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# Affordable Housing

## What is it? And Why Do We Need It?



Kennedy Homes  
Rendering by Glavovic Studio

Remember during the real estate boom when the term “**workforce housing**” was coined amid the backdrop of skyrocketing property values?

Well, it’s back. In the last couple years, new projects that were planned during the boom are now constructed and more are poised for development in Downtown Fort Lauderdale. Projects such as **Eclipse** and **Progresso Point** have added specially priced **alternatives** to the Downtown housing stock. In light of these recent additions, now is a perfect time to revisit the workforce housing topic.

Downtown Fort Lauderdale is on its way to becoming a true **24-hour city**, in accordance with the principles of Smart Growth: a mix of uses, high densities, high walkability, transit and amenities to support its population and ensure its **vibrancy**. This kind of thriving livable city can only be achieved if those who work here also have the option of living here. By **reducing** the distance between residences and the workplace, people are able to forgo the use of cars, which helps our retail businesses, the environment and our health. Not everyone who works in Downtown can

afford luxury condominiums or the down payment required for a purchase — that’s why the need for **workforce housing** prevails. Workforce housing is the term that was created to differentiate housing designed for the working professional that is offered at various levels of rental rates, and costs renters no more than 30 percent of a household’s income.

As new affordable housing projects have come to light, some have voiced common concerns. The following points attempt to address them.

- **Aesthetics and compatibility:** The workforce housing buildings being constructed in Downtown are designed to be attractive, modern mid-rises that **complement** the existing neighborhoods, with convenient amenities that will benefit not only the residents but also the neighborhood. New streetscape improvements can be inviting additions to once-neglected streets.

- **Property values and safety:** Studies have shown that housing developments that are well designed do not have a negative effect on neighboring **property values**. What’s more, the National Crime Prevention Council calls for the construction of affordable housing to reduce crime because it enhances neighborhood **cohesion** and economic stability.

Who actually **lives** in affordable housing? Teachers, healthcare workers, hospitality workers, artists, students, retirees and families all benefit from workforce housing. **Florida Atlantic**

**University** and **Broward College** have both expressed the need for affordable housing for their Downtown students, the majority of which have long commutes to and from Downtown.

**Progresso Point** reveals, “With 24 leases signed, the typical resident is working in the Downtown area, in restaurants, office buildings and bars. There are several flight attendants who have applied. They are single, ages 18 to 29 and want to live in a ‘loft’ style property.” These are people who provide important daily services to the community, consumers who spend money at our Downtown establishments, and who appreciate the benefits of urban living within reach.

As the workforce housing dialogue is revisited, it is important to weigh the many benefits this type of development presents against the greater framework of what this city hopes to become in the future. **GO**



Progresso Point  
Photography by Reliance Housing

