Home Matters for Ocala and Marion County

QUICK FACTS:

- Over 6,900 very low-income households—including hardworking families, seniors, and people with disabilities—pay more than 50% of their incomes for housing.
- On a single day in January 2016, homeless service agencies counted 823 people on the streets or in shelters.
- In many occupations, such as medical and retail, workers in Ocala and Marion County do not earn enough to rent a modest apartment or buy their first home.
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WHY DOES HOME MATTER?
The health, safety, and welfare of Ocala and Marion County and the strength of the local economy hinges on an adequate supply of affordable housing for working families, elders, and people with disabilities living on fixed incomes.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING REDUCES TAXPAYER EXPENSES

• Affordable, community-based housing for seniors and people with disabilities is about one-third of the cost of institutional care.

• Chronically homeless persons often cycle through jails, hospitals, and other crisis services. Permanent supportive housing for this high-need population can reduce taxpayer costs by about $20,000 per person per year.

• Affordable housing can improve the health and educational outcomes of low-income families and children, reducing the public costs associated with illness and poor school performance.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING BOOSTS THE ECONOMY

• Money spent on affordable housing construction and rehabilitation has a ripple effect on local economies. Contractors and suppliers spend money on materials and labor, and workers spend their earnings locally.

• If the Sadowski Housing Trust Fund money is fully appropriated for housing, Marion County and the City of Ocala will receive nearly $3.4 million in total SHIP funds. This allocation will leverage a further $15 million from public-private partnerships, creating nearly 340 jobs and generating nearly $47 million in positive economic impact.

The Florida Housing Coalition has produced this report in support of Home Matters® (www.HomeMattersAmerica.com), a national movement to make Home a reality for everyone by elevating the importance of Home’s impact on people’s health, education, personal success, public safety, and the economy. Participating in Home Matters is a coast-to-coast coalition composed of members of the general public, leaders of housing and community development organizations, as well as other organizations concerned about increasing the positive impact of Home in their communities.
For many low-income residents in Ocala and Marion County, however, their housing is a source of stress rather than respite. Thousands of working families are paying more than they can afford for housing, and cutting back on necessities like nutritious food and health care as a result. Other low-income families respond to high housing costs by living in substandard housing, doubling up with family and friends, or moving frequently—all of which have negative impacts on their health, their children’s education, and the wider community. By contrast, an adequate supply of affordable housing helps families put down roots, stay healthy and get ahead.
Misconceptions about affordable housing are widespread, with many citizens associating it with large, distressed public housing projects in central cities. However, plenty of public housing authorities in communities around the nation, large and small, are well-managed and have decent units. Furthermore, public housing is only one type of affordable housing. In this report, “affordable housing” refers to privately owned housing that receives a subsidy to bring its rent or purchase price down to a level affordable to a low-or moderate-income family. Except for the subsidy, affordable housing is indistinguishable from market-rate housing—it has the same architectural and landscaping styles, and often has basic amenities like energy efficient appliances and community gathering spaces. Substandard housing is, by definition, not affordable housing.

**Why Affordable Housing?**

In addition to being a basic human need, housing is a market commodity. However, the cost of constructing and maintaining a decent house or apartment exceeds what many low-income families can afford to pay in rent or mortgages. Additionally, more affluent homebuyers and renters may bid up the price of relatively modest housing, even in communities with soft housing markets. As a result, many low- to moderate-wage workers, and people living on fixed incomes due to age or disability, are priced out. Simply put, the inability of the housing market to supply these families with adequate housing is a market failure.

The way to correct this market failure is to provide incentives that make it profitable for private developers to invest in affordable housing. These incentives come from public-private partnerships among lenders, real estate professionals, community-based nonprofit organizations, and local, state, and federal government agencies. Affordable housing funders typically impose high standards for building quality and property management. Every partner and every funding source in this community effort—public, private, and nonprofit—is an essential piece of the puzzle.

This report makes the case for affordable housing needs in Marion County and its central city, Ocala. The document is organized as follows:

- The remainder of **Chapter 1** sets the stage for understanding the importance of affordable housing, and provides a demographic overview of Ocala and Marion County.
- **Chapter 2** provides a broad overview of the “how and why” of housing-related hardships in Ocala and Marion County, including housing cost burden, homelessness, and other factors.
- **Chapters 3 and 4** explore drivers of housing cost burden for low-income renters and owners, respectively, in more detail.
- Finally, **Chapter 5** describes the role of the Sadowski Housing Trust Funds and other funding sources in crafting solutions to the affordable housing challenges in Ocala and Marion County.

**The Benefits of Affordable Housing**

**Economic Benefits**

Affordable housing—like any other housing development—is an economic powerhouse. Construction and rehabilitation creates local jobs directly, as well as creating business for local suppliers, who in turn hire new workers to meet the increased demand. The workers provide a further boost to the economy by spending their wages at local restaurants, grocery stores, and other businesses. Once the development is finished and occupied, the residents create demand for ongoing jobs to meet their needs.

