



Jon Romine  
April 4, 2023

# Housing Branch April Meeting

Lee County Recovery Task Force



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## Introductions

Updates from the Recovery Task Force Meeting

Overview of Branch Problem Solving Process

Research and Data Presentation

Discussion and Questions

Next Steps

Public Comment



# Introductions



## Membership

- **Branch Leads:**
  - Gary Griffin
- **Branch Members:**
  - Amy Yearsly
  - Mary Gibbs
  - Chris Simoneau
  - Lee Ford
  - Diana Giraldo
  - Richard F. Durling
  - Marion Briggs
  - Jan-Erik Hustrulid
  - Marcia Davis
  - Kevin Besserer
  - Dan O'berski
  - Bradley Alix

# Introductions



## Branch Meeting Support Team

### Facilitator(s)

- Jon Romine

### Branch Support

- Robbie Heere

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# Updates from the Recovery Task Force Meeting



## RTF Updates

1

Community Engagement Strategy

2

Emergent Issues

3

No New Priorities

4

CDBG-DR Process and Progress

# Branch Priority 1



## **Zoning changes to comprehensive planning that increases density and redevelopment.**

- Workforce housing located near places of employment (From RTF Members)
- Coastal areas development and redevelopment
- Sustainable and resilient building
- Temporary housing solutions
- Elevations
- Lee Sustainability Plan
- Culture in rebuilding
- Repurposing areas for mixed use and increased density
- Walkability and multi-use
- Key partners are Bright Community Trust, Counselors of Real Estate, UF College of Design/Construction/Planning FIBER

# Branch Priority 2



## Address housing issues and development incentives for vulnerable populations and communities.

- Down payments and closing cost assistance
- Incentives for attainable housing
- Addressing homelessness
- Senior living communities
- NIMBYism
- Number of rental units up to 140% AMI
- Connectivity and transportation
- Regional housing issues
- Insurance
- Investment in lower income areas
- Effect of developments on flooding and natural resources
- Rental including workforce, attainable
- Transitional housing
- Potential use of Buckingham property- 500 acres of land that could be utilized

# Branch Priority 3



**Deregulation to reduce costs of housing and consistency of codes and permitting for efficiency.**

- Permit applications and requirements
- Streamline process in permitting
- Land development regulations for development orders
- Taxes- impact on affordability
- Impact fees and development
- Attainable housing and innovative building methods
- Homeownership attainability
- HOAs and impact on costs, fees and building materials

# Priorities: Entanglements



## Economic Recovery Branch

- Identify partnerships and incentives supporting the workforce, such as affordable housing near jobs
- Investment in housing solutions that effect overall economic growth
- Housing choices for families
- Improving transportation system
- Housing located closer to jobs
- Incentivizing workforce and affordable housing to support economy
- Lowering costs of housing
- Mechanism to lower costs of housing to be closer to jobs, loss of productivity

# Priorities: Entanglements



## Cultural Resources Branch

- Convening of the arts community supporting cultural facilities and individual artists
- Supporting artists
- Housing for local and visiting artists

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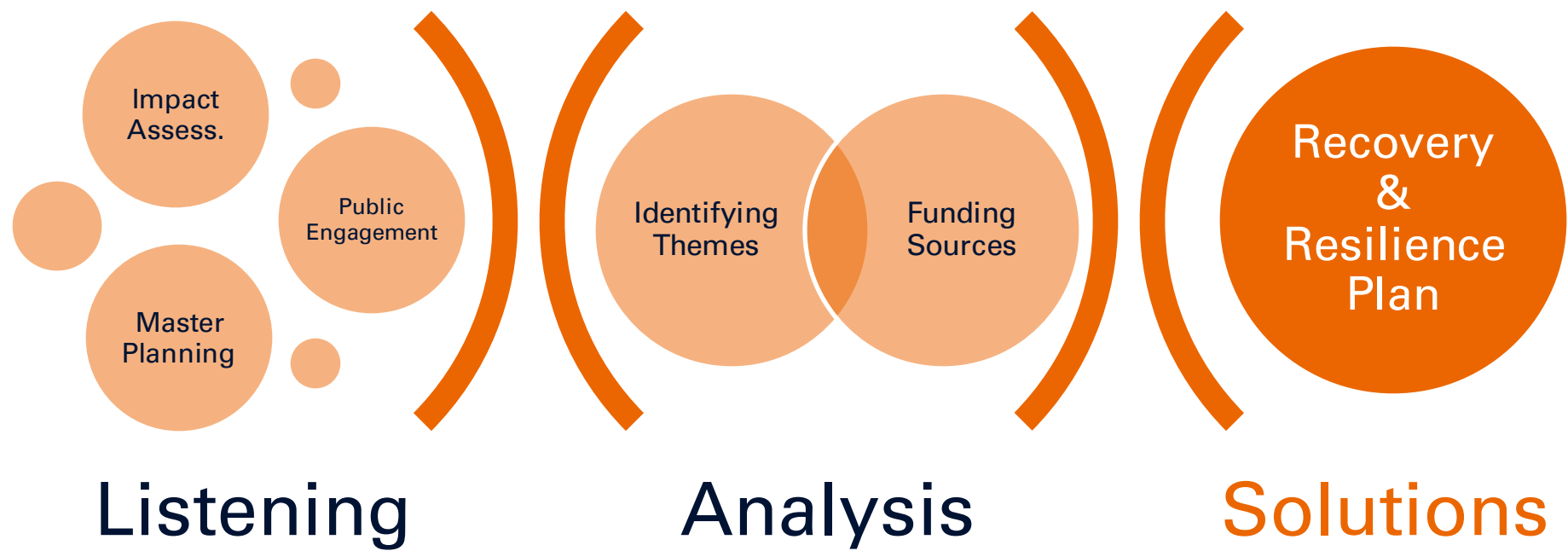
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# Overview of Branch Problem Solving Process



