

Parking and Alternative Transportation Board

Short Term Recommendation #12: Affordable Housing Project proposed by City on College Road

Language:

Recommending that the City should encourage developers to facilitate alternative transportation by waiving minimum parking requirements and substituting additional bicycle and scooter parking, designing carpooling and van pooling programs, and providing convenient public transit options related to this and any other affordable housing projects.

Justification/Research:

Land use plays an important role in determining the ease with which residents can make use of alternate transportation options. Low-income residents who reside at a city's periphery have a struggle to access employment as well as health care, schools and groceries.

In the United States, housing and transportation costs are often the two largest expenditures for households. The average cost of owning a car ranges from about \$6,000 to \$12,000 a year, an expense that is particularly acute for low-income households.

A [2014 HUD report](#) details the relationship between transportation and income. Typical households in auto-dependent neighborhoods spend about 25 percent of their income on transportation costs, but this number drops to 9 percent in neighborhoods with a variety of mobility options. The savings of both dedicated affordable housing and decreased transportation costs allows these families to save for homeownership or market-rate housing, spend more money in the local economy, and spend on essential services such as healthcare. These benefits are not just individual, but societal as well, as they place less strain on social services and resources.

The HUD report also highlights how coordination amongst housing and transportation departments aids in the creation of successful communities. Leaders should assess the degree to which existing transportation networks meet the needs of low-income commuters, prioritizing projects that improve mobility for residents of affordable housing. The report also stressed the importance of seeking federal, state and partnership funds, coordinating investments and using existing resources more efficiently.

There is funding available to meet these goals. [Mobility Lab](#) contends that "affordable housing finance" should be put to use as a Traffic Demand Management (TDM) strategy. They list a handful of policy options that can help outside developers better afford to address transportation needs.

Alternatives:

In addition to the items listed in the Parking and Alternative Transportation Group's recommendations, the following best management practices should be explored, not only for the College Road project, but for all affordable housing projects:

- Tax Credit Points for Transportation
- Housing Protection Districting
- Transit-Oriented Development Fund
- Eco-Passes
- Location Efficiency Mortgages
- Affordability Indexes
- HUD's Resident Opportunities and Self-Sufficiency (ROSS) program
- Passive and Formal Education / Outreach Programs

Options:

Recommend to the City Commission:

- A) To task the internal Transportation Coordination Team to solely pursue the stated recommendations by the Parking and Alternative Transportation Group.
- B) To task the internal Transportation Coordination team to engage FDOT's South Florida Commuter Services to research additional best management practices for College Road and future affordable housing projects.
- C) Ensure that the new units are part of the upcoming Transportation Development Plan.
- D) Apply for Community Block Grants and other funding to free up monies from City coffers.
- E) Nothing
- F) Other?