In addition, affordable housing programs are less costly to taxpayers than providing social services to persons who are elderly, have disabilities, or are homeless or precariously housed. According to an AARP report⁴, Medicaid-funded nursing home care in Florida for seniors and people with disabilities cost over $30,000 annually per person served, compared to less than $10,400 for Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS). For an individual with developmental disabilities, HCBS costs $30,323 annually, compared to over $109,000 for an intermediate care facility. Homeless persons with severe mental illness, meanwhile, are often heavy users of public crisis services such as jails and emergency rooms. A study in Central Florida estimates that permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals saves taxpayers an estimated $20,000 per person⁴.
Health and Education Benefits

Housing plays a major role in our physical and mental health. For low-income individuals and families, lack of affordable housing can have a multitude of negative effects:

- Families in unaffordable housing are likely to cut back on nutritious food and health care\(^3\).
- Substandard housing poses a variety of health hazards. Dust, mold, and cockroaches can cause asthma and allergies, and peeling lead paint can reduce IQs and cause behavioral problems in children. Unsafe structural conditions, such as faulty wiring, increase the risk of fire and injury\(^4,5\).
- Many low-income families move frequently or double up with friends and relatives if they cannot find affordable housing. Frequent moves are associated with stress and depression, and overcrowding has been linked to poor health in children\(^6,7\).
- Homelessness exacerbates a person’s pre-existing health problems, and living on the streets or in shelters poses unique health risks (including tuberculosis, violence, and exposure to weather). Homelessness also makes it difficult to rest and recuperate after illnesses, find a place to store medications, and keep wounds clean and dry\(^8\).

Many of the health problems associated with a lack of affordable housing are closely connected to children’s educational performance. For example, exposure to lead paint is known to cause developmental delays in children, while asthma from exposure to dust and mold can cause children to miss school and fall behind. Frequent moves, overcrowding, and homelessness have also been linked to lower educational attainment in children\(^9\).

If a lack of affordable housing can contribute to ill health and educational problems among low-income families and children, then affordable housing is the foundation for good health and achievement in school. For example, a study in Boston found that children in subsidized housing were 19% less likely to be food insecure and 35% more likely to be in good health than children whose families were on the waiting list for subsidized housing\(^10\). Additionally, both subsidized rental housing and homeownership have been linked to better educational outcomes for children\(^11,12\).
Demographic Overview

Marion County is a medium-sized county whose central city is Ocala. Ocala had a population of 57,209 in 2015, slightly above the threshold for a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) entitlement community.

The populations of Ocala and Marion County have grown in relative proportion to the state (Table 2). Between 2000 and 2015, Florida’s population increased by 23%, while Ocala and Marion County’s increased by 18% and 30% respectively. Both have seen slower growth than the state between 2010 and 2015, growing at a slow 2% compared to 4% for the state.

Marion County’s racial and ethnic profile is different from the state as a whole, with a lower share of both African-Americans and Hispanics and Latinos (Table 1). Ocala also has a lower share of Hispanic and Latinos compared to the state, but a higher share of African-Americans.

The County’s homeownership rate is higher than the state’s (76% compared to 65%). However, the homeownership rate in Ocala is much lower than the state at 51% (see Table 1). The higher homeownership rate in the County is likely due to the predominance of single-family residential housing in the unincorporated suburban areas in the County as well as a higher concentration of rental units within the Ocala city limits.

Both incomes and housing costs are lower in Ocala and Marion County than in the state as a whole (Table 1). Incomes and housing costs in Ocala are comparable to the County as a whole, except that median owner income and median monthly owner costs are notably higher ($52,355 compared to $44,205 and $872 compared to $651 respectively).

Both Ocala and Marion County have lower rates of labor force participation, along with higher unemployment and poverty to the state as a whole. Both also have higher shares of elderly residents (Table 1). The high share of elderly residents likely explains much of the lower rate of labor force participation and higher rates of unemployment and poverty.

In many ways, Ocala and Marion County may be representative of the future of the state of Florida, with a growing senior popula-

Table 1. Comparison of Marion County & Ocala to the state of Florida. (Source: 2015 5-year American Community Survey.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Florida</th>
<th>Marion County</th>
<th>Ocala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>19,645,772</td>
<td>336,811</td>
<td>57,209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian % of Population</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>81.7%</td>
<td>69.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African-American % of Population</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino % of Population</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeownership Rate</td>
<td>65.3%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$47,507</td>
<td>$35,459</td>
<td>$35,924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Owner Income</td>
<td>$57,539</td>
<td>$44,205</td>
<td>$52,355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Renter Income</td>
<td>$33,153</td>
<td>$28,005</td>
<td>$24,484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Monthly Owner Costs</td>
<td>$993</td>
<td>$651</td>
<td>$872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Gross Rent</td>
<td>$1,002</td>
<td>$803</td>
<td>$793</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Population 16 and Older in Civilian Labor Force</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>54.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed % of Civilian Labor Force</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Population in Poverty</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elderly (65 &amp; older) % of Population</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Population Change in Marion County, Ocala, and the State of Florida. (Source: 2000 and 2010 Census; 2015 5-year ACS.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>15,982,378</td>
<td>18,801,310</td>
<td>19,645,772</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marion County</td>
<td>258,916</td>
<td>331,298</td>
<td>336,811</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocala</td>
<td>45,943</td>
<td>56,315</td>
<td>57,209</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER TWO: Overview of Housing Problems in Ocala and Marion County

This chapter provides an overview of the housing-related hardships faced by low-income households in Ocala and Marion County, as well as some key factors that shape the local housing market. Housing cost burden, or paying more than one can afford for housing, is the most widespread hardship. This chapter also explores substandard housing and high transportation costs, two tradeoffs that low-income households may make when they cannot find affordable homes near their workplaces. The implications of vacant units for Ocala and Marion County’s housing markets are considered. Finally, this chapter examines homelessness—the most extreme form of housing deprivation—and the role that low wages play in housing-related hardships.

