



# **Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing In the City of Hammond, Indiana**

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## Introduction

Pursuant to its authority under the Fair Housing Act, HUD has directed program participants to undertake a new type of assessment of fair housing issues called the Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) approach. The updated AFH rule is designed to improve community planning in order to overcome fair housing issues.

The Department of Community Development, in partnership with the Hammond Human Relations Commission, is current in the process of preparing the City of Hammond's Assessment of Fair Housing Plan. The AFH process will begin with inclusive community participation and will result in the setting of fair housing goals to increase fair housing choice and provide equal access to opportunity for all community members. The City will then use the fair housing goals and priorities established in the AFH to inform the investments and other decisions made in local planning processes.

As provided in the rule, affirmatively furthering fair housing means taking meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics. Specifically, affirmatively furthering fair housing means taking meaningful actions that, taken together, address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replacing segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns, transforming racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity, and fostering and maintaining compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws. The duty to affirmatively further fair housing extends to all of a program participant's activities and programs relating to housing and urban development.

## Public Inspection of Fair Housing Data

The AFH is designed to identify fair housing issues, determine the factors that significantly contribute to identified issues, and develop a plan to overcome them. To help with this analysis, HUD has provided data through maps and tables for public inspection. The data provided will help provide context for the following fair housing concepts:

1. Integration and segregation patterns and trends based on race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin, and disability in the jurisdiction and region;
2. Racially or ethnically concentrated areas of poverty (R/ECAPs) in the jurisdiction and region;
3. Significant disparities in access to opportunity for any protected class in the jurisdiction and region; and
4. Disproportionate housing needs for any protected class within the jurisdiction and region.

## Seeking Public Comment

Please feel free to leave a comment, concern or suggestion relating to a fair housing issues. In addition, if you'd like to meet one on one, or participate in a small focus group, please leave your contact information along with an email address where you can be reached.

## Focus Group Schedule

The city will host a focus group discussion as a way to gather together individuals from similar backgrounds or experiences to discuss the contents of the AFFH plan. The group of participants will be guided by a moderator (or group facilitator) who will introduce topics of discussions for the purpose of planning process. The group discussion will be held on Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, Hammond City Hall, 5925 Calumet Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor room 315 beginning at 5:00 p.m.

The following experts/organizations will be invited:

John Petrusak, Executive Director, South Suburban Open Housing Center	Jean Ishmon, Executive Director, Northwest Indiana Reinvestment Alliance
Assistant Chief of Police William A. Short	Rev. Homer Cobb, President, Hammond Branch NAACP
Maurice McGough, Regional Director Chicago HUD Region Office	Frank Mrvan, North Township Trustee
Dr. Walter Watkins, Superintendent, School City of Hammond	Kelly Kearney, Hammond Code Enforcement
Carmen Paniagua, Executive Director, Hammond Housing Authority	Ronald Mullins, Chairman, Hammond Human Relations Commission
Ronald Novak, Director, Environmental Management	Brian Poland, City Planner
Dean Button, City Engineer	

Representatives from:

Hammond Hispanic Community Coalition	Northwest Indiana Community Action	Hammond Health Clinics
Hammond Public Library	Churches	Bankers
GNIAR – Realtors	NIPSCO	Hammond City Eviction Court
Work One	Hammond Shelters	Soup Kitchens

## Public Inspection of Fair Housing Data and Existing Plan

<http://www.gohammond.com/departments/planning-and-development/community-development/>