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Memo

To: Education & Housing Equity Board of Directors
From: Tim Sullivan
Date: November 12, 1997
Re: Fiscal relationship between MICAH and EHEP

Some significant changes have occurred in the past few months within MICAH that warrant a change to our fiscal agent agreement. MICAH has secured a larger office space with a separate office for EHEP. EHEP now has its own dedicated phone line through MICAH. Lastly, the rate at which MICAH pays me has changed significantly. The following is a breakdown of the costs that MICAH is proposing starting November 1, 1997.

- 1) Administrative support services: Bookkeeping, payroll, producing financial statements, etc.
Cost: Time of administrative director at \$21.20/hour for approximately 7 hours per month
- 2) Office space
Cost: 128 square feet at 1.03 /square foot per month
- 3) Local telephone service
Cost: One business phone line including taxes at \$50.00/month
- 4) Use of office equipment such as phones, voice mail & fax
Cost: 20% of equipment depreciation. There will be no charge to EHEP for this.

Taken together, these costs amount to about \$330 per month. That is what I am proposing as MICAH's fee for the above services.

In addition, MICAH will bill EHEP for the following on a monthly basis:

- 1) Copies at \$.05/copy
- 2) Long distance phone calls at cost
- 3) Postage charged to MICAH's account at cost
- 4) Any office supplies that MICAH pays for at cost

I have included a new Fund Certification Agreement for your approval. If you have any questions about the agreement, please contact me.

Fund Certification Agreement

Effective Date of Agreement: November 1, 1997

Recitals:

- A. Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAHA) is a Minnesota nonprofit corporation recognized by the IRS as being organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code §501(c)(3).
- B. Education and Housing Equity Project (EHEP), with a principal office at 122 W. Franklin Ave., Suite 310, Minneapolis, Minnesota is a Minnesota nonprofit corporation recognized by the IRS as being organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Internal Revenue Code §501(c)(3).
- C. EHEP desires to enter into an Agreement to retain MICAHA as EHEP's "fiscal agent" in order for EHEP to carry out one or more of its specific projects, in furtherance of charitable purposes within the meaning of §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code as follows:
Promoting integration of the housing and educational systems in the Twin Cities through education and advocacy.
- D. MICAHA has agreed to act as EHEP's "fiscal agent" in order to support the charitable purposes enumerated in the preceding recital within the terms and conditions outlined herein.

Agreement:

1. Fiscal Agent Services

- 1.1 Authority. EHEP hereby appoints MICAHA to act as its fiscal agent and MICAHA hereby accepts such appointment. MICAHA shall have full power and authority to receive, accept, deposit and disburse monies on behalf of EHEP and to otherwise act as EHEP's agent, solely in accordance with this Agreement.
- 1.2 Responsibilities of MICAHA. As the fiscal agent of EHEP, MICAHA shall perform the following duties:
 - 1.2.1 MICAHA shall establish and maintain an account for the deposit of monies of EHEP;
 - 1.2.2 MICAHA shall disburse monies of EHEP in accordance with this agreement;
 - 1.2.3 MICAHA shall provide all accounting and payroll services for EHEP, provided, however, that EHEP is the "employer" for all purposes of any persons performing services for EHEP; and
 - 1.2.4 MICAHA shall invest monies of EHEP upon the direction and approval of EHEP, provided, however, that any income or losses from such investments are income or losses of EHEP, and MICAHA shall have no liability therefor.
- 1.3 Reporting Responsibilities. MICAHA will prepare reports concerning funds held on behalf of EHEP as reasonably required by donors to EHEP. MICAHA shall not be responsible for performing any auditing functions nor for preparing and submitting tax or other reports which are required to be filed with federal, state or local governments or agencies.
- 1.4 Distribution of Funds/Documentation. MICAHA shall disburse funds according to the written request of EHEP, as soon as administratively feasible. Each such request for funds by EHEP shall contain a written description of the purpose of the disbursement as well as documentation as to the purpose of each payment made by MICAHA on EHEP's behalf.

