

*Constitution Jan 5, 1962*  
**Barricade at City Hall**

*Mr. Dan Sweet*

The rebuke Mayor Ivan Allen delivered to Atlanta aldermen in his "state of the city" address was mild in comparison with what he might have said.

"Not a single major corrective or creative program has come out of City Hall with which to cope with the problems of slums and transportation," the mayor declared.

But it's even worse than that. In the fight against slum blight, the aldermanic board actually has been a hindrance.

That point was made abundantly clear in another mild-spoken report—one delivered last month by the Housing Resources Committee, a group of civic leaders appointed by the mayor to expedite his low-cost housing plans.

The HRC observed that almost all urban renewal land on which low-cost housing might be built already has been committed. Most other sites zoned for multi-family use already are being used for that purpose or are prohibitively expensive.

And yet there is reasonably priced vacant land in the city. It is zoned for other purposes, however.

"This indicates," said HRC's annual report, "that the bulk of remaining land needed for the program will have to depend on rezoning of appropriate tracts for this purpose."

And there's the rub. Aldermen have been notably reluctant to rezone for housing for the poor—unless the site were in someone else's ward.

In its report, the Housing Resources Committee outlined a broad-spectrum attack on slums, utilizing "turnkey," 221 and other privately developed projects; vigorous rehabilitation programs, leasing of privately owned buildings by the Atlanta Housing Authority, additional urban renewal, and close intergovernmental cooperation.

A key and controversial recommendation

which deserves serious consideration is selection of multiple sites scattered throughout the city's four quadrants for low-cost housing. These sites would be submitted for zoning approval as a package to avoid accusations that any one section is bearing more than its reasonable share of housing for the poor.

But until the aldermen get some backbone and show some initiative, the mayor's worthy program to find decent housing for all Atlanta's citizens will falter.