

Florida Needs Affordable Housing Now, More Than Ever: The Data



by Anne Ray

There seems to be a widespread belief that the housing “bust” created affordable housing that meets the needs of Florida’s residents, most particularly with foreclosed homes. However, the housing affordability situation in Florida has worsened since the 2007 bust.

For more than a decade, the Shimberg Center has been tracking housing affordability in Florida. In that time we’ve seen the housing market move from boom to bust to recovery, but a constant has been the increase in the number of Florida households that are paying more than they can afford for their homes. This trend is confirmed by our recent analysis comparing U.S. Census and American Community Survey data from 2000, 2005 and 2011 (the latest year available).

A growing number of Floridians are “severely cost burdened;” that is, they pay more than half their income for housing costs, leaving little for other necessities such as food and medical care. In 2005, there were 813,000 severely cost burdened households with very low incomes, defined as incomes below 50 percent of area median. By 2011, 982,000 very low-income households were severely cost burdened, a 21 percent increase, even though the total number of households at this income level only went up by 12 percent.

In a nutshell, housing costs rose sharply in the first half of the 2000s without a corresponding increase in incomes. Then, as the effects of the economic slowdown set in, incomes fell in the second half of the decade. This led to an increasing housing affordability gap. In 2000, median rent for the state of Florida was \$837 per month and median monthly costs for owners with a mortgage was \$1,157 (all figures in 2011 dollars). By 2005, the median rent had increased by almost \$100 per month and owner costs by almost \$30, while incomes barely budged. Between 2005 and 2011, real incomes of renters and owners fell by 15 and 9 percent, respectively, while median housing costs held steady.

Median Gross Rent and Median Household Income 2000-2011 (2011 Dollars)

	2000	2005	2011
Rent	\$837	\$932	\$949
Income	\$34,480	\$34,051	\$28,714

Median Monthly Owner Costs for Units with a Mortgage and Median Household Income (All Owners) 2000-2011 (2011 Dollars)

	2000	2005	2011
Owner Costs	\$1,157	\$1,437	\$1,470
Income	\$58,772	\$59,361	\$53,050

The supply of affordable housing has not kept up with the need. In 2011, there were just 39 affordable and available rental units for every 100 very low-income households. For the lowest income households—those with incomes at or below 30 percent of area median income—there were just 22 affordable and available units for every 100 households. [HNN](#)

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