- 1.5 Fiscal Agent Discretion. In its role as fiscal agent, MICAH shall receive and disburse monies of EHEP solely for the purposes described above for which EHEP was organized. If, in the discretion of MICAH, any disbursement is not consistent with the charitable purposes enumerated in Recital C of this Agreement, MICAH may refuse to authorize any such disbursement on behalf of EHEP.
- 1.6 Responsibilities of EHEP.
- 1.6.1 EHEP shall designate an individual to be the sole authorized contact for MICAH in MICAH's performance of services under this Agreement.
- 1.6.2 EHEP shall notify MICAH immediately of (a) any changes in EHEP's legal or tax status, or (b) any action by any federal, state or local administrative agency (including, but not limited to, investigations, audits, or examinations) or (c) any changes in EHEP's executive staff or key staff responsible for achieving EHEP's charitable purposes.
- 1.6.3 EHEP shall pay to MICAH \$330 per month to cover administration, office space use, local telephone service, and use of MICAH's office equipment. Individual items including, but not limited to copies, faxes, long distance phone calls, postage, and office supplies will be billed to EHEP at an agreed upon rate.
- 1.7 Limitation of Liability and Indemnification. In receiving, accepting, depositing, investing and disbursing monies on behalf of EHEP, MICAH assumes no responsibility beyond the exercise of duties set forth in this Agreement. EHEP hereby agrees to defend, indemnify and hold harmless MICAH, and its officers, directors, and employees, from any liability, claims and/or causes of action arising out of or related to the performance of MICAH's duties under this Agreement or arising out of or related to the activities of EHEP.

2. MISCELLANEOUS

- 2.1 Relationship of Parties. In making and performing this Agreement, the parties hereto act and shall act at all times as independent contractors. Nothing in this Agreement shall be construed or implied to create an employment relationship, partnership or joint venture among the parties. Nothing contained in this Agreement shall constitute the naming of MICAH as an agent or legal representative of EHEP for any purpose whatsoever except as specifically and to the extent set forth herein.
- 2.2 Termination of Agreement. This Agreement may be terminated at any time by either party upon 30 days written notice.

MICAH

By: _____

Its: _____

EHEP

By: _____

Its: _____

LEVINE
5760 VERMILION BWD
NOLA 70122



DICK LITTLE
ETHP
122 W. FRANKLIN AVE, SUITE 310
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55404

55404/2452



METROPOLITAN INTERFAITH COUNCIL ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

"Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8



October 3, 1997

Mr. Dick Little
Education & Housing Equity Project
122 W. Franklin Ave. #320
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Dear Dick:

I am pleased to announce that the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAHA) has been awarded \$100,000 by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for educational outreach to reduce community tensions related to fair housing (please see enclosed article).

As HUD Secretary Cuomo stated during yesterday's press conference, "When you discriminate against a person (in housing) ... you discriminate where they can live, you deny a person home, but you also deny them the schools, the neighborhood, the friends, and often the job that they need." MICAHA's project, called *Neighbors Building Strong Communities*, will use grassroots organizing components of education, advocacy and service projects to further housing choices across our region.

In collaboration with the nationally acclaimed Illusion Theater, MICAHA will produce seven affordable housing educational productions for presentation throughout the metropolitan region. In order to validate and broaden the theater productions' impact, MICAHA will secure private sector partnership for each theater production. The project will expand the network of individuals, congregations and organizations involved in long-term solutions to the chronic shortage of fair housing choices on the municipal, regional and state levels.

Your letter of support along with those from others from the Twin Cities showed HUD the depth of commitment our metropolitan community has for fair housing. Thank you again for your support of the project.

As MICAHA moves ahead with *Neighbors Building Strong Communities*, we anticipate many individuals, congregations and organizations will want to join in the efforts, either through direct involvement or financial sponsorship of an educational production. Please call me to discuss your interest in further collaboration for a specific aspect of the project.

Sincerely,



Joy Sorensen Navarre
Executive Director

Enclosure

In new effort to battle housing bias, HUD awards \$15 million in grants

Associated Press

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Housing Secretary Andrew Cuomo announced a crackdown on housing discrimination Tuesday and awarded \$15 million to fair-housing groups to investigate complaints.

"Fundamental to the idea of America is that you have the choice to live where you want," Cuomo said at a news conference.

The announcement came just hours after President Clinton attended a meeting to help jumpstart the work of his advisory board on race. He said that the first town hall-style meeting on race will be held Dec. 2, probably in the Midwest, and that he wants to intensify the fight against housing discrimination.

