Affordable housing is now widely recognized as a social determinant of health. Providing access to both affordable housing and quality healthcare is an integral part of building strong, positive communities and healthier individuals and families.


- affordable housing
- health outcomes, and
- the potential for significant public sector healthcare savings.

Moreover, findings indicate that when access to affordable housing, healthcare, and healthy food come together in a community, children and families:

- Have more stability,
- Make more optimal consumer health choices,
- Achieve better health outcomes,
- Experience greater household savings,
- Reduce public costs associated with chronic use of higher priced emergency and other healthcare interventions.

“There are many practical, feasible and effective ways to improve the health of cost-burdened households ‘hiding in plain sight’.”

— Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Commission to Build a Healthier America

THE CHALLENGE...

When families and the elderly spend 30% or more of household income on housing, they:

- Spend less on healthcare and food, and
- Must often choose between paying rent or buying prescriptions and other medical care.

Being homeless:

- Exacerbates a person’s pre-existing health problems, and
- Living on the streets or in shelters poses additional health risks.¹

And, a child’s health, and even their educational performance:

- Suffers in the absence of affordable housing.²
AT THE INTERSECTION OF HOUSING: ONGOING NEED AND DEMAND

The supply and availability of affordable housing stock has a direct link to achieving better health outcomes and, in turn, healthcare savings. By using 100% of Florida’s affordable housing trust fund revenue to increase the supply of affordable housing, Florida could reap more of these kinds of results.

According to the Shimberg Center for Housing Studies at the University of Florida:

- 911,390 very low-income cost burdened renters in Florida pay more than 50% of their income for housing,
- 236,000 cost-burdened senior households in Florida are in need of affordable rental housing, compared to only 58,444 elderly housing units, and
- Over the past 25 years (1993-2016) Florida has lost over 58,000 units of affordable housing stock with 35,000 more units estimated to be lost by 2030.

The extent of this need for affordable housing is vast. But, so are the potential benefits for improved health outcomes and even greater healthcare savings.
Florida ranks 36th in the U.S. in overall health and is faced with a persistent scarcity of affordable housing.³

Linking affordable housing and health strategies has the potential to improve the health outcomes of low-income, medically underserved populations; as well as generate significant public sector cost savings.

**AT THE INTERSECTION OF HEALTH:**

**UNREALIZED HEALTHCARE SAVINGS & IMPROVED HEALTH OUTCOMES**

HERE ARE THE WAYS...

- Expand access to federally qualified community health centers to reduce high-cost emergency room visits made by low-income families as their primary delivery source of healthcare services, thereby reducing Medicaid costs.

- Provide persons with special needs and the homeless with permanent and supportive housing to reduce public spending on high-cost medical and other interventions by as much as $20,000 per person per year.⁴

- Ensure greater access to healthy food, particularly in Florida’s 1,300+ “food desert” census tracts, to help prevent obesity, type 2 diabetes, and infant mortality; and maintain the health of medically vulnerable and elderly populations.

- Guarantee that eligible children have access to free or reduced lunch and after-school feeding programs to help promote better physical health and higher scholastic achievement.

- Combine access to healthy foods with access to affordable housing to amplify the benefits. For example, in one study, mothers of infants in food-secure families were 43% less likely to be hospitalized during their prenatal period if living in affordable rental housing, resulting in nearly $20 million in healthcare cost savings.⁵
THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINED PUBLIC SECTOR FINANCING CANNOT BE UNDERESTIMATED

Developing affordable housing takes multiple layers and sources of federal, state, local, and private capital. Notably, Florida uniquely benefits from the 1992 Sadowski Act and the creation of Florida’s Local and State Housing Trust Funds.

POTENTIAL HOUSING PRODUCTION @ 100% OF HOUSING TRUST FUNDS

In FY15, the Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC) produced 7,500 units of affordable rental housing: 4,000 new construction units and 3,500 rehabbed units. Local SHIP programs, on average, over an 8-year period (2007-14) produced 1,812 units per year.

However, with access to 100% of Florida’s State and Local Housing Trust Funds, it is estimated that:

- FHFC could potentially double its capacity to produce up to 15,000 units of affordable rental housing per year; and
- Local County SHIP programs could produce 8-10,000 units per year

... creating nearly 70,000 units of affordable housing over the next 3-year period.

Each $1 of state and local housing trust funds LEVERAGES $4 TO $6 in private investments, federal tax credits, and other funding sources.6

Public Sources of Capital.

- Low-Income Housing Tax Credits
- 4% Bonds
- SAIL
- SHIP
- CDBG
- HOME Funds
- National Housing Trust Funds
- USDA / Rural Housing

Developing affordable housing takes multiple layers and sources of federal, state, local, and private capital. Notably, Florida uniquely benefits from the 1992 Sadowski Act and the creation of Florida’s Local and State Housing Trust Funds.