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# Research and Data Presentation



- This Data and Research summary was developed to provide relevant data, research, and context to the priority areas for recovery and resilience efforts identified by the Housing Branch of the Recovery Task Force (RTF).
- Branch members selected initial priority areas based on their experiences with housing challenges and needs in Lee County and in consultation with the members of the RTF.
- Reviewing this report, the Housing Branch will further refine its chosen priority areas and ultimately build initiatives to help Lee County communities recover and rebuild in a resilient manner.
- The following slides capture the Key Challenges and Research for the three chosen Housing Branch Priorities.

# Priority 1: Zoning changes to comprehensive planning that increases density and redevelopment.



## Key Challenges and Needs

- A 2019 analysis reflects a stark difference between the number of affordable and available rental units for a wide range of income levels in the cities of Cape Coral and Fort Myers.
  - For every 100 renters at 0-60% Area Media Income (AMI), only 52 rental properties are available at a price that would not result in the buyer becoming “housing burdened.”
- Local employers report says it is a challenge for them to recruit and retain qualified employees due to housing prices.
- Current zoning policies have specific language to limit density and retain “rural” character.

## Key Research

- Lee County Affordable Housing Committee – The Attainable Housing in Lee County: 2018 Report
- Florida Gulf Coast University – 2023 Executive Business Climate Survey
- Lee County – The Lee Plan
- Lee County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) – Affordable Housing Incentive Review Report 2021

# Priority 1: Zoning changes to comprehensive planning that increases density and redevelopment.



## Key Findings

- A stakeholder evaluation of the Lee Plan found that attempts at mixed-use zoning still promote a predominantly suburban land use pattern . Current zoning may not provide for highly integrated “mixed-use zones” – which would allow residential and commercial properties to co-exist in close proximity.
- The Lee County Regional Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice highlights permitted land uses, minimum lot size, and the range of permitted housing types as having the greatest impact on the lack of attainable housing.
- There is some indication that underlying infrastructure considerations to support increased density must be studied and addressed to increase neighborhood support for more housing.
  - A planned development in Fort Myers met with resistance due in part to complaints of low water pressure from an already overburdened water infrastructure.

# Priority 1: Zoning changes to comprehensive planning that increases density and redevelopment.



## Jurisdictional Permitted Land Uses

| Jurisdiction             | Minimum Lot Size | Units per Acre Allowance                 |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Lee County               | 7,500 sq.ft.     | 20 (multi-family district)               |
| Fort Myers               | 5,000 sq.ft.     | 70(downtown); 16 (multi-family district) |
| Cape Coral               | 10,000 sq.ft.    | 20 (residential receiving district)      |
| Sanibel                  | 10,000 sq.ft.    | 10                                       |
| Bonita Springs           | 4,875 sq.ft.     | 15                                       |
| Town of Fort Myers Beach | 7,500 sq.ft.     | 6                                        |