Housing Cost Burden and Tenure

Ocala and Marion County make up a much smaller community than Florida’s major metropolitan areas, such as Miami and Tampa Bay. However, the market experienced significant losses in value as evident in median sales prices. In 2006, what many consider the height of the housing boom, median sales prices in the Marion County and Ocala markets were $219,898 and $232,599 respectively. By 2012, those had fallen to $99,096 and $84,443. Since 2012, Ocala and Marion County have not seen the same degree of upward pressure on prices as seen in other larger communities, where job markets are stronger and millennials are entering the market home purchases. Even still, Marion County and Ocala are similar to the state as a whole in terms of low-income households struggling with unaffordable housing costs.

Figure 1 shows ACS data on the share of households in Marion County, Ocala, and the State of Florida that are low-income and housing cost burdened. (For a definition of terms relating to household income and cost burden, see the sidebar on the next page.) Households are less cost-burdened in Marion County and Ocala compared to the State overall. In Marion County, 9% of households are low-income and moderately cost burdened, and another 9% are low-income and severely cost burdened. In Ocala, those figures are 10% and 14% respectively. (Please note that numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding.)

Figure 1. Prevalence of Low-Income, Cost Burdened Households in Marion County and Ocala.
Table 3 provides ACS estimates of the absolute numbers of low-income households with cost burden. For example, of Marion County’s 86,887 households, 15,807 are low-income and cost burdened. Of these households, 8,142 households are severely cost burdened. A subset of households often prioritized by policymakers and affordable housing advocates consists of very low-income, severely cost-burdened households. Marion County has 6,988 households in this category. Similarly, of Ocala’s 38,340 households, 9,317 are low-income and cost burdened. Of these households, 5,248 households are severely cost burdened, of which 4,112 households are very-low income.

Local affordable housing policy often focuses heavily on the needs of low-income elders and people with disabilities. Marion County has 6,435 low-income, elderly-headed households with cost burden. While, this number is only 7% of all households in the County, it comprises 41% of all low-income, cost-burdened households. In Ocala, there are 2,725 households in this category, making up 7% of all Ocala households and 29% of all low-income, cost-burdened households in the city.

The ACS dataset also provides a community’s total share of low-income, cost burdened households with members that have disabilities. Marion County has 6,905 low-income, cost-burdened households with members that have disabilities. Similar in percentage of the population as elderly-headed households, this is 8% of all households and 44% of all low-income, cost-burdened households. For Ocala, the numbers are higher than elderly-headed, with 9% of all households and 38% of low-income, cost-burdened households having disabled members.

The ratios in this section of Table 3 suggest the prevalence of low-income households headed by seniors and/or which contain disabled members. This data may be taken into consideration for local policy and funding priorities.

Table 3. Number of Low-Income, Cost Burdened Households in Marion County & Ocala
(Source: 2011-2015 American Community Survey data.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Florida</th>
<th>Marion County</th>
<th>Ocala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Households</td>
<td>7,463,191</td>
<td>86,887</td>
<td>38,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Income, Cost Burdened Households</td>
<td>1,946,730</td>
<td>15,807</td>
<td>9,317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Income, Severely Cost Burdened Households</td>
<td>1,125,736</td>
<td>8,142</td>
<td>5,248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low-Income, Severely Cost Burdened Households</td>
<td>911,390</td>
<td>6,988</td>
<td>4,112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Income Households that are Not Cost Burdened</td>
<td>1,056,609</td>
<td>19,232</td>
<td>5,635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Income, Cost Burdened, Elderly-Headed* Households</td>
<td>570,241</td>
<td>6,435</td>
<td>2,725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of All Households</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Low-Income, Cost Burdened Households</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-Income, Cost Burdened, One or More Household Members with a Disability</td>
<td>577,467</td>
<td>6,905</td>
<td>3,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of All Households</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Low-Income, Cost Burdened Households</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Household head is 62 or older.
Cost Burden by Tenure

When housing cost burden data for Marion County and Ocala are disaggregated by tenure and income category, both show a similar pattern to that of the state. Figure 2 shows the total number of severely cost burdened households by tenure and income category in Marion County, Ocala, and the State of Florida. In all three jurisdictions, the number of severely cost burdened households decreases as income increases. In general, homeowners with mortgages are more likely to be severely cost-burdened than renters and those without mortgages, with the exception of very low-income households (incomes between 51% and 80% of area median income) in Ocala. Extremely low income homeowners with mortgages have the highest rate of being severely cost-burdened. Of note, this percentage is 100% for ELI homeowners with mortgages in Ocala.

This distribution may be affected by multiple factors, including differences in homeownership rates and the legacy of subprime mortgages. For example, both Marion County and Ocala have large senior populations, many of whom are low-income. When combined with high ownership rates, this results in the potential for many to be cost-burdened, particularly if housing was purchased during the housing boom of the early 2000s. Another reason for the dominance of severely cost burdened owners may be partly the legacy of adjustable-rate and subprime mortgage loans made during the housing boom.

Figure 2. Number of Severely Cost Burdened Households by Tenure and Income Category in Marion County and Ocala.
(Source: ACS 2011-2015 data)
The number and type of severely cost burdened households has implications for a community’s mix of appropriate affordable housing strategies. For example, severely cost burdened homeowners between 31% and 80% AMI may be best served by foreclosure prevention counseling, refinancing, energy-efficiency improvements to reduce utility costs, or even downsizing to a more modestly priced home. For ELI owners with severe cost burden, affordable rental housing may be a more feasible option.

Cost Burden Over Time
The rates of cost burden for low-income households have decreased since the height of the housing boom in 2006. Figure 3 compares ACS data on cost burden by tenure for low-, very low-, and extremely low-income households. Please note that the percentages for Marion County below include Ocala. Also, for a note on the use of ACS data, see Appendix 1.

