

PROJECT OPEN CITY

A Comprehensive Action Program to Desegregate the Chicago Metropolitan Community.

PREAMBLE

"It is hereby declared the policy of the City of Chicago to assure full and equal opportunity to all residents of the City to obtain fair and adequate housing for themselves and their families in the City of Chicago without discrimination against them because of their race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry." (Chicago Fair Housing Ordinance)

I PURPOSE:

To achieve equal housing opportunity in the city and the metropolitan community.

To reverse the dangerous patterns of racial polarization in Chicago's metropolitan housing supply.

To make Chicago the leading city in dealing effectively with the critical problem of racial segregation in housing.

II BASIC PRINCIPLES:

1. A Moral Issue: Racial segregation in housing is a moral as well as a social issue. It is a grave form of injustice to individuals and families in their search for shelter. An open city and an open housing market must be achieved to protect basic human rights and dignity.
2. Welfare of Metropolitan Community: The economic and social health of the metropolitan community is gravely threatened by a metropolitan housing pattern increasingly characterized by racial segregation. Such a pattern prevents normal contact and communication and leads to a total racial polarization of the community. Two hostile racial cities are being created where there should be one harmonious interracial community. This division and polarization unless reversed will destroy the Chicago metropolitan community as a viable place in which to live and work.
3. Shared Responsibility: Only a massive effort supported by all the major leadership institutions of the community will be adequate to the solution of the problem.

4. Pattern of Justice: Under conditions of equal housing opportunity it is accepted that every city and suburban neighborhood will have a significant proportion of Negro residents. This pattern will end the present harmful system in which Negro housing opportunity expands only at the periphery of the ghetto.
5. An Action Program: This effort must be an action program, as well as an education program and it must result in visible, measurable change.

III SPONSORING GROUPS:

The initial sponsors of this program are The City of Chicago; Chicago Freedom Movement; Chicago Real Estate Board; Association of Commerce and Industry; Cosmopolitan Chamber of Commerce; Chicago Federation of Labor-Industrial Union Council; Archdiocese of Chicago; Church Federation of Chicago; Chicago Board of Rabbis; Cook County Council of Insured Savings and Loan Associations; Mortgage Bankers Association; Commercial Club of Chicago; Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council; Chicago Conference on Religion and Race.

Other leadership groups in the city and suburbs will be asked to join in the program as soon as possible, particularly representatives of mass communications, education, other real estate boards, other civic and religious groups, the County of Cook and the State of Illinois.

IV ELEMENTS OF THE PROGRAM:

Actions by public and private bodies will be taken, as follows:

- A. The City of Chicago will take these steps to implement the vigorous and effective enforcement of the Chicago Fair Housing Ordinance in all parts of the city.
 1. Adopt new regulations to require the posting of the city policy and a digest of the ordinance in all real estate offices.
 2. Initiate a program of testing of real estate offices throughout the city for compliance with this law. This program should have the capacity to check all offices at least twice a year.
 3. Begin a more vigorous program of initiating complaints for violations of the law.
 4. Employ additional staff in order to complete investigation of complaints promptly and to carry forward the program of testing and initiation of complaints.

5. Use the full sanctions of the law, including suspension of licenses, to insure effective observance of the law on a continuing basis.
- B. The City of Chicago will continue to seek from the Illinois General Assembly the power to strengthen its own ordinance to cover property owners as well as brokers and the enactment of a state-wide fair housing law with coverage of property owners as well as brokers and financial institutions.
- C. The City of Chicago, in its Department of Urban Renewal, will inform families being relocated of available housing throughout the city and will assist and support Negro families who seek housing in any part of the City.
- D. The Cook County Department of Public Aid will inform families on public assistance of available housing throughout the city and will assist and support Negro families who seek housing in any part of the city.
- E. The Chicago Housing Authority will take these steps:
 1. Proposed projects which include high-rise buildings for families with children, will be redesigned to eliminate these high-rise buildings.
 2. CHA and the Board of Project Open City will jointly request from the appropriate federal agencies the authority to transfer funds for proposed high rise buildings and rehabilitation of existing buildings.
 3. In every project not now integrated, immediate programs of integration will begin. Specifically, minority families will be given priority for each vacancy which occurs in these projects until a satisfactory level of integration is achieved, and apartments will be held open up to 60 days for this purpose.
 4. The program of leasing and rehabilitation will be implemented throughout the city and will be administered to effect integration.
 5. Cooperative programs will be sought with the Cook County Housing Authority to build public housing of low density on vacant land in the suburbs and unincorporated areas.