## County Housing Distribution Profile

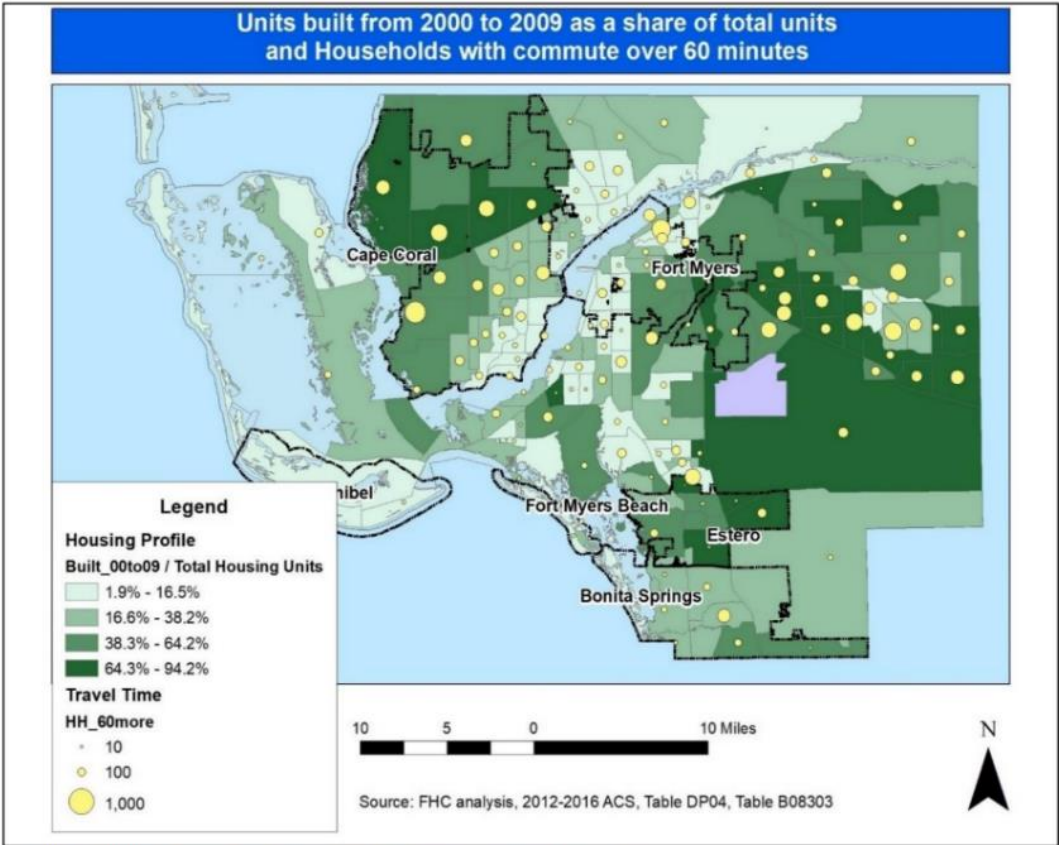


Figure 2. Number of units built between 2000 to 2009 as a share of total units.

## Priority 2: Address housing issues and development incentives for vulnerable populations and communities.



### Key Challenges and Needs

- Households are experiencing housing cost burden across the County.
- Lee County households are in unattainable rental markets contending with lower vacancy rates, higher concentrations of renter households, and lower average household incomes.
  - Attainable housing is housing that is affordable to those earning the Area Median Income (AMI), meaning they need to spend no more than 30 percent of their income on their home.
- Vulnerable populations need to be considered regarding attaining affordable housing. There are a few resources for transitional housing, but there is a continued need.
  - Currently, 515 households who are experiencing homelessness have contacted Lee County's Coordinated Entry Line seeking assistance with housing.

### Key Research

- Ian Progress Report
- The Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization – Long-Range Transportation Plan (2020)
- Lee County Emergency Management – Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (2022)
- Lee County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee – Affordable Housing Incentive Review Report (2021)
- Financial Assistance Programs as identified from the Lee County website Department of Human and Veteran Services page