Said Cuomo: "When you discriminate against a person [in housing] . . . you discriminate where they can live, you deny a person home, but you also deny them the schools, the neighbor-

hood, the friends, and often the job that they need."

Federal law prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing. But Cuomo, citing examples of violations, pointed to a recent case where an apartment referral service representative used the code word "Archie" to flag properties whose owners didn't want minority tenants. Cuomo said "Archie" refers to Archie Bunker, the bigoted character from TV's "All in the Family."

Cuomo said the president wants the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to double the number of enforcement actions and has provided a total of \$15 million to 67 private, nonprofit groups to investigate housing discrimination complaints and promote fair housing. The groups represent every region of the country.

In Minneapolis, HUD will distribute grants totaling \$450,000 to two groups — not to investigate discrimination, but to combat it

and help victims. The Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis will receive \$350,000 to provide counseling and referral services to people alleging discrimination.

The Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing will receive \$100,000 to produce interactive educational programs to combat racial tension and support local initiatives.

Dick Little, a board member of the Interfaith Council, said the money will be used primarily to try to change the way people think about discrimination. In partnership with Illusion Theater, the organization will stage theatrical performances in Twin Cities-area churches; the performances will be aimed at breaking down barriers.

In Clinton's first term, HUD logged 34,000 housing-discrimination complaints. Of those, 1,085 resulted in enforcement actions, and 6,500 were settled.

— *Washington Bureau correspondent Joel Sawyer contributed to this report.*

METROPOLITAN INTERFAITH COUNCIL ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

"Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8



September 5, 1997

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Rev. Arthur Tredwell

Exodus Development Company

Staff

Joy Sorensen Navarre

Executive Director

Dick Little
Executive Director
Education & Housing Equity Project
122 W. Franklin Ave. #320
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Dear Dick,

On behalf of the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAHA), I want to express my appreciation for the thoughtful letter of support you composed for MICAHA's application for funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). We recognize that we asked you to produce a letter on very short notice and are grateful for your quick response to our request.

We met the application deadline of August 25. During the next 90 days HUD will review proposals from across the nation. We are hopeful ours will be one of the five selected for implementation. We anticipate notification by November 25 and will inform you as to HUD's decision.

Thank you again for your support of MICAHA's "Neighbors Building Strong Communities" fair housing proposal.

Sincerely,

Joy Sorensen Navarre
Executive Director

**EDUCATION AND HOUSING EQUITY PROJECT
COMMUNITY CIRCLE COLLABORATIVE**

122 West Franklin Avenue, Suite 320

Minneapolis, MN 55404

Phone: (612) 871-8980

Fax: (612) 871-8984

e-mail: micah@mtn.org

August 14, 1997

HUD Headquarters

ATTN: Maxine B. Cunningham

Fair Housing Initiatives Program Division

Office of Fair Housing Initiatives and Voluntary Programs

451 7th Street SW, Room 5234

Washington, DC 20410-20000

Dear Ms. Cunningham:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Education and Housing Equity Project and the partner organizations of the Community Circle Collaborative, I am writing to convey our strong commitment and support for the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing's proposal, "Neighbors Building Strong Communities," to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Fair Housing Initiative Program for 1997.

With a membership base of over 100 congregations located throughout the metropolitan area and a history of proactive leadership on metropolitan housing issues dating back to 1989, MICAHA has developed a substantial track record in increasing public support for fair housing and overcoming opposition to affordable housing in suburban communities. MICAHA's very creative proposal to work with the Illusion Theater (nationally known for its success in confronting stereotypes and provoking rethinking about major social issues) is a logical extension of its work.

This project will occur at a critical time in efforts by Twin Cities area communities to address issues of housing, schools and race that are polarizing our communities. MICAHA's proposal will directly contribute to achieving the objectives of the Minneapolis Housing Principles, the Metropolitan Livability Act, the Regional Housing Opportunity Counseling Program of the Metropolitan Council, the class action settlement of *Hollman v. Cisneros*, and the mediation process for the educational adequacy suit filed by the NAACP against the State of Minnesota. MICAHA has the public respect and trust to be *the agent* that can bring people together on the difficult issues of fair and affordable housing facing our metropolitan area, and can do so in a way that will lead to results.

