

## NEWS



SARASOTA

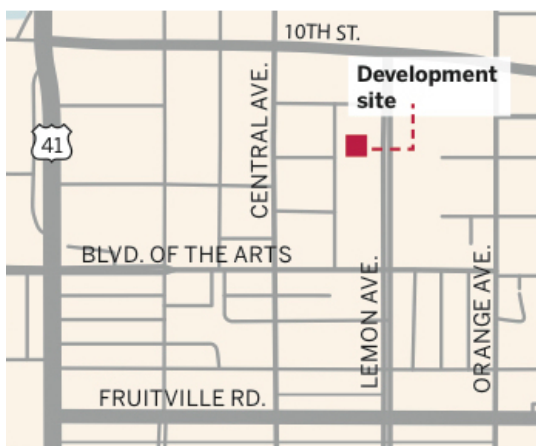
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## Housing Authority project lands \$14 million award

Plans for the Lofts on Lemon development could include up to 130 affordable and workforce housing units in the Rosemary District.

by: [David Conway](#) | Deputy Managing Editor

A proposed Rosemary District affordable housing project landed more than \$14 million in tax credits from the state, moving the project closer to reality, the Sarasota Housing Authority announced today.



The SHA said the award, granted by the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, ensures its Lofts on Lemon development can be built. Plans call for at least 80 affordable housing units on a 3-acre parcel at Ninth Street and Lemon Avenue. The project could also include up to 50 additional workforce-housing units, housing authority officials said.

The housing authority is seeking additional funding in an effort to ensure it can build the 50 workforce units. SHA President and CEO William Russell said the group has spoken to local private philanthropic organizations and county officials about contributing to the development.

“I think it’s a great opportunity for those who are expressing a concern we don’t have enough affordable housing,” Russell said.

Already, [the city has committed \\$3 million in funding toward the project](#), with City Commissioner Hagen Brody serving as an outspoken advocate for accelerating the development.

“The time is past for talking about affordable and workforce housing,” Brody said in a statement. “We’re going to start building more affordable units closer to where those that have been priced out work.”

The affordable units in the project will be reserved for those making 60% or less of area median income. That would work out to a family of three making less than \$37,980 a year paying \$989 a month for a two-bedroom apartment, according to a SHA release.

Russell said the workforce units would likely be rented to those making 100% or less of area median income. That equates to a family of three earning roughly \$50,000 a year paying \$1,266 a month for a two-bedroom apartment.

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The SHA said the project would give workers in certain public service positions a preference for a portion of the units. Those professions include first responders, teachers and nurses, according to the release.

Plans for the project also include a half-acre of public parkland on the south end of the site, an effort to address [Rosemary District residents’ expressed desire for additional open space](#) in the neighborhood.

Russell expressed optimism the housing authority could secure the necessary additional funding and break ground on the project next year.

“The fact we got this critical piece shows the development really has a lot of real momentum going now, and that it’s close to becoming a reality,” Russell said.