- F. The Chicago Real Estate Board will begin positive and affirmative educational programs with members on the fundamental principle that freedom of choice in housing is the right of every citizen and on the duty to comply with the Chicago Fair Housing Ordinance. The Chicago Real Estate Board will cooperate with Project Open City in its programs of public education and in efforts to provide minority families with housing in all parts of the city.
- G. The Mortgage Bankers Association and the Cook County Council of Insured Savings and Loan Associations will undertake positive and affirmative programs with their members to assure that racial discrimination is not practiced in the granting of mortgages and that qualified minority buyers can receive financing for purchase of homes in any and all parts of the city and suburbs.
- H. The Archdiocese of Chicago, the Church Federation of Greater Chicago, the Chicago Board of Rabbis and other major religious groups will initiate in local churches and synagogues positive and affirmative programs:
1. To educate their congregations on the morality and necessity of an open and just community.
 2. To encourage owners to sell or rent housing without racial restrictions.
 3. To welcome new minority residents to schools, churches and community facilities.
 4. To support local real estate offices in their cooperation with this program and to cooperate with other community groups in programs of peaceful integration.
 5. To take responsibility in closed communities on the actual move-in of specific numbers of minority families.
 6. To use their financial resources to help make housing available without racial discrimination.
- I. The Chicago Conference on Religion and Race will cooperate in the educational and action programs of its members and of Project Open City and will, further, initiate a fair housing center, or centers, with the help of representatives of the real estate and housing industry, to provide information and help in finding suitable housing and will motivate minority families to take advantage of new opportunities.

- J. The Association of Commerce and Industry; the Cosmopolitan Chamber of Commerce and the Commercial Club will cooperate in the education and action programs of Project Open City, provide financial and staff support of them, and undertake programs of education among their own members.
- K. The Chicago Federation of Labor-Industrial Union Council will cooperate in the education and action programs of Project Open City, provide financial and staff support of them; undertake educational programs in unions and in neighborhoods where union members live, and take responsibility to encourage and assist the move of specific numbers of minority families into closed communities which are more convenient to their places of work than their present areas of residence.
- L. The Metropolitan Housing and Planning Council will cooperate with Project Open City by providing research and technical services.
- M. Appropriate Departments and Agencies of the Federal Government will be asked to provide full support to Project Open City.
- N. The communications industry will be asked to cooperate by sponsoring a massive program of public education for the Open City.
- O. The public and parochial schools and institutions of higher education will be asked to cooperate in programs of public education and technical advice.

SPECIFIC GOAL:

The sponsoring groups accept the principle that Project Open City must achieve measurable, visible change. It is accepted as a reasonable, specific goal that by June 1, 1967, each community in the city and suburbs in which there is now no significant Negro residency, will change as a result of the Project to become at least 1% Negro. It is further accepted that the sponsoring groups will set preliminary goals for action consistent with the overall goal, to take place in the first 90 days.

This figure is not a quota, but rather a necessary specific target for concrete change. It is a floor not a ceiling.

VI

STRUCTURE:

Project Open City will be governed by a Board composed of three persons appointed by the Mayor, three persons appointed by the Chicago Freedom Movement, one from each of the initial sponsors, and one representative of such additional groups as the Board may decide, up to a total membership of 21. Ben W. Heineman is proposed as Chairman.

Project Open City will be continuing with the responsibility to see that action and education programs are carried forward. The sponsoring groups pledge that it will have adequate staff and budget, though many of its programs will be carried out through member groups. Project Open City will receive and review monthly progress reports from the private and public bodies on the commitments they have undertaken.

VII

ANNOUNCEMENT OF PROGRAMS:

The Mayor of the City of Chicago and the Co-Chairmen of the Chicago Freedom Movement will announce Project Open City, a comprehensive action program to achieve open housing throughout Chicago and the metropolitan area. They will announce, at the same time, further, a moratorium of marches and demonstrations in the neighborhoods on the issue of open housing.