The Education and Housing Equity Project is a collaborator in this proposal. Over the past year, we have engaged hundreds of citizens throughout the metropolitan area in 'community circle' discussions on the questions of how racial and economic segregation of housing has impacted the educational achievement and life opportunities of Twin Cities' children and families, and what we as a community can do to enhance educational success and housing and economic opportunities for *all* children in the region. MICAHA has been a principal partner in this project, and many of its member organizations have sponsored the discussions. Through its leadership in our "Choices for Community" project, MICAHA has developed a keen awareness of and commitment to connecting affordable housing to the related issues of education, jobs, transit and race relations with which our metropolitan citizens are struggling.

Through the "Choices for Community" project and Community Circle Collaborative, we have built an immense network of partners (including media organizations) that will serve to amplify the ability of MICAHA's proposed "Neighbors Building Strong Communities" project to reach and engage a broad cross-section of Twin Cities citizens. We have also advanced the art of using discussion models and developing discussion guides that can be used to support the public conversations that are an essential part of MICAHA's proposal. Using our research and the results of community circle discussions already completed, we will also be able to inform the MICAHA project's conversations and ideas for action. In these and other ways, our resources will be leveraged to support and complement the "Neighbors Building Strong Communities" project.

In short, we strongly urge you to fund MICAHA's "Neighbors Building Strong Communities" proposal.

Sincerely,

Richard C. Little, AICP
Executive Director

CC: Matt Little, President, Education and Housing Equity Project
Joy Sorensen Navarre, Executive Director, MICAHA
Jaime Pedraza, Director, Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity Division,
Minnesota State Office, HUD



'Suburban Initiative' brings organizing on affordable housing to metro suburbs

"And who is my neighbor?" This question posed to Jesus in the parable of the Good Samaritan is at the heart of current efforts to expand housing opportunities in suburban communities and revitalize inner-city neighborhoods.

MICAH, through its Suburban Initiative, is actively engaged in increasing the affordable housing choices available to low-income people throughout the region.

"The vitality of our community and our capacity to provide authentic opportunity for low income people requires that we think regionally, act locally, and live faithfully," says Mike Anderson, MICAH's executive director.

Anderson believes this type of thinking broadens our "sense of neighbor" and compels people of faith to play a unique and important role in supporting and developing affordable housing in suburban communities.

Monitoring and Implementing the Livable Communities Act and the Hollman Consent Decree

The passage of the Livable Communities Act in 1995 and the settlement of the Hollman Consent Decree provide real opportunities for creating affordable housing and expanding housing opportunities in suburban communities.

Passed by the state legislature in 1995, the Livable Communities Act provides modest incentives to suburban communities to develop affordable housing. Nearly 100 communities took up this invitation, agreeing to establish goals and create plans for development of affordable housing. MICAH played a key role in the initial passage of the Livable Communities Act.

The Hollman settlement is the result of a suit filed by the NAACP and Legal Aid against the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority (MPHA) and HUD. The suit claimed that MPHA and HUD engaged in discriminatory practices that led to the development of segregated public housing in north Minneapolis. The agreed-upon remedy: to provide \$100 million to tear down some of the units, create 900 new Section 8 certificates, provide relocation assis-

tance to families and build new units in areas of the city or region with lower poverty rates.

MICAH, through the Suburban Initiative, is monitoring the implementation of the Livable Communities Act and the Hollman Consent Decree and working to broaden public support for local efforts designed to create affordable housing.

As part of this monitoring effort, MICAH is providing staff support to the Livable Communities Taskforce chaired by former St. Paul mayor George Latimer. The goal of the Taskforce will be to determine the impact of the Livable Communities Act on the creation of affordable housing in suburban communities. Organizations sponsoring the Taskforce include the Anoka County Affordable Housing Coalition, Community Action for Suburban Hennepin (CASH), the Minnesota Housing Partnership, the Northeast Metro Coalition for Affordable Housing (NEMCAH) and the Scott-Carver Community Action Program.

Building Local Support

Broad policy measures such as the Livable Communities Act are important but, in the final analysis, affordable housing is built only when a developer creates a plan and wins the support of a local city council. MICAH is organizing and mobilizing congregations and individuals at the local level to support local affordable housing development.