In Marion County, the percentages of lower-income homeowners that are cost burdened has fluctuated from 2006 to 2015, but overall exhibits a downward trend. The exception to this is extremely low-income homeowners with mortgages, where the percentage of cost-burdened households has increased. The same can be said for renters in Marion, where the percentage of cost-burdened households has decreased except...
for with extremely low-income renters. The State as a whole exhibits flat or slightly decreasing trends in cost burden from 2006 to 2015, which is encouraging but indicates that many households remain cost-burdened, even with lower prices during the Great Recession. At the Marion County level, trends suggest that while pricing has come down to more affordable levels, there still are few affordable options for extremely-low income households. In all, affordability remains an issue at both the State and local levels.

**Housing + Transportation Costs**

Faced with high housing costs in the communities where they work, many families live in outlying communities. However, this strategy is not entirely successful, since many of these families have to pay for long commutes. The Center for Neighborhood Technology [CNT] calculates a “Housing + Transportation Affordability Index” for communities across the nation. Just as 30% is the maximum share of income that a family can affordably devote to housing, CNT has determined that 45% is the maximum affordable share of household income that can be spent on combined housing and transportation costs.

Figure 4 indicates many more Marion County and Ocala households are cost burdened when transportation costs are taken into account. A typical household at 80% AMI pays 78% and 74% of their incomes for housing and transportation in Marion County and Ocala respectively, well above the 45% considered affordable.

For comparison, in the Tampa Bay metropolitan area, not surprisingly, housing costs absorb a higher share of an 80% AMI household’s income (44%, compared to 41% in Marion County, inclusive of Ocala). However, when factoring in transportation costs, these households are more cost-burdened in Marion County. In other words, low-income households are struggling to find affordable housing near their jobs.

**Vacant Housing**

Ocala and Marion County’s housing market cannot be fully understood without considering vacant units. The ACS categorizes vacant housing units as 1) for sale or rent, 2) rented or sold but not occupied, 3) for seasonal or recreational use, 4) for migrant workers, and 5) “other vacant” units, which include but are not limited to:

- Units held off the market while the owner makes repairs or renovations
- Units owned by an elderly person who is living in a nursing home or with relatives
- Units that the owner does not currently wish to rent or sell
- Units that are involved in legal disputes

Not all “other vacant” units are dilapidated or abandoned, and not all foreclosed homes are classified as “other vacant”. However, national data shows that “other vacant” homes have a disproportionate share of older units and units that have been vacant for two years or more. Thus, a relatively high or increasing share of “other vacant” units in a community may indicate distress or inefficient use of the housing stock.
Table 4 compares “other vacant” units in Ocala and Marion County. In 2015, Marion County had 10,379 such units, of which 1,101 are located in Ocala. For both Ocala and Marion County (exclusive of Ocala), these units comprise approximately 4.1% and 5.7% all housing units respectively. This represents an increase from 2010 when the percentage was 3.4% for both Marion County and Ocala.

Since these units are generally off the market, they do not serve to moderate housing prices by expanding the supply. However, deteriorated or foreclosed “other vacant” units are likely to depress neighboring home values and contribute to local perceptions that a neighborhood is declining. A comprehensive housing strategy should include an effort to return abandoned and dilapidated “other vacant” housing units to productive use, both to expand the affordable housing supply and revitalize neighborhoods. This should be done concurrently with new affordable housing construction on vacant land parcels, especially in infill areas.

Homelessness

When a household’s rent or mortgage payments compete with other basic needs, such as food and healthcare, they are at risk of homelessness. Ocala and Marion County comprise one homeless “Continuum of Care”, the lead agency for which is the Marion County Homeless Council, Inc. In the 2016 Point-in-Time [PIT] Count, according to HUD data, Ocala and Marion County identified 823 “literally homeless” people—those staying in shelters, on the street, or in other places not meant for human habitation. This is a 9% increase since 2008. Office on Homelessness data shows a 30% decrease in the state’s homeless population during the same period (Table 5).
HUD provides CoC-level PIT Count data for subpopulations. Table 5 shows that Marion County’s total homeless population has decreased by 20% since 2011 according to HUD’s data compared to the state’s overall decrease of 30%. The data shows significant decreases in chronically homeless and homeless veterans. However, it shows that homeless families have more than doubled during this time.

To fully understand family homelessness and housing instability in Ocala and Marion County, data on homeless students must also be considered. The U.S. Department of Education provides funding and other support for public school districts to identify children and youth who are homeless at any time during the academic year, including those who are doubled-up or living in hotels or motels due to their family’s loss of housing or economic hardship. By this definition, Ocala and Marion County had 2,685 homeless students in the 2014-2015 academic year, a 21% increase since the 2011-12 academic year. The state as a whole had a smaller increase (15%) in student homelessness. Notably, the data shows that Ocala and Marion County experienced an increase in the number of students who were literally homeless or awaiting foster care placement (38%) while the state saw a slight decrease (-3%). Marion County also saw an increase in students who were doubled up or living in motels (22%) higher than the state’s increase (19%). While these figures do not exactly correlate with the figure for increase in homeless families, it does indicate that addressing the needs of this population should be a policy and program priority.

Overall, Ocala and Marion County’s picture on homelessness is mixed. HUD data suggests that the Marion County CoC has made progress in reducing homelessness and the number of homeless. However, the PIT count has limitations. Considering that the data shows a growing problem of housing instability among families with school-aged children and youth, organizations in Ocala and Marion County have a need to expand best practices such as Housing First. The success of both permanent supportive housing and rapid re-housing depends on an adequate supply of affordable housing.

