

**Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Task Force**  
**Bullet Point Response to Affordable Housing Task Force Recommendations**

**For presentation at the June 7, 2016 AFFH Task Force Quarterly Meeting**

The joint City-County Task Force on Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) commends the Pittsburgh Affordable Housing Task Force (AHTF) for addressing the City's affordable housing crisis, but we are concerned about the lack of Fair Housing considerations in most of the AHTF recommendations. When developing housing policies such as those recommended by the AHTF, the City is required to affirmatively further Fair Housing by addressing significant issues facing historically disadvantaged populations; such as:

1. How can the City address persistent patterns of segregation?
2. How do choices and decisions about affordable housing policies and placement affect the ability of persons with disabilities to find accessible and affordable housing?
3. How does the placement of affordable housing units allow for residents to move to areas of opportunity?

These policy questions and other barriers can and should be addressed through City policy. The AFFH Task Force will develop supplemental Fair Housing recommendations to City Council in the coming months, but in the meantime we want to bring attention to some of the issues that are missing from the AHTF recommendations.

**Overcoming Disproportionate Housing Needs**

The AHTF recommendations do not address racial, gender-based or disability-based disparities in housing quality, ownership, concentrations, and/or stability. This is a serious oversight that the City has a legal obligation to consider and address under its AFFH obligations. Such disparities include:

- Lack of homeownership among persons with disabilities. SSI asset limits prevent many people with disabilities from saving for down payment and home maintenance.
- Lack of housing stability for survivors of domestic violence, who are subject to eviction because of the actions of perpetrators.
- Lack of housing stability for residents of subsidized housing developments and harmful practices around development. When public and subsidized housing communities are redeveloped, developers typically use a "relocate first" approach that uproots residents from their social networks and moves them to other areas with high rates of poverty and concentrated residential segregation. The overwhelming majority of these residents are women and African-Americans; many are seniors and persons with disabilities. This is a harmful practice that often denies residents a meaningful opportunity to remain in a revitalized neighborhood.

**Inclusion**

We commend the AHTF for recommending that the City adopt an Inclusionary Housing policy and to defend the Source of Income ordinance. These tools will help expand housing and neighborhood choices for members of Pittsburgh's protected classes. However, we believe that all of the policies recommended by the AHTF must be designed to address integration and segregation patterns, deconcentrate racially or ethnically areas of poverty, and address disparities

in access to opportunity for any protected class in order to foster social inclusion. Further we believe:

- At least one Fair Housing expert should be included on the Trust Fund Governing Board, the Trust Fund Advisory Board, and each committee or working group that will be established to further refine AHTF policy recommendations.
- All new housing developments built with City funds (the Housing Trust Fund, HOME Funds or other City support) should be purposefully located in areas of opportunity, with good access to transportation, jobs, quality schools and other neighborhood amenities
- To “provide opportunities for affordable home ownership,” and “help give low-income residents increased stable housing option,” the City should address/alleviate barriers to housing due to credit history, history of incarceration or criminal records, and other common barriers that have a disparate impact on protected classes..
- HACP should be encouraged to take all feasible steps to give Housing Choice Voucher tenants greater housing choice and help them access housing in healthy, high-opportunity neighborhoods. Such steps could include increasing the voucher payment standard, adopting small area FMRs and implementing a housing mobility program.
- The City should consider a mandatory Visitability policy to ensure that, to the extent feasible, all housing that is built or rehabilitated in the City of Pittsburgh is visitable by people with mobility impairments.

The AFFH Task Force will work to complete a series of policy recommendations in addition to those presented here to address barriers to fair housing choice. The AFFH Task Force invites all members of the community to participate and provide feedback in advance of the final draft release in 2017. For more information, please contact the Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations at 412-255-2600 or at [human.relations@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:human.relations@pittsburghpa.gov).