Earlier this year, MICAH and the Minnesota Housing Partnership sponsored a conference in Edina, "Let's Make a Deal: Developing Partnerships for Affordable Housing."

This conference was followed by another event in Richfield, co-sponsored by the South Hennepin Branch of Family and Children's Service, "A Working Conference on Affordable Housing in South Hennepin County." Here participants learned about housing needs, heard briefings on Livable Communities Act action plans from four communities, and discussed future collaborative steps to take.

In June, MICAH organized another meeting, this time in Plymouth, attended by eight pastors, the Mayor of Plymouth, city staff, one for-profit developer and one non-profit devel-

'Think regionally, act locally, live faithfully.'

—MICAH's organizing vision

oper.

"People were saying 'let's get together again,'" notes Pastor Wayne Peterson of Plymouth's St. Barnabas Lutheran Church, host of the luncheon. "It was the type of networking situation that was good."

A similar luncheon in Minnetonka with area clergy led to a request by private developer Colleen Carey, president of the Cornerstone Group, Inc. In the face of neighborhood opposition, she sought MICAH's help to ensure local support for "Minnetonka Mills," a 30-unit rental townhome development for families earning \$16,000 to \$43,000. Three of the units will be subsidized by the Hollman decree and will be available to very low income families.

"Our objective in all of this is to develop affordable housing that changes the stereotype," Carey says.

Although the Minnetonka city council won't make a decision until mid-September, city officials already are hearing from local residents who believe Minnetonka should have a diversity of housing options.

"There's a lot of good will out there that needs to be tapped," says Rabbi Harold Kravitz, MICAH's president and head rabbi of Adath Jeshurun, located in Minnetonka.

"This whole issue for MICAH is about getting people to see everyone as part of their community, not as categories or groups."

'Rebuild the City; Revive the Common Good'

Inter-faith celebration planned September 8

"The increasing poverty in the central cities and the growing polarization in the region pose a serious threat to the entire metropolitan community. All of us — in central cities and suburbs alike — will suffer if the trend is not reversed."

Earlier this year, religious leaders from across the metro region joined together in a joint statement about metro issues and didn't mince words. The statement, "Rebuild the City; Revive the Common Good" clearly spelled out the dimensions of the urban crisis and why rebuilding the central cities "is a responsibility that must be shared by every citizen of the metropolitan region" (see insert).

MICAH is planning an "Interfaith Celebration of Commitment and Action" on the theme "Rebuild the City; Revive the Common Good." This event, designed for the whole family, will be Sunday, September 8 from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. at Todos Los

Santos and Salem Lutheran Church, 610 West 28th Street (Lyndale and 28th) in Minneapolis.

This interfaith celebration will provide an opportunity for people from throughout the metro area to come together to renew their commitment to revitalize the city through political advocacy and hands-on efforts.

Organizing on metro issues is moving from raising general awareness of the problems to focusing on specific issues, like making the Metropolitan Council an elected body and improving the Livable Communities Act, says Ron Krietemeyer, director of the Office for Social Justice of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. This shift in focus, he says, is "all in the context of an ongoing effort to rebuild the urban core and make the metro area more healthy by addressing inequality."

3:00 — 4:15 p.m. Celebration of Commitment and Action

"Honoring Our Work and Commitment"

Imam Matthew Ramadan

(Executive Director, Northside Residents
Redevelopment Council)

"A Call to Commitment and Action"

Dr. Reatha Clark King

(President, General Mills Foundation)

4:15 — 6:00 p.m.

Action Fair

- Meet with community organizations
- Learn how to influence public policy
- Paint a mural
- Enjoy a variety of food and music

Todos Los Santos and Salem Lutheran Church

610 W. 28th Street
(Lyndale and 28th, south Minneapolis)

Update: MICAH's African- American Initiative

In just a few months, MICAH's African-American Initiative has progressed from the idea stage through the planning stage and, now, into the action stage.

"We've shown some good initial success with pilot projects," says MICAH's John Ruffin, who directs the program.

Center of Joy

The Center of Joy is a new outreach ministry of Zion Missionary Baptist Church in north Minneapolis. A church-owned four-plex is being developed into transitional housing for homeless families, which will be owned and managed by the Center of Joy, a new organization. MICAH is helping with technical assistance, fundraising, and organizational develop-

ment.