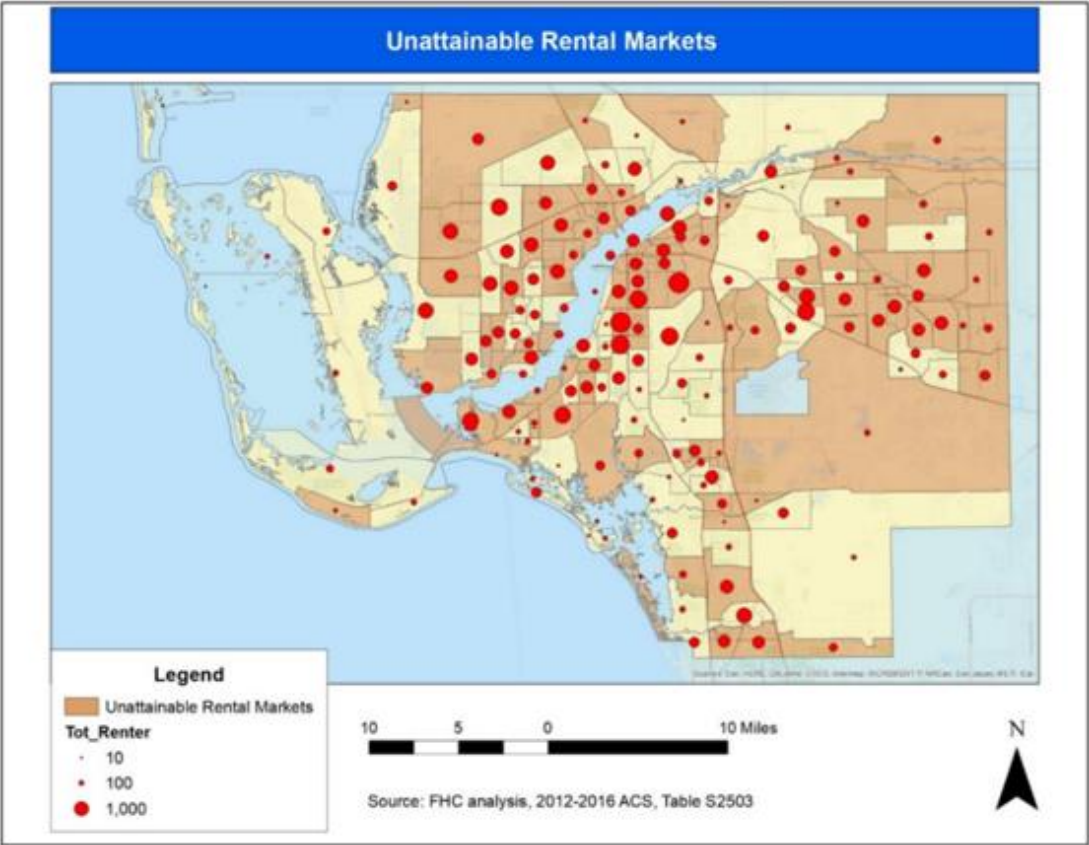
## Priority 2: Address housing issues and development incentives for vulnerable populations and communities.



### Key Findings

- Lee County offers multiple programs to address housing cost burden and provide incentives to homebuyers, but there is still a great need for affordable housing.
  - The current slate of programs could indicate pathways for increased investment.
- Per Florida Statutes, Sec. 420.9076(4), annually the Lee County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) will submit a report to the County Commissioners and to the Florida Housing Finance Corporation with recommendations on the implementation of affordable housing incentives.
- NIMBYism presents a particularly negative obstacle to producing affordable housing.
  - NIMBY stands for “Not in My Back Yard.” In the housing world, it is used to describe people, typically existing homeowner residents, who oppose new housing development near their homes.

# Priority 2: Address housing issues and development incentives for vulnerable populations and communities.



Lee County Repetitive Loss Properties

| Community          | Residential | Commercial | Other |
|--------------------|-------------|------------|-------|
| Bonita Springs     | 60          | 0          | 2     |
| Cape Coral         | 4           | 0          | 0     |
| Estero             | 1           | 0          | 0     |
| Fort Myers Beach   | 164         | 40         | 0     |
| Fort Myers         | 7           | 1          | 0     |
| Sanibel            | 55          | 1          | 4     |
| Lee Unincorporated | 223         | 6          | 3     |
| Total              | 514         | 48         | 9     |

## Priority 2: Address housing issues and development incentives for vulnerable populations and communities.



### Lee County Affordable Housing Incentives

|                     |                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Incentive 1</b>  | The processing of approvals of development orders or permits for affordable housing projects is expedited to a greater degree than other projects.                                     |
| <b>Incentive 2</b>  | The establishment of a process which local government considers, before adoption, policies, procedures, ordinances, regulations, or plan provisions that increase the cost of housing. |
| <b>Incentive 3</b>  | The modification of impact-fee requirements, including reduction or waiver of fees and alternative methods of fee payment for affordable housing.                                      |
| <b>Incentive 4</b>  | The allowance of flexibility in density for affordable housing.                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Incentive 5</b>  | The reservation of infrastructure capacity for housing for very-low-income persons, low-income persons, and moderate-income persons.                                                   |
| <b>Incentive 6</b>  | The reduction of parking and setback requirements for affordable housing.                                                                                                              |
| <b>Incentive 7</b>  | The allowance of affordable accessory residential units in residential zoning districts.                                                                                               |
| <b>Incentive 8</b>  | The allowance of flexible lot configuration, including zero-lot-line configuration for affordable housing.                                                                             |
| <b>Incentive 9</b>  | The modification of street requirements for affordable housing.                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Incentive 10</b> | The preparation of a printed inventory of locally owned public lands suitable for affordable housing.                                                                                  |
| <b>Incentive 11</b> | The support of development near public transportation hubs and major employment centers and mixed-use developments.                                                                    |

