

July 25, 1969

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The Honorable George Romney  
Secretary of the United States Department  
of Housing and Urban Development  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Secretary:

In November, 1966, we began in Atlanta a concentrated effort to stimulate the development of 16,800 units of low and moderate income housing to provide safe and sanitary shelter for thousands of less fortunate citizens.

This effort, called "The Mayor's Housing Resources Program" was supported by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, private banks, developers, churches, civic groups and individual citizens at all levels.

This program has produced results. As of this date, 21,013 of the five year goal of 16,800 units have been completed, are under construction, or in planning. The most recent status report is attached for your information.

Within the next few weeks, the single most significant development generated by our programs will be placed under construction. It is the East Lake Meadows turnkey project, which is the largest turnkey public housing development in America with comprehensive community facilities.

Because of the significance of this undertaking and because it embodies so many of the aspects of community housing action which you so magnificently support, all of us in Atlanta - City Hall, the builders, our housing officials, and citizens in general - feel that we want to share the beginning of this project with you.

Secretary Romney  
Page Two  
July 25, 1969

I have been asked to issue you an official invitation from all of us to inaugurate construction of this most important housing development for poor people. If your schedule will permit you to come to Atlanta in the next few weeks, we shall schedule the ceremonies for your convenience. It would also give us the opportunity to show you some of the operational components of Atlanta's Model Cities program.

Highlights in the development of the East Lake Meadows Project will give you some idea of its importance not only in relation to the solution of urban problems of Atlanta but perhaps in other cities.

The land on which this project is located was once a golf course owned by prominent conservative businessmen in Atlanta. They sold it to the March Company, a private development company, and supported difficult rezoning in an area which had hitherto had no public housing. City officials, local Housing Authority, and the Regional Housing Authority, together with local business people, civic groups, communication media, were all involved. The project includes 300 living units, 150 for elderly, shopping center, community and health facilities, city park, recreation areas and the dedication of school sites. An example of community support involves the four leading banks in Atlanta who formed a consortium to finance the interim construction costs in an effort to assist in the solution of Atlanta's housing problems for its low-income citizens. This development represents the highest type of cooperation among city, business, government interagency planning and implementation - a model community effort.

Your presence here on this occasion, therefore, would serve to give strength to the solution of the many difficult problems we still face in Atlanta and to spotlight one of the landmark public housing developments in America.

Those of us who are faced with the community level problems of leadership are thankful that you are in the crucial position at HUD.

Sincerely yours,

Ivan Allen, Jr.  
Mayor

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cc: Mr. Edward Baxter