PROCEED, Inc.

PROCEED, Inc. is an economic and housing development organization created by Progressive Missionary Baptist Church in St. Paul. MICAH has helped PROCEED obtain \$40,000 in loans to support its housing development work. PROCEED plans to develop affordable housing on St. Paul's East Side.

Aftercare, Inc.

Aftercare, Inc. provides affordable, transitional housing in a group setting for single males who are recovering from chemical dependency issues. MICAH has provided a \$10,000 loan to purchase windows for a new facility which Aftercare has developed in north Minneapolis, a facility which will provide 16-32 affordable housing units. Aftercare owns three other buildings, with total capacity of 140.

"They've succeeded in their first two buildings, finding a way to work with what had been considered a 'problem population,'" says MICAH's John Ruffin. "We want to see that type of creativity flourish."

"We don't bring an agenda to the table;" Ruffin notes, reviewing the projects MICAH is supporting. "We help the com-

munity implement its agenda."

Additional partners in the African-American Initiative include Exodus Community Development Company, Operation Roof, and Lighthouse Foundational Ministries.

According to Art Treadwell, president of Exodus Community Development Company, these new projects need capital, capacity, and credibility to succeed. MICAH is attempting to help in all of these areas.

MICAH recently organized a meeting with its partners in the African-American Initiative and the major funders of affordable housing in Minnesota. These funders included Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) commissioner Kit Hadley; Tom Fulton of the Family Housing Fund of Minneapolis and St. Paul; and Steve Thomas of the Corporation for Supportive Housing. Discussion explored ways to provide financial support for these new community initiatives.

"We've made progress," Ruffin says of MICAH's African-American Initiative. "We see [the Initiative] as a great vehicle to revitalize the urban core and to assist the African-American community in developing programs they want to develop."

Excerpts from

Rebuild the City: Revive the Common Good

Statement by Religious Leaders of the Twin Cities

The Twin Cities region is facing conditions in the urban core that pose serious and urgent problems for all citizens of the area. As religious leaders, we take this occasion to call for a renewed commitment to "rebuild the city" — to revive and strengthen the urban core of our metropolitan community.

The challenges that face our cities are especially important because of the vital role that our urban center plays in the life of the entire region. It would be a mistake to assume that the cities are primarily a collection of problems and weaknesses. They are not. Despite the adversities that they face, our urban neighborhoods are places with many unique assets and advantages. Most retain a strong sense of community and reflect a rich diversity in terms of culture and race. They enjoy a close proximity to the downtown business and cultural centers. They have a great deal of valuable housing stock and underutilized commercial property, as well as a very good transportation system, and many excellent schools.

In view of these human and social resources, we believe that reversing the present economic decline of the urban core is one of the most urgent challenges for the region. Consider the signs of crisis that affect the central cities of our region: deepening inner city poverty, growing disparity between city and suburbs, increased racial segregation, fewer decent-paying jobs, declining property values and tax bases along with an increase in violent crime and other social ills.

The sources of these urban problems are multiple and complex, but it must be acknowledged that many of the root causes stem from forces beyond the central city neighborhoods themselves. National economic and tax policies as well as regional housing and development policies have contributed to the creation of a metropolitan area that is increasingly divided into "haves" and "have-nots." Urban sprawl has triggered a process in which people with greater incomes have moved from central cities to suburbs, and the urban core has remained home to growing concentrations of people with lower incomes, fewer educational opportunities, and less access to living wage jobs. While urban residents continue to struggle valiantly to overcome these obstacles, the larger economic and social forces have often dwarfed and negated their efforts.

As religious leaders, we call upon all people of the region to help reverse the decline in the urban core. Meeting this responsibility is not only the sensible thing to do; it is the morally right thing to do. For the health of the urban core is critical to the success of the entire region. Our suburbs and cities are linked in a single economy, and we are already paying a heavy price for isolating poor people in neighborhoods that severely limit their opportunities for a productive and secure life. If we fail to act in the face of this challenge, the price we all pay will surely escalate.