Table 5. Homeless Population and Subpopulations in Ocala and Marion County Continuum of Care.  
(Source: HUD Point-in-Time Count data,25.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ocala and Marion County (Office on Homelessness data)</th>
<th>2016 Homless Population</th>
<th>2011 Homeless Population</th>
<th>Percent Change in Ocala/Marion County</th>
<th>Percent Change in Florida</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>823</td>
<td>1,032</td>
<td>-20%</td>
<td>-30%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homeless Population Category (HUD data)</th>
<th>2016 Population</th>
<th>2011 Population</th>
<th>Percent Change in Ocala/Marion County</th>
<th>Percent Change in Florida</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Homeless Population (2011-2016)</td>
<td>823</td>
<td>1032</td>
<td>-20%</td>
<td>-30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons in Families (2011-2016)</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>144%</td>
<td>-38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronically Homeless Individuals (2008-2014)</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>-47%</td>
<td>-27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans (2011-2014)*</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>-33%</td>
<td>-49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. Homeless Students Identified in Public School Districts in Ocala and Marion County.  
(Source: Florida Homeless Education Program26.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Marion County 2014-15</th>
<th>2011 Population</th>
<th>Percent Change in Ocala/Marion County</th>
<th>Percent Change in Florida</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Homeless Students</td>
<td>2,685</td>
<td>2,223</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter, Transitional Housing, Awaiting Foster Care, Unsheltered, RV Parks, Campgrounds, etc.</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>-3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doubled Up or in Hotels/Motels</td>
<td>2,386</td>
<td>1,962</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Over 600,000 Floridans have median wages below $10 per hour, leaving their families vulnerable to financial crisis.

Many of Florida’s common occupations DO NOT PAY ENOUGH FOR A FAMILY TO SURVIVE, Let Alone Thrive

In Florida, the median wage for 39% of jobs fall below the Minimum Survival Wage.

$13.71 per hour

Low Wages

The above sections have discussed the “how” of housing cost burden and related hardships for low-income families in Ocala and Marion County. Similar to communities across the state and the nation, the “why” of Ocala and Marion County’s affordable housing shortage is largely explained by low wages for many common occupations. Table 7 compares the 15 most common occupations and their median wages for the Ocala/Marion County metropolitan area with the median wages for those same occupations in the State of Florida. Wages in the Ocala/Marion County metropolitan area are less than the state medians for all categories except Stock Clerks and Janitors. In some cases the differences are significant, such as with Heavy Truck Drivers and Secretaries.

The United Way of Florida’s 2017 report on ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) Households calculated that the “survival wage” in Ocala and Marion County is $8.37 for a single adult, and $23.93 for a family of four with two adults and two small children. The “survival budget” described in the ALICE Report covers only the bare minimum for basic household expenses like housing, food, and child care, with no cushion for emergencies. All of the 15 most common occupations in the Ocala/Marion County metro pay wages that cover a single person’s survival budget. Nine occupations would not cover a family of four’s survival budget even if doubled (i.e. even if both parents worked in these occupations).

Workers in common low-wage occupations drive much of a community’s demand for low-cost rental housing. Chapter 3 discusses the barriers faced by low-income renters in more detail.

Summary

Despite Ocala and Marion County’s relatively soft housing market, its low-income households continue to struggle with high housing costs in similar ways to low-income households in Florida overall. Low-income households are further burdened by transportation costs, and homelessness is of particular concern to family households.
Table 7. Median Wages of Top 15 Occupations in the Ocala/Marion County Metropolitan Area compared to Florida.
(Source: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity [DEO] 201727.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 15 Occupations in Ocala Metropolitan Statistical Area</th>
<th>Median Wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail Salespersons</td>
<td>$10.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashiers</td>
<td>$9.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food</td>
<td>$9.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretaries and Administrative Assistants*</td>
<td>$13.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service Representatives</td>
<td>$14.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Nurses</td>
<td>$28.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiters and Waitresses</td>
<td>$10.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Clerks, General</td>
<td>$12.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock Clerks and Order Fillers</td>
<td>$12.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers</td>
<td>$14.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Assemblers</td>
<td>$13.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers</td>
<td>$19.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receptionists and Information Clerks</td>
<td>$12.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Assistants</td>
<td>$11.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janitors and Cleaners**</td>
<td>$10.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Occupations in Ocala Metropolitan Area</td>
<td>$14.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top 15 Occupations Statewide Wages</th>
<th>Median Wage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retail Salespersons</td>
<td>$10.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashiers</td>
<td>$9.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food</td>
<td>$9.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretaries and Administrative Assistants*</td>
<td>$15.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service Representatives</td>
<td>$14.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Nurses</td>
<td>$30.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiters and Waitresses</td>
<td>$9.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Clerks, General</td>
<td>$13.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock Clerks and Order Fillers</td>
<td>$11.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers</td>
<td>$18.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Assemblers</td>
<td>$13.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers</td>
<td>$19.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receptionists and Information Clerks</td>
<td>$13.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Assistants</td>
<td>$12.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janitors and Cleaners**</td>
<td>$10.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Occupations in Florida</td>
<td>$16.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Except legal, medical, and executive  **Except maids and housekeepers
CHAPTER THREE: Challenges for Renters

Over the past decade, the number of renter-occupied units in Marion County overall and Ocala’s local housing market has increased, while the number of owner-occupied units has declined (Table 8). It is customary for a community to have higher vacancy rates among rental units than owner units, since renters tend to move more often than owners, leaving a higher share of rentals vacant at any given time. The rental vacancy rates for both Marion County overall and Ocala have decreased, although still higher than the state’s vacancy rate. Ocala’s rental vacancy rate remains higher than that of Marion County overall, indicating a tight market for rental units outside Ocala.