# Priority 3: Deregulation to reduce costs of housing and consistency of codes and permitting for efficiency.



## Key Challenges and Needs

- There are limited studies capturing the impact of regulation and permitting on the production of housing in Lee County.
  - State and local governments are increasingly experimenting with zoning and land-use reforms aimed at unleashing housing supply and improving affordability. However, many of these reforms are still relatively new, and few have been rigorously studied.
- More than 37,000 households in Lee County pay more than 50% of their household income toward housing expenses. Of those, 43.3% are households making between 0-30% of the area median income.
- In Lee County, the 2017 median sales price for a single-family home was \$246,087. The Countywide “maximum affordable home purchase price” was \$145,522.



## Key Research

- Lee County Affordable Housing Committee – Meeting Minutes (2018)
- Lee County Association of Realtors – How Homeownership Can Help During Rising Inflation (2022)
- Lee County Community Development Website – Community Development Fees

# Priority 3: Deregulation to reduce costs of housing and consistency of codes and permitting for efficiency.



## Key Findings

- Lee County lists current community development fees (i.e., permitting, development services, zoning, planning, environmental sciences, contractor licensing and code enforcement) on the County website for reference.
- Each County jurisdiction retains a different impact fee schedule, different permitting processes and some unique building codes.
- The Lee County Association of Realtors identified community member benefits of homeownership.
  - Homes are an appreciating asset.
  - Homes mean fewer moving costs.
  - Fixed-rate mortgages do not vary from year to year.
  - Homeowners can always refinance.

# Priority 3: Deregulation to reduce costs of housing and consistency of codes and permitting for efficiency.



Housing Cost Burden in Lee County

| Jurisdiction             | Owners | Renters |
|--------------------------|--------|---------|
| Urban County             |        |         |
| Bonita Springs           | 25.58% | 42.49%  |
| Fort Myers Beach         | 32.82% | 43.37%  |
| Sanibel                  | 31.48% | 45.94%  |
| Estero                   | 25.29% | 43.16%  |
| Unincorporated           | 25.01% | 48.15%  |
| Total Urban Lee County   | 25.45% | 47.28%  |
| Entitlement Jurisdiction |        |         |
| Cape Coral               | 29.64% | 48.04%  |
| Fort Myers               | 25.82% | 51.52%  |
| Total Lee County         | 26.47% | 48.23%  |

Jurisdictional Impact Fee Schedule

| Jurisdiction   | Single Family Residence | Multi-family Residence                          |
|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Estero         | \$10,685.63             | \$6,729.30                                      |
| Bonita Springs | \$9,646.00              | \$8,633.00                                      |
| Fort Myers     | \$6,603.17              | \$3,850.21                                      |
| Cape Coral     | \$7,181.95              | \$4,765.89                                      |
| Lee County     | \$17,836.00             | \$11,659 (low)   \$9,669 (mid)   \$8,609 (high) |

# What do we still need to know?



? Are there any additional priorities?

? What information is still needed to identify challenges within each priority?

? Are there any known studies or programs to validate these priorities?



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## Discussion and Questions



Discussion to close after final member questions, before opening to Public Comment.



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# Next Steps – Future Meetings



| Date                                    | Time (p.m.)  |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------|
| Tuesday, April 4, 2023                  | 12:30 – 2:00 |
| Tuesday, May 9, 2023                    | 12:30 – 2:00 |
| Tuesday, June 6, 2023*                  | 12:30 – 2:00 |
| Tuesday, June 13, 2023 (as needed)      | 12:30 – 2:00 |
| Tuesday, July 11, 2023*                 | 12:30 – 2:00 |
| Tuesday, July 18, 2023 (as needed)      | 12:30 – 2:00 |
| Tuesday, August 1, 2023                 | 12:30 – 2:00 |
| Tuesday, August 15, 2023 (as needed)    | 12:30 – 2:00 |
| Tuesday, September 5, 2023              | 12:30 – 2:00 |
| Tuesday, September 19, 2023 (as needed) | 12:30 – 2:00 |

\*Rescheduled

# Next Steps



- Confirming Workshop Needs
  - Submit any further feedback on workshop topics or desired participants: [@resilientlee.info.org](mailto:@resilientlee.info.org)
- Review Data Summary



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# Adjourn

Email: [info@resilientlee.org](mailto:info@resilientlee.org)

Housing Branch

April 4, 2023



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