



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



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MAYOR LIGHTFOOT ANNOUNCES BLUEPRINT FOR FAIR HOUSING

New Assessment Outlines Actions the City will take over the next five years to advance fair housing to reduce residential segregation

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot today announced the release of the “Blueprint for Fair Housing,” a plan to address the City’s housing segregation, disparities in access to opportunity, and history of inequitable investment. The Blueprint includes specific plans to mitigate and eliminate barriers to fair housing. The assessment outlines eight goals and complementary strategies that will focus on Chicago’s most residentially segregated communities and provide direction on how the City will work to address those forces that both drive and exacerbate Chicago’s racial divides. This includes wealth and public health factors that influence a community’s access to opportunity, employment, quality education, transportation, and other essential services.

"If we are to truly eradicate the lingering scourges of housing segregation here in Chicago, we must take bold action," said Mayor Lightfoot. "By completing this 'Blueprint for Fair Housing,' we will be able to tackle the deeply embedded issues of structural racism and economic disinvestment that drives disparities in housing and access to opportunity in our city. Paired with our other ongoing housing equity and anti-poverty initiatives, we will be able to rebuild and diversify our middle class and restore all residents' access to healthy, affordable and quality housing in neighborhoods by providing jobs and essential services."

This year marks the 53rd Anniversary of the signing of the 1968 Fair Housing Act, however Chicago remains profoundly segregated by race. In Chicago, 74% of the city’s 1.8 million people of color live in economically disconnected areas, mainly on the South and West sides where rates of unemployment and poverty far exceed those in on the North side. These disparities rank the city as the fifth most racial and economically segregated metropolitan area in the country.

"This Blueprint for Fair Housing represents another step to address a century of systemic racism and resulting segregation in Chicago," said DOH Commissioner Marisa Novara. "Historically, government has played a significant role in creating



and maintaining segregation, and today we take a significant step in our work to assess where we've fallen short and chart a new course of housing choice for all Chicagoans."

The findings of fair housing challenges, community conversations, and extensive data analysis confirm that residential segregation creates a cycle of instability and economic hardship with long-lasting consequences. The Blueprint for Fair Housing identifies the following eight goals the City and the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) will take over the next five years to further fair housing goals and make Chicago more equitable:

1. Increase and preserve affordable, accessible housing options
2. Prevent involuntary displacement and stabilize neighborhoods
3. Increase opportunities and community integration for people with disabilities
4. Address the segregation of opportunity and related inequitable distribution of resources
5. Enhance housing policies and programs to increase fair housing choice
6. Expand fair housing outreach, education and enforcement
7. Preserve existing and expand affordable homeownership
8. Ensure that internal policies and practices advance equity and address history of structural racism

"The CCHR is proud to have contributed to Chicago's Blueprint for Fair Housing," said CCHR Commissioner Nancy Andrade. "As the City's civil rights enforcement agency, we continue to see housing discrimination and its stalling impact on a family's health, education, employment and access to community amenities many of us take for granted. This project will help shape a better future for those who have been left out for far too long."

The Chicago Blueprint for Fair Housing is the result of the City's participation with the Cook County Regional Assessment of Fair Housing, a first-of-its-kind planning effort that convened 13 jurisdictions and six public housing authorities to understand the underlying causes behind the region's fair housing issues. The City partnered with Enterprise Community Partners, Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance (CAFHA), and the Metropolitan Planning Council along with six community partners which were awarded grants to gather feedback directly from impacted communities and include:

- Chicago Housing Initiative
- Connections for the Homeless
- Housing Choice Partners
- Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing



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- Legal Aid Chicago
- Metropolitan Tenants Organizations
- Northwest Compass
- Respond Now

“Enterprise Community Partners would like to commend the City of Chicago for their leadership around the first regional assessment of fair housing done in partnership with Chicago, Cook County and 13 participating municipalities and public housing authorities,” said Andrew Geer, Vice President, Enterprise Community Partners. “As the Biden Administration is seeking input into reinstating the Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule, the City of Chicago process of evidenced-based actions and broad stakeholder engagement can serve as a national example of ways in which cities and regions can collaborate to address the deeply entrenched barriers to fair housing.”

An advisory committee was convened by the Chicago Area Fair Housing Alliance which further identified historic policies and decisions and informed the assessment and subsequent actions. The Blueprint for Fair Housing is available [now](#) and open for public comment through May 28, 2021, and available by visiting www.chicago.gov/fairhousing. On Monday, April 12, the Office of Budget Management will host a public hearing on the assessment.

“Families need housing free from discrimination, and the Chicago Housing Authority is working with the City of Chicago and partner organizations to create more housing opportunities where families can thrive,” said CHA CEO Tracey Scott. “Chicago’s Blueprint for Fair Housing establishes the necessary framework to strengthen communities and to ensure more equitable access to housing.”

“Housing is foundational. We know that life outcomes (in terms of health, education, economic stability, and the like) are shaped by housing. We also know there is a dearth of affordable, accessible, integrated housing in the City,” said Karen Tamley, President and CEO of Access Living. “In light of that shortage, we support any and all City efforts to expand affordable, accessible, integrated housing options for people of low-incomes, including people with disabilities.”

The Blueprint for Fair Housing is part of Mayor Lightfoot’s commitment to tackling the deeply embedded issues of racial segregation, economic disinvestment and structural racism. Last month, the City and DOH released the country’s first Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) on its Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) for the distribution of Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, the City’s largest funding source for the creation of affordable rental housing. The REIA and 2021 draft QAP are available for public comment through April 15th by visiting chicago.gov/qap.



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