The decreasing rental vacancy rates in Marion County overall and Ocala are still higher than the 5% point at which time rental rates typically see significant increases and pressure for new product. However, the high vacancies may not be a true indicator of demand. Rental vacancies may remain high due to lack of affordability, particularly for very-low income renters.

Mismatch Between Rents and Wages

A rental market's relative affordability is determined not by housing costs alone, but by the balance between rents and incomes. As Chapter 2 described, many of Ocala and Marion County’s most common occupations pay very low wages. Figure 5 compares median wages for the Ocala metro’s top 15 occupations to the “housing wage” required to afford a 1- or 2-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rent (FMR). Nine occupations fall short of the housing wage for even a 1-bedroom apartment, and most are several dollars per hour short of affording a 2-bedroom apartment.

Many low-income workers share housing costs with a spouse or roommates, but this is not a failsafe way to make housing affordable. These households can quickly fall into financial crisis due to job loss, illness, child care emergencies, break-down of an automobile, or other disruptions. Additionally, many low-income households consist of single parents with young children.

Table 8. Tenure and Occupancy Status of Housing Units (Source: ACS.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marion County (inclusive of Ocala)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Occupied</td>
<td>105,672</td>
<td>104,987</td>
<td>103,705</td>
<td>102,790</td>
<td>101,048</td>
<td>99,961</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter Occupied</td>
<td>28,294</td>
<td>28,990</td>
<td>31,028</td>
<td>31,212</td>
<td>32,089</td>
<td>32,326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Vacancy Rate*</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental Vacancy Rate*</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeownership Rate</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ocala</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Occupied</td>
<td>11,886</td>
<td>12,032</td>
<td>11,573</td>
<td>11,363</td>
<td>11,576</td>
<td>11,051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter Occupied</td>
<td>9,836</td>
<td>10,146</td>
<td>10,735</td>
<td>10,891</td>
<td>10,346</td>
<td>10,613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Vacancy Rate*</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental Vacancy Rate*</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
<td>12.7%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeownership Rate</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Florida</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner Vacancy Rate*</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental Vacancy Rate*</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeownership Rate</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*American Community Survey calculations of vacancy rates include units that are vacant-for-rent, vacant-for-sale, or sold or rented but not yet occupied. Units that are vacant for other reasons (e.g. vacation rentals and those that are off the market for repairs) are excluded from the calculations. These calculations of vacancy rates include units that are vacant-for-rent, vacant-for-sale, or sold or rented but not yet occupied. Units that are vacant for other reasons (e.g. vacation rentals and those that are off the market for repairs) are excluded from the calculations.
The problem of high rental costs is not just restricted to renters with the lowest wages, however. The median renter income of $26,807 in Marion County—an hourly equivalent of $12.89—is still nine cents per hour short of affording a 1-bedroom apartment at fair market rent.

Ocala and Marion County do have rental units, both subsidized and unsubsidized, that are affordable to low-income households. However, there are not enough of these units to go around. Not only is the overall supply of affordable rentals limited, but some of these rentals are already occupied by higher-income households. In other words, low-income renters find themselves in a game of musical chairs with other low-income renters and higher-income renters for a limited number of affordable units.

This shortage of affordable and available units is illustrated in the Figure 6. For low-income households in both Ocala and Marion County, 96 rental units are affordable and available for every 100 renter households. However, at lower income levels, the shortage increases. At the very-low income level, there are 66 and 60 affordable and available rentals for every 100 households at this level in Ocala and Marion County respectively.

Figure 5. Comparison of Median Wages and “Housing Wages” for Top 15 Occupations in the Ocala/Marion County Metro. (Source: DEO 2017, National Low Income Housing Coalition [NLIHC] 201732.)
The shortage increases dramatically for extremely-low income households, with only 7 and 15 affordable and available rentals for every 100 households at this level in Ocala and Marion County\textsuperscript{33,34}. Please note that this measure may understate the actual prevalence of housing cost burden among low-income households. For example, a household at 60\% AMI could live in an apartment affordable at 75\% AMI. The household would be cost burdened, but the rental unit would still count as affordable and available to households between 51\% and 80\% AMI\textsuperscript{35}.

Figure 6. Affordable and Available Rental Units for Every 100 Renter Households at Different Income Categories in Ocala and Marion County.
CHAPTER FOUR: Challenges for Homebuyers

A community’s affordable housing strategy should never neglect or disparage renters. Still, homeownership has undeniable benefits, including a chance to put down roots in a community, gain access to desirable neighborhoods and schools, and build wealth. Although the Great Recession has tempered American attitudes toward homeownership, most renters still aspire to own a home one day. For many low- and moderate-income families, homeownership is a viable option—provided it includes strong underwriting criteria and sustainable interest rates. In the first quarter of 2017, the Ocala/Marion County metro area had Florida’s third most affordable market for median-income homebuyers, according to the National Association of Home Builders’ (NAHB) Housing Opportunity Index (HOI) data. As this chapter shows, however, home prices often exceed what low-income professionals can afford to pay, and the supply of affordable homes for sale is limited.