We believe that the Twin Cities region should develop a long-term multi-dimensional strategy to attack inner city poverty and revive the core communities of our cities. We must think small by encouraging individual local initiatives, but we must also think and act on a larger, more structural level. For, to a great extent, the root problems affecting the inner city lies in the public policies, institutions, and structures that have shaped the path of development in our cities and our metropolitan region as a whole. It is crucial, therefore, that leaders in the public and private sectors join together in a renewed

commitment to shape policies and structures that will reverse the decline in our urban core. We call on elected officials at every level, as well as business and community leaders to take up this task.

We believe that the urban challenges facing our region require a long-term, multi-faceted strategy for building and sustaining healthy inner city neighborhoods. While we are not qualified to provide a blueprint for such a strategy, we believe that it should include action in the following areas:

- **Poverty.** Our region needs an aggressive metropolitan strategy to reduce poverty. The primary focus of this strategy should be jobs. There is no substitute for jobs that pay a living wage.
- **Racial Segregation.** The Twin Cities region suffers from a very high degree of racial segregation. Combined with the problems of concentrated poverty, these racial divisions are a major obstacle to creating a healthy metropolitan community.
- **Housing.** Affordable housing for low-income families should be available throughout the metro region. This will require using public policy to change the incentives of a housing market that now works to concentrate low-income families in the inner city.
- **Transportation.** The metro region needs a transportation system that provides affordable public transit between the central cities and the regions that are developing new jobs.
- **Tax Policy.** Since the plight of the inner city is the responsibility of the entire metro region, policy makers should seek ways of using the tax resources of the metro region as a whole to support the reinvestment initiatives for the urban core. While tax revenues are currently shared in a limited way, we believe additional, more targeted efforts are needed to channel financial resources to the poorest inner city communities.
- **Creating Safe Neighborhoods.** Renewing inner city neighborhoods will require an increased emphasis on reducing the violence and crime that threatens some urban communities.

Perhaps the most important change that is needed is a greater public recognition that the central cities are important for all of us. A crucial starting point for each of us is the willingness to see ourselves as members of a larger community — the Twin Cities metro region. The central cities are the heart of that region, and that heart must be strong if the region is to thrive.

Bishop Sharon Brown Christopher, United Methodist Church, Minnesota Conference
Archbishop Harry J. Flynn, Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis
Bishop Mark Hanson, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, St. Paul Area Synod
Right Rev. James L. Jelinek, Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota
Rabbi Harold Kravitz, Aduv Jeshurun Congregation
Rev. Robert E. Lucas, Executive Presbyter, Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area
Bishop David W. Olson, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Mpls. Area Synod
Rev. David McMahill, Minister for the Eastern Association, Minn. Conference,
United Church of Christ
Rev. William Smith III, Chairman of Mpls. Interdenominational
Black Ministerial Alliance

'Rebuild the City' builds interfaith focus on social problems

A crowd exceeding 300 persons from diverse faiths — Christians, Muslims, Jews — filled the Minneapolis sanctuary of Salem Lutheran Church and Todos Los Santos on Sept. 8 to join in common cause in efforts to "Rebuild the City and Revive the Common Good."

The event, sponsored by the Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICA), the Minnesota Rabbinical Association, the Jewish Community Relations Council, and others, featured a prayer service, music, food, mural painting, an information fair, and workshops on advocacy for kids and adults.

"It was a very inspirational experience — people of different faiths and backgrounds coming together to work on rebuilding the city," said Paula Beugen, director of Avodah B'Yachad, Congregations in Community, sponsored by the Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas (JCRC).

"We are called to do important work at a critical time," said Rev. William Smith III, pastor of African Wellspring Mission Church and president of the Minneapolis Interdenominational Black Ministerial Alliance.



Children at the "Rebuild the City" event work on a mural.

"Our faith communities can bring us together," said Dr. Reatha Clark King, executive director of General Mills Foundation, a keynote speaker. She contrasted the nation's determination to put a man on the moon with "the way we approach social problems."

For information about what you and your synagogue can do to "Rebuild the City," contact Paula Beugen at the JCRC, 338-7816; Frank Hornstein at the Jewish Metropolitan Organizing Project, 374-0344; or Mike Anderson at MICA, 871-8980.

