



## *Supporting policies that say YES to housing everyone can afford*

YIMBY St. Pete says “Yes” to inclusive, equitable communities, “Yes” to opportunity, “Yes” to new policies to accelerate home building, and “Yes” to more neighbors who can afford to live in our wonderful city. We want to solve St. Pete’s affordable housing crisis.

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### **The Problem: It’s getting too expensive to live in St. Pete**

- St. Petersburg has a shortage of homes and apartments that young adults and working families can afford. In Pinellas County, nearly a third of families spend more than 40% of their income for rent or mortgage, with little left over for basic necessities. Worse, the price of that housing is going up by the year. It’s getting so that the young adults and families St. Pete wants to attract simply cannot afford to live here.
- Unfortunately, our current housing policies are making the situation worse. YIMBY wants to change the policies that restrict home building. We want to increase the supply of housing and make it less expensive.
- We want to do this without relying on government subsidies. For years, our governments have spent millions of tax dollars to create affordable housing in St. Pete with not enough to show for the effort. It’s clear there just isn’t enough

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### **The Solution: Change policies to encourage more housing that people of all income levels can afford.**

#### **(1) Allow “upzoning,” more than one unit of housing per lot in as many locations as possible.**

- This provides incentives for the private sector to create more housing. The housing is denser, smaller, and therefore less expensive to build, buy and rent. As more units are created throughout St. Pete, the price of housing will drop – for everyone.
- Here’s an example: on average, if you upzone a piece of property to allow building three units on a lot now zoned for one, it costs 15-20% less per square foot to build each unit. As a result, the sales price or rent per unit goes down as much as 20%.
- Relax restrictions on “accessory dwelling units” (ADUs). These are already legal in some St. Pete parcels, and can be found in some of our wealthiest neighborhoods. Single-family homeowners rent out their ADUs, thus providing an additional unit of housing for someone else. These are especially attractive to young adults who want to live in a walkable city, near where they work, and close to public transportation. They are also an excellent solution for multigenerational families. Currently, requirements such as maximum square footage, maximum lot size, and the ability for ADU’s to be constructed over two floors discourage development. ADU’s should be allowed on every parcel.

**(2) Encourage inclusionary zoning, which would require that a portion of new construction be designated for people with low to moderate incomes**

- New buildings with more than a certain number of housing units (for example, 20 or 40) would include some for middle-and-lower-income renters and buyers. For example, 5% of a 40-unit development would be set aside for an individual making a certain AMI.
- In exchange for making these units affordable, builders could receive greater density benefits, such as an additional +1 FAR for the creation of these affordable units, or reduced parking requirements. Appropriate inclusionary zoning regulations would need to be determined by City Council with community input.

**(3) Allow builders, developers and homeowners to combine parcels in conjunction with upzoning, and allow other regulatory reforms that encourage more housing construction**

- Current zoning regulations prohibit combining parcels in most of the city. By allowing parcels to be combined, the cost of building will go down, as will the selling price or rent of each unit. Combining parcels encourages construction of more lower-priced units.
- On units within a mile of public transportation, relax regulations regarding the number of required parking spaces from two to one for each residential unit.
- Create a higher threshold for when a public hearing is required for workforce housing projects or require no public hearing at all.

**(4) Activate city-sanctioned shared-equity home ownership**

- Encourage city-sanctioned co-ops. Community land trusts, housing co-ops, and limited-equity co-ops energize affordable home ownership. They allow homeowners to build up equity in their property, while capping appreciation to ensure the home is still affordably priced for the next buyer. Please click here for more information on one of the two land trusts that currently operate in Pinellas County: <http://thebrightway.org/land-trust-what-is-it/>

**(5) Adapt Architectural Design Standards**

- The foundation of the St. Petersburg zoning and architectural codes is the single-family home. Instead, codes should encourage multi-family construction, particularly in walkable neighborhoods. This is housing designed for middle- and lower-income families. It includes a range of house-scale buildings with multiple units, aesthetically compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods of detached, single-family homes.
- Approving architectural design standards that show two front doors, side door entrances for additional units, shared porches, or relaxed height restrictions would go a long way towards encouraging missing middle multifamily construction. Adapted architectural design standards would energize new methods like modular construction and streamline permitting for these affordable developments.

Let's push for these reforms in the 2050 visioning plan by saying "Yes In My Back Yard." A successful plan for affordable housing is one that allows the private sector to build their way out of the problem, rather than depending on grants or other government support.

