><u>PROJECT</u></b>	<b><u>UNITS</u></b>	<b><u>ACTUAL OCCUPANCY</u></b>
Alta Largo	288	96%
Bayside Court	144	98%
Booker Creek	156	96%
Clearwater Apts	90	100%
James Park	82	80%
Palmetto Park (Greenwood)	179	85%
Pinellas Heights	153	100%
Lexington (Tuscany)	240	96%
Viridian (Columbian)	188	99%

Numbers are as of December 2014

### **COMMUNITY LAND TRUST**

Currently there are 15 distinct Community Land Trusts (CLT) totaling 634 units of permanently affordable housing. The housing options for residents include single-family, townhomes and apartment communities. In 2014 27 new properties were added to the CLT via a rental development named Townhomes at Creek Park.

The CLT is operated by Bright Community Trust, formerly Pinellas Community Housing Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization created by the HFA in 2008 to provide administrative support for the CLT.

(update table)Community Land Trust	Project	Status
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EcoVillage at Dunedin	Proposed 25 Net Zero Ownership Units	Under Construction
31 <sup>st</sup> Street	18 Rental Units	Complete
Lakeview Villas	83 Rental Units	Complete
Ashley Place	55 Rental Units	Complete
Boardwalk Apartments	36 Renovated Rental Units	Complete
162 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue	2 Habitat Single-family Homeownership	Complete
Haven Ridge Townhomes	18 Habitat Single-family Homeownership	6 Complete
Sunrise Place Apartments	36 Rental Units	Complete
Proud Ground Pinellas	80 Single-family Homes and Land	34 Homes Sold
Bayside Court Apartments	144 Rental Units	Complete
Norton Apartments	48 Renovated Rental Units	Complete
Redwood Apartments	10 Renovated Rental Units	Complete
Town Homes at Creek Park	27 Rental Units	9 Complete
Magnolia Court	26 Rental Units	Complete
Cypress Point	26 Rental Units	Complete

## HOUSING TRUST FUND

The Pinellas Community Housing Trust Fund, approved by the Board of County Commissioners in 2006, supports the development and preservation of affordable housing. The HFA administers the program to sub-recipients including Pinellas County and the cities of Clearwater, Largo and St. Petersburg. No new funds have been added to the Housing Trust Fund since FY08/09. In 2014 the HFA utilized these funds to promote homeownership by providing down payment assistance through the HFA's First-time Homebuyer Program.

## GENERAL OPERATIONS

Following recommendations made in the 2010 Audit of Community Development that there be a clear separation between Community Development and the HFA, the HFA began implementing the recommended changes. The HFA and the County mutually terminated the Administrative Services Agreement and the HFA hired an Executive Director and staff that reported to the HFA Board of Directors. This process was completed in April. The HFA and County staff continue to work closely together to leverage resources and achieve the mission of both entities.

**Bright Community Trust (formerly Pinellas Community Housing Foundation)**

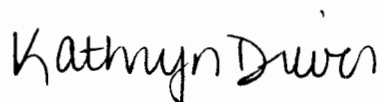
In 2008, when the HFA formed this non-profit organization, the HFA planned to eventually make it independent of the HFA. On September 30, 2013 the Pinellas Community Housing Foundation became a standalone non-profit agency and changed the name to Bright Community Trust (BCT). Bright Community Trust continues to support community housing programs including homebuyer education and foreclosure prevention counseling services, ongoing stewardship relations with CLT property owners, and oversight of the Proud Pinellas Program. Being independent allows BCT to actively pursue grant opportunities previously not available to them because of their association with an instrumentality of government.

The HFA is proud to continue its sponsorship for the **Certificate in Community Real Estate Development** program at the University of South Florida's Florida Institute of Government. A wide range of professionals, who promote affordable housing, benefit from this program concentrating on real-life projects participants bring to class to evaluate. Many of the projects presented and evaluated have been completed after the conclusion of the class.

The **Florida Association of Local Housing Finance Authorities (FLALHFA)** continues educating new Florida legislators on the value of housing finance and programs to constituents and the economy through its Sadowski Education Effort (SEE). The HFA supports this effort and pledged \$10,000 to the 2014-2015 SEE. Through this effort, the House and Senate reached an agreement to fund housing programs at over \$167 million. The funding was split out at SHIP \$100,000,000 and SAIL \$67,660,000. This appropriation level represents 75% of the funds estimated to be distributed into the housing trust funds and available for appropriation during FY2014-15. It is also the highest level of funding since FY 2007-2008. This is a great step forward and it could not have been accomplished without the support of FLALHFA members and the HFAs who financially support the SEE. This year the goal is 100% funding of the housing trust funds.

In 2014, the HFA continued to work in conjunction with Pinellas County Health and Community Services and the Pinellas County Communications Departments to produce the "No Place Like Home" radio show which is aired on WRXB 1590 AM and is also available on Pinellas County Connection TV. In conclusion, the changes in 2014 have been positive and the HFA will continue its' mission to put keys in the hands of people seeking safe, decent, affordable housing. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathryn Driver". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Kathryn" and last name "Driver" clearly legible.

Kathryn Driver, Executive Director

cc: Pinellas County Legislative Delegation