



Vice Mayor Heather Moraitis



I attended the **National Alliance to End Homelessness** conference in February 2022, because many of us are concerned about homelessness. As a policy maker, I am committed to finding solutions. One of the sessions' conclusions was simple, yet poignant: homelessness is a housing problem. Steve Berg, Vice President for Programs and Policy, National Alliance to End Homelessness and Gregg Colburn, Assistant Professor of Real Estate, College of Built Environments at University of Washington, discussed problems and policies to address this escalating crisis. Professor Colburn, author of Homelessness is a Housing Problem, made the following conclusion in his book: Tight housing markets accentuate vulnerabilities.

So what does that mean for Fort Lauderdale and our tight housing market? These experts implore state and local governments to provide pathways to promote a greater stock of housing, with an emphasis on workforce and affordable housing. The state needs to fully fund the Sadowski Fund to help local efforts to incentivize workforce and affordable housing (thank you Governor DeSantis for funding it 100% in your proposed 2022 budget to legislature) and the city needs to continue to approve this type of housing in our downtown. Why downtown? Because mass transportation is also needed to offset the cost of living. Rents are rising and salaries are not rising at the same rate, leaving many burdened by overall living costs.

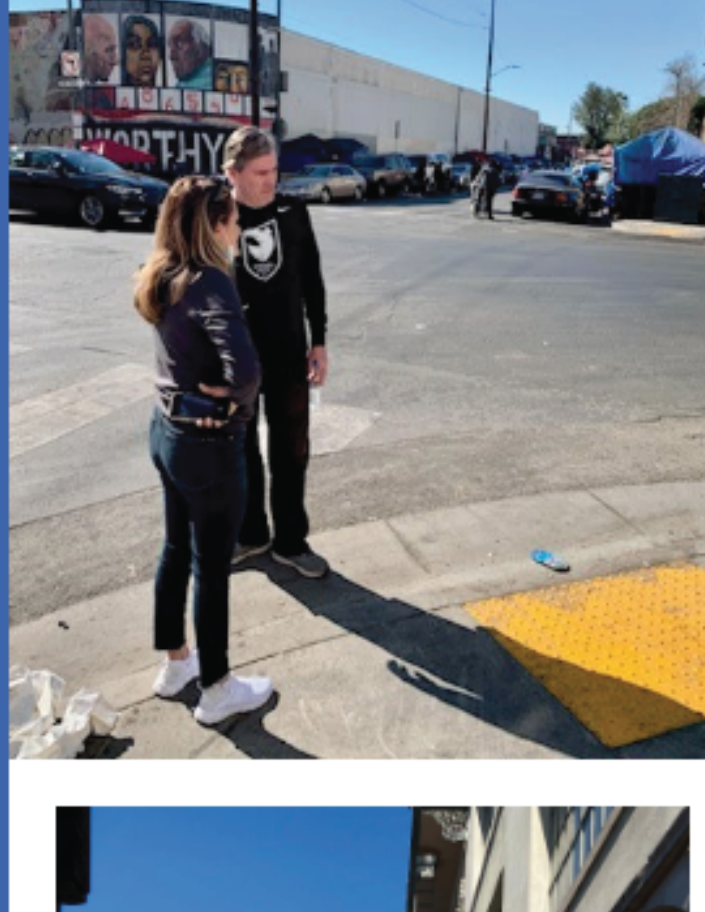
As our home values and rent continue to increase, it is becoming increasingly more difficult for 50% of our community to make ends meet. According to the **ALICE** (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) report from the United Way, 50% of Broward County's 694,980 households are struggling. And while 13% of these households were living below the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), another 37%— more than twice as many — were ALICE households. These households earned above the FPL, but not enough to afford basic household necessities. The hourly wages needed to support these budgets were \$12.30 for the single adult Survival Budget; \$13.67 for the Senior Survival Budget; and \$34.76 for one worker or \$17.38 each for two workers for the Survival Budget for a family of four.

Creating opportunities for people to earn a living wage is why you will often hear me talking about education. My emphasis over the past few years has been in expanding aviation and technology career technical opportunities for our workforce, because these are high paying, in demand jobs. I worked with Broward County Public Schools and the Fort Lauderdale Executive Airport to launch an **avionics career technical program**, and we hope to expand this program to include an airframe and power plant certification. I toured **Full Sails University** in Orlando to explore their eSports program and arena, hoping to bring a similar program to our city, with technology based certification programs.

On a recent work trip to LA, I also took time to tour **Skid Row** to see how their city's homeless containment policy in the 1980s led to a 54 block homeless encampment with approximately 5000 residents. Most of the residents are in some type of housing, with access to wrap around services, although about 20% are unsheltered in tents. The rest of LA's 66,000 homeless are living throughout the city. To combat the homeless epidemic in CA, the state will need to spend \$12 billion to create 46,000 new housing units. As we see property values rise in Florida, we must build more housing and train our workforce, to avoid a homeless crisis. State and local policies and funding need to incorporate temporary rapid housing, health wrap around services, building more affordable housing and workforce housing with public transportation, and educational opportunities for high paying jobs.

Sincerely,

Tour of Skid Row, Los Angeles California



Vice Mayor Moraitis and Adam Murray, Executive Director of Inner City Law Center.
<https://innercitylaw.org>

Organizations in Skid Row Assisting the Homeless



SRO Housing Corporation
<https://www.srohousing.org/sro-community-development.htm>



James Wood Community Center
<https://www.srohousing.org/sro-community-development.htm>



Downtown Women's Center
<https://www.downtownwomenscenter.org>



MADE by DWC is a purpose driven social enterprise created by The Downtown Women's Center to empower women in Los Angeles to break the cycle of chronic homelessness through employment.
<https://www.madebydwc.org>



Lamp Community
<http://www.lampcommunity.org>



Midnight Mission Donna and John Crean Center
<https://www.midnightmission.org>



Union Rescue Mission
<https://urm.org>



Wesley Center [jwchinsitute.org](http://www.jwchinsitute.org)

To discuss any issues in your neighborhood, please join our District 1 meeting. Please contact District 1 Assistant **Melissa Whiddon** mwhiddon@fortlauderdale.gov or 954-828-5033, for any questions or to schedule an appointment.

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