

EXTRACT
from
ATLANTA'S COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM REPORT

SECTION TWO: DEVELOPING AN AFFIRMATIVE RELOCATION PROGRAM

* * *

AN AFFIRMATIVE RELOCATION PROGRAM

The factual analysis of relocation housing practices and relocation housing resources as related to those persons and families displaced by governmental action presented thus far results in one unavoidable conclusion:

Atlanta does not have the housing resources to meet the needs of persons to be displaced by future governmental action. Before Atlanta can proceed with expanded code enforcement and urban renewal activities it must increase its low-income housing stock.

In addition, an affirmative relocation program for Atlanta must include changes in organization, procedures, and policies appropriate to the findings of Section One of this report. Section One shows the need for a definite system of low-to-moderate income housing planning which will provide replacement housing at the time of displacement. It also reveals the need for overall coordination of community development efforts; better record keeping and data use; improved timing of relocation counseling services and survey; improved use of existing relocation resources; and an improved policy of local initiative in providing local assistance to displacees when such aid is not available through existing programs.

The following recommendations have been devised to meet the needs outlined. They are presented in two categories: (1) recommendations of an interim nature for immediate action to alleviate the present low-income housing shortage, and (2) recommendations on organization, procedure, and policies considered necessary for effective long range relocation and relocation housing planning.

* * *

Recommendation 3

That a Housing Resources Bureau be established as a major division within the proposed Community Development Department recommended as a part of the reorganization plan of the "Government of the City of Atlanta - A Survey Report" by the Public Administration Service.

It is the intent of this recommendation that "Housing Planning" be elevated to a position never before achieved in Atlanta as a highly technical entity with its own staff. Responsibility would be broadly based and not narrowly confined to urban renewal objectives. The major activity would be the planning of housing resources through research for all types of displacement and relocation needs; therefore, this new technical division could be called - for lack of a better name - "Housing Resources Bureau".

The proposed Housing Resources Bureau should have as its head an assistant to the Community Development Department Director. It should be staffed with capable, informed economic analysts and planners with demonstrated knowledge of the housing industry, the community, and the local housing market. This new governmental agency would have the following responsibilities:

A. Research

Maintain a continuous inventory of housing in the City of Atlanta by size of unit, whether for sale or rent, condition of unit, type of unit compared to significant rent/cost ranges, and specific location. In addition, the Housing Resources Bureau would retain sufficient data on the characteristics of the low-income to moderate-income population and their housing locations and needs as necessary for a continual assessment of market potential. Although costly, the retention of such housing and population data would be an extremely valuable planning tool for both public and private interests. Furthermore, this function is seen as the only practical way definitive "client analyses" can be achieved to obtain the best possible housing balance in the area or to plan for maintaining that balance with the criteria attached to the various existing and proposed housing assistance programs.

The Housing Resources Bureau would identify the potential of use of housing assistance programs in advance of all governmental community redevelopment projects. Through cooperation with the appropriate agencies the "Bureau" would program and initiate loan, grant, or unit reservations for housing assistance at a time sufficient to assure such housing facilities are "on the ground" at the time people are displaced by governmental projects.

B. Public Information

Periodically, reports would be issued and distributed to realtors, developers, banks, and concerned public or private agencies. These reports would indicate existing housing imbalances determined by comparing the characteristics of the existing housing stock to the changing character of area economy and population.

C. Technical Assistance

The Bureau would be responsible for providing designated city agencies with information on housing and population characteristics necessary to the major report forms required in the administration of their programs with the Federal Government (Workable Program forms, Survey and Planning Applications for urban renewal, public housing reservation information, etc.). Such information would be of a designated format confined to housing and tenant characteristics and provided at designated intervals. This responsibility would provide important consistency and, hopefully, improve understanding and accuracy of such data.

The Housing Resources Bureau would purposefully solicit and encourage assistance and support from area realtors, developers, and the like, by offering special services in defining and describing special housing market needs, and, where appropriate, applying information on the potential use of governmental assistance programs for low-to moderate-income housing markets.

* * *