



**Community & Economic  
Development**

**Community Planning & Housing Division**  
1104 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave  
Lakeland, FL 33805  
Phone (863) 834-3360 Fax (863) 834-6266

## **AFFORDABLE HOUSING LAND BANK PROGRAM GUIDELINES**

As required by FS 166.0451 the City of Lakeland Affordable Housing Land Bank provides an inventory list of all real property owned by and within the City limits of the City of Lakeland that are appropriate for use as affordable housing, the list also includes CRA- owned lots. This lots may be offered to qualified developers, builders, or nonprofit housing organizations for the purpose of constructing new affordable residential units to meet the City's affordable housing needs. The purpose of this program is to add to the City's housing stock, reduce the number of vacant and blighted properties, and encourage the development of new affordable housing units on vacant lots throughout the city. The program addresses the need for quality affordable housing and contributes to neighborhood stabilization efforts.

The City and CRA currently hold an inventory of lots located throughout the city and will offer these lots for sale to developers and/or builders, including qualified affordable housing sponsors, to construct new, affordable housing units. The units may be rented or sold to income qualified households. Units must be affordable benefiting extremely low to moderate workforce income households up to 140% of Area Median Income as defined by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The City will waive building permit fees and if eligible, a reimbursement/waiver of non-utility impact fees will also be provided. In addition, the City of Lakeland will provide several pre-approved architectural plans that may be used by the purchaser. Prospective buyers shall demonstrate proven experience, financial resources, and professional expertise to develop, market and rent/sell quality, affordably priced, residential units. Purchasers must also agree to meet the criteria provided herein.

The City of Lakeland will sell vacant lots to developers/builders/sponsors at a sale price of no less than 120% of the assessed value as determined by the Polk County Property Appraiser. The sale price shall be set, and information made available to the public as referenced above. The Buyer shall pay \$1,500.00 at the time a Contract for Sale and Purchase is entered into with the City of Lakeland. The balance remaining due on the purchase price (represented by 120% of the assessed value less \$1,500.00 paid) shall be secured against the property in the form of a 10-year deferred payment lien. This deferred payment lien shall be forgiven in full upon sale or upon lease at the rate of 10% per year



following issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. The beginning date of the lien shall correspond with the date of Closing. Closing shall occur within 60 days of date of contract.

**Location:**

The properties are located throughout the city limits of the City of Lakeland, Florida, and listed below.

**Application Process:**

For Profit Developers:

The process will be an open review and award process by a Selection Committee consisting of representatives from the city, with purchasers required to enter into a developer agreement with specific benchmarks according to design standards approved by the City of Lakeland. Developers must have experience in the construction of residential dwelling units and the financial capability to perform its obligations.

Not-For-Profit Developers:

A portion of lots will be set aside for not-for-profit organizations.

Not-for-profit developers may submit proposals to the housing division. Each proposal will be evaluated individually by staff and the Affordable Housing Review Committee.

Individual Home Buyers:

Individual home buyers will only be able to apply for a lot in conjunction with a certified affordable housing builder or non-for-profit builder.

In all instances, the city reserves the right to request such information or require execution of such documents as may be reasonably necessary to determine the financing of construction of the unit(s).

**Vacant Buildable Residential Lots:**

It may be necessary to combine two or more adjacent small lots and sell them as one parcel should the individual lot size be insufficient to construct a modest sized dwelling unit while complying with all zoning requirements. Should there be sufficient interest in the program by more than one entity expressing interest in purchasing a particular lot or there are more participants than lots available, preference will be given in the following order:

First: Lakeland Electric Service Area developers/builders/sponsors.

Second: Polk County developers/builders/sponsors.

Third: Outside of Polk County developers/builders/sponsors.

**Terms of Sale to a Non-Profit or For-Profit Builder/Developer/Sponsor:**

- Property must benefit extremely low to moderate income buyers as evidenced by the sales contract and household income verification. Extremely low to moderate workforce income is defined as equal to or below 140% of median income per the Local Housing Assistance Plan (LHAP).
- Property must be developed or redeveloped as affordable housing.
- Property to be developed or redeveloped as a minimum 2-bedroom dwelling unit.
- Architectural plans must be approved by the City of Lakeland Planning and Housing Division prior to closing of the lot.
- Purchaser must provide construction schedule and building permit.
- Purchaser must show evidence of funding commitment to complete construction such as a construction cost estimate and bank funding commitment letter, bank statement, and/or grant agreement to support construction of the units.

Land Bank lots may be offered as available through a request for applications or as part of an affordable housing incentive program. Lots available under this program shall be advertised with sufficient information to draw attention to the program and direct prospective buyers/homesteaders to the appropriate offices to make application. Applications shall be made by the prospective buyer which shall contain information as to availability of construction financing, contractor information, etc.

Transfer of title to such lots shall not occur until all of the terms of the sale are complete. Language shall be included in the deed document to allow title to revert to the City in the event construction is not initiated within six (6) months of closing and any deposit or other funds paid by buyer shall be forfeited to the City. The construction must be completed within eighteen (18) months from the closing date.

To ensure occupation of unit(s) by income qualified homeowners, impact fees will be paid at the time of building permit issuance and will be deposited into the Affordable Housing Incentive account. However, the developer/builder/sponsor may request reimbursement of City non-utility impact fees. Prior to permit issuance, the contractor/developer/sponsor must submit a copy of any waiver from County Impact Fees if approved by Polk County.

Upon completion of the project, the contractor/developer/sponsor will submit a request to the Housing Office for reimbursement of the paid impact fees along with documentation including Certificate of Occupancy and homebuyer's income verification and HUD -1/closing disclosure document, verifying that the home has been sold to an income qualified homebuyer. The deadline to submit a request for reimbursement is one year after the closing on the property.

**Other Requirements:**

The purchaser must act in accordance with all applicable laws, rules and regulations.

City staff will schedule and monitor progress meetings to ensure completion of construction in accordance with the purchase agreement.

**Income verification and certification:**

Income eligibility requirements apply to affordable housing development similarly as with other assisted housing programs. The developer/builder/sponsor seeking to acquire surplus land for affordable housing should be prepared to commit to ensuring the process will occur according to program requirements. In order to leverage local funds and to maximize the development of affordable housing, qualified homebuyers may be awarded home purchase assistance from the City's other affordable housing programs. Homebuyers must attend a homebuyer education class with an approved HUD housing counseling agency.

**Program Proceeds:**

It is important that affordable housing has a continued funding source for future projects. Proceeds received from the sale of the lots will be deposited into a separate City account fund earmarked for affordable housing and used to further affordable housing goals. Funds deposited into this account may be used for home purchase assistance, infrastructure costs, site maintenance, and legal expenses.