



LAUDERTRAC

HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES UPDATE



Tracking Progress on Fort Lauderdale Commission Priorities for 2022

July 2022

BUILDING A BRIDGE THROUGH HELP, HOUSING, AND HOPE

Creating Affordable Housing Opportunities

Over the past 20 years, increases in home ownership and rental costs have surpassed changes in household income. The City's Housing and Transportation (H+T) Affordability Index combined, exceeds the recommended 45% of a family's income. To help combat this, the City is looking at options for more affordable and workforce housing in areas that are highly walkable, bikeable, and close to public transportation.

The City is working to add and enhance development incentives to promote the development of affordable and workforce housing by amending its Unified Land Development Regulations (ULDR). The proposed changes include a building height increase, density bonus, and expedited plan review to encourage the inclusion of affordable and workforce housing within new development. To date, analysis and public outreach for adding a height increase and density bonus incentive for the South Regional Activity Center has been initiated. Upon completion in a few months, the analysis will be presented to the City Commission for recommendation and final approval. In addition, implementation of the Broward County Land Use Plan Amendment PCT 20-4 provisions will include allowing residential units on properties with a future land use of Commerce and Regional Activity Center. Currently, that right does not allow for residential development. Broward County is also considering amending their policy; if Broward County's amendments are adopted, the City's policy will be adjusted to align with the County.



The City is working to enhance development incentives to promote the development of affordable and workforce housing.

City Program Provides Repairs and Peace of Mind

Availability of affordable homes that are safe and habitable plays a crucial role in preventing homelessness. The City's Housing Rehabilitation/Replacement Program preserves and creates affordable housing in our neighborhoods. Funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the program assists very low, low, or moderate-income homeowners whose homes require rehabilitative construction. The primary goal of the program is to improve the safety and comfort of homes and eliminate City code violations. This includes replacing windows, roofs, and heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems; improving accessibility; weatherproofing; and making other minor repairs. Since Fiscal Year (FY) 2015, the City has completed 59 out of 83 approved projects and expended over \$3 million. Currently, there are 25 projects in progress with an estimated cost of \$1 million. In addition, the City administers HUD funding to support eligible first-time homebuyers. Since FY 2020, this program has offered housing incentives to purchase 14 homes.

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Light at the End of The Tunnel

Meet Matthew Patterson, a Student Voice Liaison for SAFE Project addiction treatment program at Broward House. He is a member of Collegiate Recovery Leadership Academy Class of 2020-2021 as well as a Florida Atlantic University (FAU) Master of Social Work graduate. He founded the Collegiate Recovery Community at FAU to connect and support other students in recovery. However, his path to success was not an easy one.

In his early years, Matthew battled with addiction, incarceration, unemployment, and homelessness. He resorted to survival sex work to fund his daily meth injections and became HIV positive. His stay at public rehab and public shelter was never more than 60 days. Due to his HIV status, he qualified for the Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) fund, administered by the City. As a subrecipient of the City, Broward House received HOPWA funding to provide safe and long-term residencies and allowed him to attend college and overcome unemployment. He became an alumnus of the Broward House Treatment Program and eventually served his clinical internship there. He believes that education is the most effective way to end poverty and oppression. To learn more about "Matt's Story", visit <https://www.safeproject.us/story/matts-story-battling-the-box>.



HOPWA offers short-term and long-term financial assistance, and other non-financial assistance. If you or someone you know has HIV/AIDS and would like additional information on HOPWA program eligibility and registration requirements, contact the HOPWA housing case management agencies: Careresource (954) 567-7141 or Sunserve (954) 764-5150.

"Sobriety and a pair of clippers saved my life"

Greg Young is celebrating nine years of sobriety this July. But he's not celebrating with a party for himself with family and friends. He's offering free haircuts to the homeless, something he's been doing for the past several years in Fort Lauderdale and something that's become more of a mission than an occupation.

"I was a lost soul for so many years, so I knew what it was like being out there" said Young. "In 2017, I started heading out with my backpack and providing hygiene bags and haircuts for the homeless because I wanted to make an impact on lives that I was noticing were being neglected."

Young has been offering free haircuts at the City of Fort Lauderdale's Community Court every Wednesday morning since its inception in 2019. He estimates he's given around 1,000 free cuts at City Hall since then.

"I knew what it was like to be out there because I was homeless on and off throughout my years of addiction," said Young. "You've got folks out here that haven't been spoken to in months or years. They don't remember what it's like for someone to tell them they love them. That's where my place comes into play."

For Young, the message is more significant than simply offering a shave and a haircut. "I want to build something strong here, not for myself but for the people that we serve. We can make an impact on people's lives one haircut and conversation at a time."

Despite his years of struggle, today, Young is a husband, father of two, and successful Fort Lauderdale business owner. He co-owns and runs Noblemen's Cut and Shave at 805 N.E. 2nd Avenue in Progresso Village. He's also started his non-profit organization called The Backpack Barber. He has big plans for the organization's future, working with, not only the homeless, but also foster children and underprivileged youth.

"I didn't have that role model in my life. I try to do that in people's lives if I can, try to show some love."

Visit thebackpackbarberfoundation.com to learn more about Young and his mission or stop by and see him in action at Community Court Wednesdays at 9 a.m. at Fort Lauderdale City Hall.



Greg Young from the Backpack Barber Foundation



The Backpack Barber Foundation providing haircuts at Fort Lauderdale's Community Court