

INDIAN RIVER COUNTY, FLORIDA
M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Board of County Commissioners

THROUGH: John A Titkanich, Jr., County Administrator

PREPARED BY: Cindy Emerson, Community Services Director

DATE: March 11, 2025

SUBJECT: Consideration of the revised Indian River County Local Housing Assistance Plan for the Fiscal Years 2024-2025, 2025-2026, and 2026-2027

It is requested that the data herein presented be given formal consideration by the Board of County Commissioners at its regular meeting on March 11, 2025.

DESCRIPTION AND CONDITIONS

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 420.907, F.S., and Rule 67-37.005, Florida Administrative Code (FAC), the Board of County Commissioners approved the County's first Local Housing Assistance Plan (Ordinance #93-13) on April 6, 1993. Subsequently, the Florida Housing Finance Corporation approved the County's plan and authorized the disbursement of State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) Program funds.

According to Rule 67-37.005(2), Florida Administrative Code, every three years, each local government receiving SHIP funds must submit a new Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation. Accordingly, the County's plan was submitted in 1994, 1997, 2000, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018, 2021, and 2024.

In 2024, the Board of County Commissioners approved the County's current 3-year plan. This agenda item reviews the proposed amendments to the current LHAP for FY 2024-2025, FY 2025-2026, and FY 2026-2027.

- SHIP Program Activity

Since its initial adoption in 1993, the County's LHAP has been successful in directing assistance to eligible households within the county. The attached table (attachment #1) identifies the County's SHIP allocations and the number of loans given to eligible applicants by fiscal year and by income category.

Since SHIP is a state-funded program, the SHIP program fiscal year (FY) is concurrent with the state fiscal year and runs from July 1 to June 30. Because SHIP funds provided in one fiscal year can be spent over a three fiscal year period, the county often has two or more years of SHIP

funding active.

For each fiscal year (FY), SHIP funds consist of state allocations and program income. Program income includes SHIP loan repayments and interest earned. For FY 2024-25, full funding estimated at approximately \$1.2 million was approved by the Legislature.

ANALYSIS

To meet the Florida Housing Finance Corporation's local housing assistance plan submittal requirements and to recognize changed conditions, staff, in conjunction with the County's Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC), prepared a revised LHAP (Attachment 2). The revised plan is a continuation of the county's existing plan with the following changes:

- A new strategy for Demolition/Reconstruction has been added with a proposed award of \$380,000.00 in line with the median property sales price in Indian River County as at 12.31.2024.
- The maximum home values have been increased from \$300,000 to \$400,000.
- Increased the lien term for New Construction (Federal or State Programs Matching Loans) Strategy Code 21 from 10 years to 15 years per SHIP Statute 67-37.007 (15)
- Added language relating to the use of Neighborly Software for SHIP applications.
- Added a mandatory training video for First Time Homebuyers who do not get loans through Habitat for Humanity.
- Window replacement projects to be classified as major rehabs to allow for contractors to submit bids.
- Updated Essential Service Personnel to include county workers, municipal workers and skilled laborers.

The proposed revisions are intended to enhance the LHAP. Additionally, the revisions reflect the current surge in housing market prices by increasing the home value limits. The Demolition Reconstruction Strategy was created to assist homeowners whose repairs are above the maximum rehabilitation limit.

Affordable Housing Advisory Committee Review

The LHAP was reviewed by the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) of the county on February 26, 2025. The AHAC reviewed the proposed revisions and expressed their overall agreement with them.

The proposed plan meets all state and local requirements, and the proposed revisions address changed conditions. Once the state adopts and approves it, the LHAP will provide the basic framework and operating procedures for the SHIP program for the next three fiscal years. The new plan will also make the county eligible to receive SHIP funds until June 2027.

FUNDING

All SHIP loans are funded from state SHIP allocations and program income. Therefore, no local funds are involved.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff and the AHAC recommend that the BCC approve the new Indian River County Local Housing Assistance Plan by adopting the attached resolution, authorizing the Chairman to sign the certification page, and authorizing staff to make any changes to the LHAP as may be required after review by the state.

ATTACHMENTS

1. SHIP Program Funds and Applicant Income Information Summary
2. Indian River County Local Housing Assistance Plan for FY 2024-2027 with exhibits
3. Resolution Approving the New Plan
4. Plan's Certification Page