Low Wages Relative to Home Prices

Figure 7 compares median annual incomes for the 15 most prevalent occupations in the Ocala/Marion metro to the incomes needed to afford the two different estimates of median home prices. According to the HOI, the median home price in the first quarter of 2017 was about $123,000. The Ocala Marion Association of Realtors (OMCAR) reports a higher median home price of $140,000 for the first quarter of 2017. Both measures of median home prices leave behind most of the workers shown. Only registered nurses and front-line retail supervisors can afford to purchase a home at these price points. This leaves behind the other 13 most prevalent occupations.

Limited Supply of Moderately Priced Homes

Even if many low- and moderate-income workers in Ocala and Marion County cannot afford median-priced homes, they may be able to buy more modestly priced homes in the local inventory. However, the supply of homes at price points available to these workers is also limited.
HOME OWNERSHIP IS OUT OF REACH for Many Floridians Who Provide Essential Services

Figure 8. Comparison of Moderately Priced Home Sales to Low-Income Potential Homebuyers in Ocala and Marion County. (Source: Marion County Property Appraiser, ACS 2011-2015.)

HOME OWNERSHIP IS OUT OF REACH for Many Floridians Who Provide Essential Services

Even in metro areas with relatively low home sale prices, homeownership can be out of reach for many workers that provide essential services, including paramedics, firefighters, and nurses.
CHAPTER FIVE:
The Sadowski Housing Trust Funds: Building a Stronger Ocala and Marion County

Affordable housing problems are often associated with booming South Florida communities, but low-income Ocala and Marion County households experience housing cost burden at about the same rate as low-income Floridians overall. Both median rents and home sale prices are out of reach for many low-income workers, and the supply of modestly priced homes and apartments is limited. For working families who find lower-cost housing far from their jobs, their combined housing and transportation costs can easily absorb over half of their income. Housing cost burden is increasing among lower-income households in Ocala and Marion County, and an alarming number of residents—including families with children—are homeless or precariously housed.

The Sadowski State and Local Trust Funds often provide a key layer of funding for construction, rehabilitation, and reconstruction of both ownership and rental housing. This chapter provides an overview of the Sadowski Trust Funds and reviews their impact in Ocala and Marion County.

Sadowski History and Major Programs
Twenty five years ago, a diverse coalition of Florida’s affordable housing advocates, business and industry groups, and faith-based organizations recognized the need for a dedicated state revenue source for affordable housing. In 1992, the state legislature passed the William E. Sadowski Affordable Housing Act. The Sadowski Act raised the state documentary stamp tax on deeds by ten cents per $100 of the property’s value, and directed the new funds to two trust funds, one for local governments and one for the state.

The Local Housing Trust Fund supports the State Housing Initiatives Partnership (SHIP) program, which primarily funds the production and preservation of affordable ownership housing for low- and moderate-income households. The Florida Housing Finance Corporation (Florida Housing) uses a population-based formula to distribute SHIP funds to all 67 counties and to cities eligible for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. SHIP is most commonly used to support home construction, rehabilitation to make homes safe and/or handicapped accessible, and down payment assistance. It gives local governments plenty of flexibility to meet local needs and preferences, as long as a few basic requirements are met. These requirements, found in Florida Statute 420, include:
- At least 65% must be spent on homeownership activities
- At least 75% must be spent on construction (including new construction and rehabilitation)
- At least 30% must be used to assist very low-income households

Each SHIP Dollar is Required to Meet the Following Criteria:

- **CONSTRUCTION**
  At least 75% must be spent on construction (including new construction & rehabilitation)

- **LOW AND VERY LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLD ASSISTANCE**
  At least 60% must be used to assist low-income households. Of this amount, at least half (30% of the total) must be used to assist very low-income households.

- **HOMEOWNERSHIP ACTIVITIES**
  At least 65% must be spent on homeownership activities

- **ADMINISTRATION**
  No more than 10% may be used on administration.

* In 1995, the State Legislature shifted another ten cents of documentary stamp tax revenue from general revenue to the Sadowski trust funds.
• At least 60% must be used to assist low-income households
• No more than 10% may be used on administration

The State Housing Trust Fund supports several activities, including administration of the Sadowski funds by Florida Housing. The main Sadowski-funded state program is the State Apartment Incentive Loan (SAIL) program. SAIL provides funding on a competitive basis for the construction of affordable multifamily rental housing. SAIL usually serves as “gap financing” for developments with other funding sources, such as the Low Income Housing Tax Credit.

Impact of SHIP Funds in Ocala and Marion County

The amount of SAIL funding that Ocala and Marion County receives in any given year depends on whether proposed developments in the County receive SAIL funds from the State. SHIP funding, on the other hand, is guaranteed so long as the State Legislature appropriates the Sadowski Trust Fund monies dedicated for this purpose. Marion County is expected to receive approximately 1.2 million in SHIP funds in FY 17/18, while Ocala is expected to receive just over $258,000 (Table 9). These SHIP allocations would leverage over $4.1 million in additional public and private funds in the County and Ocala combined—a ratio of 3 to 1. Between the County and City allocations, SHIP would assist 61 owner units and 13 rental units, creating nearly 82 jobs and generating over $15 million in economic impact.

Table 9. Estimated Economic Impacts of State Housing Initiative Partnership Funds in Marion County and Ocala
(Source: Sadowski Coalition 201740.) *Numbers may not add up exactly due to rounding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Impact</th>
<th>Marion County</th>
<th>Ocala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Projected Trust FundRevenue in FY 17/18</td>
<td>$1,239,846</td>
<td>$258,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other funds leveraged</td>
<td>$3,464,094</td>
<td>$723,136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied units assisted</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental units assisted</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total jobs created</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total economic activity generated</td>
<td>$12,504,470</td>
<td>$2,610,330</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9. Estimated Economic Impacts of State Housing Initiative Partnership Funds in Marion County and Ocala
(Source: Sadowski Coalition 201740.) *Numbers may not add up exactly due to rounding.
Conclusion
Affordable Housing is Essential for Ocala and Marion County:

Having a healthy, affordable place to call home is the foundation of our lives and the basis of a strong local economy. Affordable housing allows low- and moderate-income working families to live near their places of employment, and enables our elderly and disabled family members on fixed incomes to be integrated in their neighborhoods.

