

Board of County Commissioners

Agenda Request

Date of Meeting: April 5, 2010

Date Submitted: March 19, 2010

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

From: Benjamin H. Pingree, County Administrator
Lindsay Stevens, Assistant County Administrator
Alfred Nelson, Housing Director
Annie Brown, SHIP Coordinator

Subject: Request Board Approval to Adopt a Resolution Modifying the State Housing Initiative Partnership Program (SHIP) Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) for Fiscal Year 2010-2011

Statement of Issue:

This agenda item requests Board approval to adopt a Resolution modifying the State Housing Initiative Partnership Program (SHIP) Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 by adding the Rental Deposit Assistance and Eviction Protection Strategy.

Background:

Wakulla County is a participating local government in the State Housing Initiative Partnership (SHIP) Program established by Section 452.907-420.9079, et seq., Florida Statutes, Chapter 67-37, Florida Administrative Code and Administered by the Florida Housing Financial Corporation. A requirement for the receipt of SHIP funds is to develop a LHAP to be adopted by Resolution that sets forth strategies for administering the SHIP Program.

The LHAP sets forth the three year plan to implement the SHIP Program in order to provide a combination of the available public and private resources to preserve, improve and create affordable housing for very low, low and moderate income households. This will be done through partnering with the public and private sectors which can include the lenders, realtors, building contractors, developers and other community groups interested in producing affordable housing. The SHIP Program was created to provide flexibility in using the resources to meet the goals and objectives established in the LHAP and the Wakulla County Comprehensive Plan.

SHIP is an Affordable Housing Program, which provides funds to local governments as an incentive to create partnerships that produce and preserve affordable homeownership and multifamily housing. SHIP was designed to serve very low, low and moderate income families. SHIP funds are distributed on an entitlement basis to all 67 Counties and 50 Community Development Block Grant entitlement cities in Florida. The minimum allocation is \$350,000 and the maximum allocation is over \$9 million. SHIP dollars may be used to fund emergency repairs, new construction, rehabilitation, down payment and closing cost assistance, impact fees, construction and gap financing, mortgage buy-downs, acquisition of

property for affordable housing, matching dollars for federal housing grants and programs, and homeownership counseling.

The Sadowski Affordable Housing SHIP Act requires that Local Governments develop local housing assistance strategies such as housing construction, rehabilitation, repair, or finance program implemented by a participating county or eligible municipality with the local housing distribution or other funds deposited into the Local Housing Assistance Trust Fund. Local governments are encouraged to establish regulatory reform or incentive programs to encourage or facilitate affordable housing production, which include at a minimum, assurance that permits as defined in Section, 163.3164(7) and (8) of the Florida Statutes, for affordable housing projects are expedited to a greater degree than other projects; an ongoing process for review of local policies, ordinances, regulations, and plan provisions that increase the cost of housing prior to their adoption; and a schedule for implementing the incentive strategies. Local housing incentive strategies may also include other regulatory reforms, such as those enumerated in Section, 420.9076 of the Florida Statutes, and adopted by the local governing body.

The SHIP Act requires local governments to establish the maximum SHIP funds allowable for each strategy; and the SHIP Act further requires local governments to establish an average area purchase price for new and existing housing benefiting from awards made pursuant to the Act. The local housing assistance strategies and local housing incentive strategies are adopted by local government resolution with an explanation of the way in which the program meets the requirements of Section, 420.907-420.9079 of the Florida Statutes, and corporation rule. The Wakulla County SHIP Program provides funding for rehabilitation, down payment assistance and emergency repair, and receives an annual allocation of \$350,000.00 from the State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program. The County has received \$850,000.00 in SHIP Program funds for Fiscal Year 2009-10.

Analysis:

This agenda item requests the Board to incorporate a Rental Deposit Assistance – Eviction Protection Strategy into the Wakulla County LHAP. The funds will be used to provide short-term rental assistance and utilities (water/electricity) to Wakulla County families facing eviction notices or notices of termination of utility services. The assistance is limited to six months or a maximum of \$3,000 per household.

The following modifications have been made to the LHAP to be considered for the Board's approval:

1. Rental Deposit Assistance – Eviction Protection Strategy (*Pages 25-26 of Attachment #2*)

The County, in an effort to assist individuals and families who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless, will use SHIP funds to provide the upfront funds for households to obtain quality, safe, decent and affordable rental housing. The household must have the income to afford the monthly rental payments for the proposed housing. The County will pay for items such as first month's rent, security deposit, utility connection/start-ups, up to a maximum of \$3000.00. Funds will also be provided to those tenants in danger of being evicted from their current occupied rental units to assist with back-rent payments.

2. Table of Contents

The LHAP Incentive Strategies start on page 27 and the Exhibits start on page 28 of Attachment #2.

If the modifications to the Local Housing Assistance Plan are approved by the Board, the Housing Department under the SHIP Program will be able to provide eligible citizens with up to \$3,000.00 in assistance to address rental and eviction/homeless prevention needs.

Options:

1. Approve the Resolution Modifying the State Housing Initiative Partnership Program (SHIP) Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 by adding the Rental Deposit Assistance and Eviction Protection Strategy.
2. Do not approve the Resolution Modifying the State Housing Initiative Partnership Program (SHIP) Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP) for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 by adding the Rental Deposit Assistance and Eviction Protection Strategy.
3. Board Direction

Recommendation:

Option #1

Attachment(s):

1. Resolution.
2. Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP)