



Chicago zones for open space and parking. Why not affordable housing?

As the city rewrites a zoning code that's almost half a century old, it must take into account one of the most pressing issues affecting Chicago today: the lack of safe, decent, affordable housing. Other cities have used the zoning code to create thousands of new homes for residents. Chicago can too.

The city doesn't hesitate when it comes to reforming public schools, attracting new business, or expanding O'Hare. But when it comes to working families in Chicago, the city's missing a major opportunity: the chance to make Chicago's neighborhoods affordable through inclusionary zoning.

Children, workers, and seniors all need safe, decent homes they can afford. Join us at upcoming neighborhood zoning meetings to let the Zoning Commission know: Affordable housing is a zoning issue.

Near Northwest Side

Tuesday, August 6, 6:30-8:00 pm
Humboldt Park Field House
1400 North Sacramento

Near Southwest Side

Wednesday, August 14, 6:30-8:00 pm
Comiskey Park Conference and Learning
Center, 333 West 35th Street

Far North Side

Tuesday, August 20, 6:30-8:00 pm
Loyola University, Crown Center Auditorium
1001 West Loyola Ave.

If not now, when? If not us, who? Access Living, ACORN Housing Corp., Agency Metropolitan Services, Albany Park Neighborhood Council, Ambassadors for Christ, Antioch Foundation, Balanced Development Coalition, Bethel New Life, Bickerdike Redevelopment Corp., Business and Professional People for the Public Interest, Center for Neighborhood Technology, Central City Housing Ventures, Century Place Development Corporation, Chicago Better Housing Association, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, Chicago Mutual Housing Network, Chicago Rehab Network, Chicago Roseland Coalition for Community Control, Circle Christian Development Corporation, Claretian Associates, Coalition for Fair Community Development, Community Renewal Society, Covenant Development Corporation, Deborah's Place, Eighteenth Street Development Corporation, Fulfilling Our Responsibility Unto Mankind, Genesis Housing Development Corp., Greater Washington Park Community Development Corporation, Hispanic Housing, Housing Resource Center, Interfaith Open Communities, Interfaith Organizing Project, Jewish Council on Urban Affairs, Kenwood Oakland Community Organization, Lakefront SRO Corporation, Lakeview Action Coalition, Latinos United, Latin United Community Housing Association, Lawndale Christian Development Corporation, Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing, Leadership Council for Metropolitan Open Communities, League of Women Voters of Chicago, Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Metropolitan Housing Development Corporation, Metropolitan Tenants Organization, Neighborhood Capital Budget Group, North River Commission, Northwest Austin Council, OK Share, Organization of the NorthEast, Peoples Reinvestment and Development Effort, Protestants for the Common Good, The Renaissance Collaborative, The Resurrection Project, Roseland Christian Homes, Voice of the People, Woodlawn East Community and Neighbors.

For more information contact Chicago Rehab Network, 312/663-3936.

Housing Fact Sheet

Fact 1. Unlike some other cities across the country, Chicago currently has no requirements that new housing be affordable. In recent years home prices and rents have skyrocketed out of the reach of many working Chicagoans. According to the Chicago Association of Realtors, the median sale price of townhomes and condos jumped 65% in the last five years from \$148,000 to \$238,500.

Fact 2. In Montgomery County, Maryland, an inclusionary zoning ordinance has been in place since 1974, resulting in the construction of more than 10,000 affordable units in mixed-income developments. **If Chicago had a similar inclusive zoning ordinance over the last 25 years, more than 19,000 affordable units would have been built across the city.**

Fact 3. The median rent for a 2-bedroom apartment is \$891. To afford that unit—using HUD’s definition of affordable housing costing less than 30% of income—a person such as a single parent with 2 children, would have to work 133 hours a week at the minimum wage of \$5.15/hr. Conversely, if they only work 40 hours a week, they would need to earn a wage \$17.13/hr.

Fact 4. Although the City estimates that it costs between \$5,000-\$10,000 to construct each parking space in a new development, they are proposing raising parking requirements by 50% to 100% in many new developments. At the same time that the City balks at mandatory set-asides for affordable housing, it is raising mandatory set-aside for car parking. This will add an additional cost burden to new construction and rehabilitation projects, making it even harder to create affordable housing.

Fact 5. Approximately 166,000 persons—including an alarmingly high proportion of families with small children—experience homelessness in the Chicago region. In the City, requests for emergency shelter were up 22% in 2001 over the previous year. Requests by families were up 35%.

Fact 6. Zoning represents one of the primary obstacles to developing more affordable housing in Chicago. As spot down-zoning is restricting the future development of multifamily rental housing, aldermen are often approving zoning changes and exceptions for politically connected developers of high-end housing.