- Affordable housing construction and rehabilitation stimulates local economies by creating jobs and generating business for contractors and suppliers.
- Affordable housing improves a family’s physical and mental health, and helps children excel in school.
- For the elderly and people with disabilities, affordable community-based housing is one-third of the cost of institutional care.
- For people who are chronically homeless, affordable housing breaks the costly cycle through hospitals, jails, and other taxpayer-funded crisis systems, saving about $20,000 per person per year.

Thousands of Families in Ocala and Marion County Struggle with High Housing Costs:

- Over 25,000 low-income households are paying more than 30% of their incomes for housing, the maximum amount considered affordable by experts.
- Over 13,300 very low-income households are severely cost burdened, meaning that they pay more than 50% of their incomes for housing.
- Of the County’s low-income, severely cost burdened households, 36% are headed by an elderly person.
- Nearly 10,400 low-income households have a member with an ambulatory disability, and suffer from cost burden or other housing problems.
- A typical family at 80% AMI pays between 74% and 78% of its income for housing and transportation costs combined.
- Over 2,300 school-aged children and youths were doubled up with family and friends, living in motels, in homeless shelters, or on the street in academic year 2014-15, a 19% increase from academic year 2011-12.

Many Workers Don’t Earn Enough to Pay for Housing:

- Workers in most of the Ocala/Marion County metro’s most common occupations—including nursing assistants—don’t earn enough for a 1-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rent.
- Ocala and Marion County’s median renter income of $26,807 isn’t enough to afford a median-priced rental unit.
- There are nearly twice as many low-income, not cost-burdened households as there are homesteaded sales below the median sales price, suggesting a lack of inventory of moderately priced homes.

The Good News

The Sadowski State and Local Housing Trust Funds, and the public-private partnerships that they promote, are ideally suited to the diverse and complex affordable housing needs in Ocala and Marion County. SHIP and SAIL funds in Ocala and Marion County leverage additional public and private funding sources for new construction, infill, rehabilitation, weatherization, and accessibility retrofits, both for ownership and rental housing.

While Ocala and Marion County’s slow population growth and soft housing market can make it challenging to finance and market new and rehabilitated affordable housing, these factors can also be seen as an opportunity. Since land and housing costs are generally lower than in “hot markets” like Miami and Palm Beach County, Sadowski funds and the resources they leverage can be stretched farther.

Ocala and Marion County are blessed with hard-working local government staff, businesses and philanthropic organizations, housing and social service providers, faith groups, and dedicated residents. These stakeholders undertake affordable housing and community development in diverse and creative ways, ranging from revitalization in CRA districts to mixed-use, mixed-income development on properties. As Ocala and Marion County continue to develop their economy and amenities, affordable housing will provide a foothold for people from all walks of life to thrive and get ahead.
Appendix 1: A Note on Methodology
For analyses that required American Community Survey data, we used 5-year estimates whenever possible. Although 1- and 3-year estimates are more current than 5-year estimates, they are less reliable because each data point has a relatively high margin of error. The smaller the population of the geographic area in which data is gathered, the higher the margins of error are likely to be. Because Ocala and Marion County have a much smaller population than the State of Florida as a whole, analyses of trends over time are far more likely to be distorted by random variations in the estimates from year to year.
Endnotes


4 Ibid.


6 Cohen 2011.


17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

20 These percentages, unlike Census data, are not based on a “universe” of actual households, but are the result of a mathematical modeling exercise using a hypothetical “average” household at 80% AMI (not at or below 80% AMI). The model uses actual regional data on incomes, household composition, workers, housing and transportation costs, and other variables to construct profiles of “average” households and determine their average housing and transportation costs.


Ibid.

The National Low Income Housing Coalition, which calculates housing wages, assumes that renters work 40 hours per week, 52 weeks per year.


NLIHC. 2016. County Gap Analysis, Florida. [Excel spreadsheet provided to Florida members]

American Community Survey. [2015 5-year estimates]

Ibid.


The assumptions for calculating “housing wages” for median-priced homes were as follows: 1) Employees in each occupation except teachers work 40 hours per week, 52 weeks per year, 2) 30-year fixed rate mortgage at 4% interest, 3) FHA-insured with a 3.5% down payment, 4) Front-end ratio of 31%, back-end ratio of 41%, 5) All other household debt service is 18% of annual income, 6) Assessed value is 85% of the purchase price, 7) Homestead exemption is $50,000, 8) Mill levy is $18.84, and 9) Property and mortgage insurance combined is 1% of the purchase price annually.


Sadowski Coalition 2017.
Sadowski Affiliates are comprised of the local organizational members of the Sadowski Coalition members, such as local Realtors, United Way offices, and Habitat Affiliates, as well as hundreds of individuals throughout Florida who are not affiliated with any organization. They are Many Voices having One Message: Use all of the State and Local Housing Trust Funds for Housing.
Affordable Housing is an Integral Part of Community Revitalization and Economic Development

The Florida Housing Coalition, Inc., is a nonprofit, statewide membership organization which brings together housing advocates and resources so that all Floridians have a quality affordable home and suitable living environment.

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