

2006 Annual Report

BACKGROUND

The Housing Research Center at the University of Florida is called the Shimberg Center for Affordable Housing. The Florida Legislature established the Center in 1988 (s. 1004.46, Florida Statutes) in the Rinker School of Building Construction of the College of Design, Construction & Planning at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida.

During 2006, the Shimberg Center entered into a new contract with the Florida Housing Finance Corporation to continue to maintain and enhance the utility of the Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse (See <http://www.flhousingdata.shimberg.ufl.edu>). The Office of Economic and Demographic Research of the Florida Legislature selected the Center to lead a team of economists from the University of Florida and Florida State University in an assessment of the economic impact of Florida's Save Our Homes Constitutional Amendment. A third major area of activity in 2006 was the Center's lead role in developing a structural rating system for a home's potential hurricane damage under a contract from the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation. Finally, the Center completed a major effort involving the development and presentation of the HUD Consolidated Plan for Hillsborough County. Other noteworthy projects were:

Hillsborough County Affordable Housing Task Force – The Shimberg Center provided technical support to the Hillsborough County Affordable Housing Task Force during calendar year 2006. The Center provided extensive data and policy analysis to support the Task Force's decision making efforts; the efforts culminated in a written report, *Attainable Housing for Hillsborough County's Growing Economy*, which was prepared by the Shimberg Center on behalf of the Hillsborough County Affordable Housing Task Force. The Center also provided expertise in the design of an affordable housing conference offered by Hillsborough County in October 2006.

University Area Community Development Corporation Anti-Crime Programming – The Shimberg Center began its third year of service to the University Area Community Development Corporation in July 2006. These services will extend through June 2007, and focus on exploring the linkages between crimes and housing condition. The project includes an extensive effort to survey the condition of housing within the target neighborhood on a parcel-by-parcel basis. This survey will provide information that will be useful for years to come in planning redevelopment efforts and in advocating for resources necessary to accomplish redevelopment and revitalization in this severely distressed area of North Tampa.

Preserving Affordable Housing – With funding provided by the MacArthur Foundation, the Center in partnership with the Florida Housing Finance Corporation will convene a national meeting of organizations already engaged in collecting housing preservation data and develop and implement a preservation-related data collection project in the state of Florida. The objective of organizing the meeting and conducting the data collection and analysis is to identify the information needs for housing policy and program development professionals and to create a data infrastructure that other states can implement for the preservation of the affordable rental housing.

West Florida Affordable Housing – Four military bases in west Florida will be expanded to accommodate the transfer of activities from bases slated for closure in other parts of the country. These expansions will result in an increase in population in these counties, which in turn will affect housing demand. The purpose of this project is to provide data and information about the impact of those military base expansions to support the activities of the Commission for a Sustainable Emerald Coast. The project will focus on the impact of these expansions on the supply of housing, particularly the supply of housing affordable to lower income households.

Training & Demonstration Centers - The record-setting hurricane season of 2005 produced much interest in completion of the state-wide network of regional Windstorm Damage Mitigation Training and Demonstration Centers that was begun in 1998. The fourth center was completed in Broward County on the University of Florida's Ft. Lauderdale Research & Education Center located in Davie, Florida. These training and demonstration centers represent the infrastructure for reaching out to Florida's home owners about ways for protecting their home from hurricane damage, reducing the risk of storm-related property damage, and ultimately reducing their property insurance costs.

ADMINISTRATION

The Center operated with a staff of thirteen in 2006 including four students pursuing doctoral degrees. Support for the staff came from the University (\$280,815) plus a combination from foundations, the Center's endowments, and contracted research for a total operating budget of \$1,530,940. Dr. Robert C. Stroh, Sr., continues serving as director of the Shimberg Center with Anne R. Williamson and William J. O'Dell serving as associate directors. All publications of the Center, including its annual report to the Governor and Legislature and its bi-monthly newsletters, are publicly available on the Internet at <http://www.shimberg.ufl.edu> and then selecting the "Publications" link.