



NATIONAL CALL TO ACTION REPORT

Submitted by:
City of Flint, Michigan
October 2008

The City of Flint human Relations Commission
National Call to Action Affordable Housing Report
October 3, 2008
Submitted by
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Section A

The City of Flint Human Relations Commission was created to assist in the elimination of prejudice and discrimination, and to promote equity in treatment of all residents of Flint regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, marital status, political orientation, age, sexual orientation, or handicap.

The City of Flint Human Relations Commission continues to address the barriers and impediments to safe and affordable housing by raising awareness of Fair Housing practices, including landlord/tenant rights and responsibilities. In addition to providing education, information, and referral to Flint residents, the Fair Housing program mediates complaints related to housing.

In 2007, the Human Relations Commission collaborated with the local office of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, Genesee County, and Legal Services of Eastern Michigan on a study of impediments to fair housing. The study, "Impediments to Fair Housing for City of Flint and Genesee County Michigan" includes statistical data related to fair and affordable housing that identifies barriers and necessary actions to address and eliminate impediments.

Local Government Consolidated Plan

Program goals included in the City of Flint's Five-year Consolidated Plan include decent and affordable housing, a suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunities.

- The city addresses housing needs by funding handicap accessible ramps, in-fill housing, citywide emergency home repair, rehabilitation of owner occupied and rental houses, purchase/rehab/resale programs, and down payment assistance. These programs address building code violations, lead testing, and mitigating the effects of lead when necessary. The city partners with local non-profits to carry out these activities.
- Leveraging city owned property to expand affordable housing in Smith Village, which is located in the Home Ownership Zone, a federally designated redevelopment area.

- Active participation in the State of Michigan’s Cities of Promise Initiative with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority and partnerships with public, private, and grassroots groups having the common goal of reducing poverty, increasing economic development, and revitalizing neighborhoods through safe and affordable housing in Flint.
- A First Time Home Homebuyer Down Payment Assistance program for low to moderate income families who qualify for houses that are affordable and meet the national housing maintenance codes.
- Housing Counseling agencies that provide pre and post- home purchase counseling, rental assistance, homebuyer education, services for the homeless, marketing, debt management, mortgage and default resolution, information about predatory lending, and fair housing laws.
- The City of Flint, in partnership with the Genesee County Planning Commission, is in the process of developing a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy to access funding necessary to increase economic development and the jobs needed by Flint residents to purchase affordable housing.

Policy Development and Special Needs

The Fair Housing study included a section that focused on data that has been used to assist in policy development, program enhancement, and to establish strategies that assist targeted populations access to a suitable living environments, including home ownership. A ten-year plan to reduce homelessness in Flint and Genesee County is the work of local government and agencies through a Continuum of Care. This plan addresses the need for affordable housing for individuals and families who are receiving human service assistance from one or more agencies.

Section B.

The City of Flint Homeowner Code Enforcement and Comprehensive Rental Inspection Program

- In 2004, the City of Flint launched an enforcement initiative designed to clean up neighborhoods by holding property owners accountable for trash and overgrown yards.
- Local Block Clubs work with the City of Flint as a part of an organized neighborhood clean up program that is funded with Community Development Block Grant funds.
- On May 12, 2008 the City of Flint adopted a Comprehensive Rental Inspection Code in conjunction with the International Property Maintenance Code and Administrative Amendments. City Ordinance #08071.1 provides enforcement authority over the

nearly 12,000 structures that lack required rental licenses and code inspections. The adoption of this ordinance ensures Flint's rental housing stock is affordable, safe and complies with local zoning. During the last two-years the City of Flint received 17,000 complaints of unsafe, unsanitary housing that generated 4,479 civil infractions. This is compared to the previous two-year period when 13,963 complaints were received.

Section C

Flint Area Community Housing Resource Board

The Flint Area Community Housing Resource Board (CHRB) was created by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). It was formed as a non-profit board to:

- Educate residents of Genesee County to identify discriminatory housing practices. Provide information regarding the Federal Fair Housing Act and Michigan Civil Rights legislation. Correct the effects of past discrimination by working cooperatively with the Genesee Community.
- The Flint Area Community Housing Resource Board (FACHRB) conducts and sponsor public awareness events, publishes fair housing information and co-sponsors fair housing activities during April, Fair Housing Month, October, Housing Education Month and November, Homeless Awareness Week.