Notes:
1 Center for Housing Policy, 2015. The Impacts of Affordable Housing on Health: A Research Summary.
3 America’s Health Rankings 2015.
5 Children’s Health Watch and Medical-Legal Partnership Boston, 2016.
6 Florida Housing Coalition, Home Matters Report
Florida Community Loan Fund (FCLF) believes that community development finance lending at the intersection of housing, healthcare, and food access... MAKES $ENSE.

To date, FCLF has provided $278 million in financing, leveraging nearly $600 million in other public and private sources of capital, in projects with a combined value of more than $877 million. This financing supports a broad range of affordable housing and community facility projects; and represents an average leveraging ratio of 2:1 across all categories of lending. Our capacity to lend at this intersection critically depends on opportunities to leverage public (federal, state, and local) and private philanthropic resources in the financing of targeted solutions.

“Community Development Financial Institutions are often an unrecognized partner in achieving scale and greater impact.”
Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, “Community Development Finance Review”

WHAT IS A CDFI?
Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) can be nonprofit or for-profit entities including loan funds, community banks, credit unions, venture capital funds, and microenterprise loan funds. Certified by the U.S. Department of Treasury, CDFIs play a critical role in:
- Providing capital and financial services to people and communities that are typically not served by traditional financial institutions.
- Developing affordable housing, building community facilities for healthcare, social services, and education, stimulating community and economic redevelopment, and other high priority projects to local communities; and in some cases making loans to first-time home buyers and small business entrepreneurs.

UNIQUE CDFI CAPITAL RESOURCES
As a federally certified Community Development Financial Institution, FCLF can leverage these unique sources of capital.
- Federal New Markets Tax Credits
- Federal and State Healthy Food Financing Programs
- Federal Home Loan Bank AHP Program
- HHS Community Facilities Program
- USDA Community Facilities Program
- CDFI Bond Guarantee Program
6 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES TO INVEST IN

Healthcare. Federally Qualified Health Centers that provide community-based care and medical home for coordinated care of chronic diseases.

Why? Community health centers frequently are the only healthcare provider in low-income communities providing non-emergency primary care for adults and children. A recent study showed 13 states, including Florida, reported a 24% lower rate of total Medicaid spending among patients seen by community health centers.

FCLF Examples
- Central Florida Health Care, Polk-Highlands Counties
- Camillus House, Miami

Affordable Housing. Multifamily rental and single family homes for households at 80% of AMI or below.

Why? When families pay excessive amounts of their income for housing they have less resources to pay for other essentials such as food, medical insurance, and utilities. 69% of Florida low-income renters (911,000 households) are cost burdened, compared to 52% of home owners. And there are only 22 affordable and available rental units for every 100 extremely low-income renter households.

FCLF Examples
- Habitat for Humanity Veterans Village, Umatilla
- Griffin Heights Apartments, Madison County

Senior Housing. Senior living rental housing for low-income elderly.

Why? Nationally, Florida is home to the highest proportion of residents over 65, and the number is growing at a rate of 19% annually. Increasing the supply of affordable rental housing is important because low-income seniors face tough spending choices, such as housing versus other essential needs for medical care, food, utilities, and prescription drugs. Today there are only 58,444 units of affordable rental housing for the elderly in Florida, compared to 236,000 cost-burdened senior households in need. This shortage will only intensify as seniors on fixed incomes transition from home ownership to rental housing.1

FCLF Examples
- Haley Park Apartments, Tampa
- Brixton Landing Apartments, Apopka (Orange County)

Supportive Housing. Permanent rental units for persons with special needs.

Why? When persons with special needs are housed, experts report decreases of more than 50% in tenants’ chronic use of emergency room visits and hospital inpatient days, and decreases of 80% in the use of emergency detoxification services.

FCLF Examples
- The Transition House, Osceola County
- Spinal Cord Living Assistance Development, Miami

Food Access. Full-service grocery stores and other food access enterprises that benefit low-income communities and persons with limited access to healthy foods.

Why? Throughout Florida there are urban and rural areas where families have no, or very limited, access to healthy foods. Poor nutrition contributes to increased rates of obesity, type 2 diabetes and premature death among low-income persons. The Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services has identified at least 7 target areas where food insecurity linked to poor health outcomes represents opportunities to improve food access. USDA has similarly identified 1,300+ Florida low-income census tracts as “food deserts.”

FCLF Examples
- Hitchcock’s Market, Dixie County
- Treasure Coast Food Bank, Fort Pierce

Education. Title I qualified charter schools that serve low-income students, at least 40% of whom are enrolled in free or reduced lunch of after-school feeding programs.

Why? A child’s welfare increases when they are well fed; positively impacting student attention, performance, physical health, and behavior.2

FCLF Examples
- ASPIRA of Florida, Miami
- KIPP School, Jacksonville

Notes.
1 Bipartisan Policy Center, “Healthy Aging Begins at Home,” May 2016.
2 Healthy Body, Healthy Mind: The Impact of School Lunch on Student Performance.