American Jewish World, 9-20-96

Working, creating together



BUZZ MAGNUSON/PIONEER PRESS

Muslims, Jews and Christians from throughout the Twin Cities gathered Sunday afternoon in south Minneapolis at Todos Los Santos/Salem Lutheran Church in a symbolic joining of hands to rebuild and revitalize urban neighborhoods. After the interfaith service, kids and parents painted an urban mural drawn by Salvadoran muralist Jorge Flores. Among those who added color to the mural were Krista Nelson and her son, Sam, 3, and Louis Luna and his son, Louis Jr., 4, of St. Louis Park.

Pioneer Press, 9-9-96

Washington County HRA OKs plan for rent subsidy

Families displaced by public housing get first chances

JIM BROEDE STAFF WRITER

For low-income families losing their public housing in Minneapolis, it's an opportunity to move to an affluent county.

The Washington County Housing and Redevelopment Authority decided Monday to tap \$6.9 million in federal money to provide over the next five years 60 rent-subsidized single family homes at scattered locations.

Families displaced by the demolition of public housing complexes in Minneapolis will be given first dibs on 42 of the homes.

When the authority unveiled the housing proposal last summer it drew opposition from several county residents. Some claimed public housing might bring trouble to a county where the median family income is \$52,000 a year.

"Anyone who follows the evening news," Stillwater retiree Bob Fritts declared at the time, "knows Minneapolis has a severe crime problem for which officials have no demonstrated workable solutions. The problems are centered in public housing where irresponsibility and illegitimacy breed youthful criminals and gang-related murders."

HRA officials, however, said people like Fritts speak only for a minuscule number of the county's residents.

That contention was buoyed at a meeting Monday of the HRA's board of directors, when testimony from the dozen or so people in the audience was totally in favor of rolling out the welcome mat for the Minneapolis families.

"Actually, I came to the meeting sitting on the fence," HRA board member Bill Buth said. "But after I heard all those peo-

HRA CONTINUED ON 6F ▶

HRA/County approves rent-subsidy plan

construction or acquisition and rehabilitation of existing properties. In Washington County, the plan is to obtain 12 existing single family homes annually for five years.

"Some of those homes may be in mortgage foreclosure and in need of rehabbing," HRA special projects manager Wes Butler said. "We're allowed to spend up to \$108,000 to acquire and rehab a 3-bedroom home."

HUD will provide operating monies for the housing for 40 years, including rent subsidies for families at or below 50 percent of the metro median income. No family will have to pay for rent more than 30 percent of its income.

where everyone should have access to affordable housing. It's reasonable that we should welcome low-income Minneapolis families to Washington County."

A lawsuit filed against several public agencies, including the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority, alleged that for 50 years the public housing programs in Minneapolis perpetuated racial segregation.

A settlement reached last year calls for razing 770 public housing units in Minneapolis and replacing most of them with public housing in the suburbs.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has allocated \$117 million for new Twin Cities area public housing projects, either in the form of new

▼ CONTINUED FROM 1F
ple speak for going ahead with this program, I couldn't do anything but vote for it."

The board's vote was 5-0 to proceed with the program.

Most who testified said it was the right thing to do, and an opportunity for the county to become more diverse.

David McCauley, a Woodbury resident and the executive director of the Minnesota Catholic Conference, said the issue has moral ramifications.

"Instead of looking at ourselves as living in a bunch of isolated communities," he said, "we have to think of ourselves as part of the much bigger metropolitan area,

St. Paul Pioneer Press
November 29, 1996

MICAH organized the local support for this meeting.
Rev. McCauley is MICAH's Vice-President.

METROPOLITAN INTERFAITH COUNCIL ON AFFORDABLE HOUSING

"Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8



MICAH'S RESPONSE TO THE HOUSING CRISIS

MICAH's mission is to *mobilize congregations and people of all faiths* to ensure decent, safe, and affordable housing for everyone in the metropolitan community. MICAH seeks to overcome the root causes of inadequate housing, homelessness and poverty by moving people from awareness to action and from charity to justice.

To accomplish this MICAH believes we must *think regionally, act locally, live faithfully*.

MICAH's uses a threefold strategy for mobilizing and organizing congregations:

AWARENESS - MICAH, through its educational programs, fosters dialogue between congregations and those most affected by the affordable housing crisis, explores root causes of poverty and homelessness, and educates congregations about housing issues.

*** The goal of MICAH's Education Program is to stimulate concrete actions by individuals and congregations by raising awareness of the housing crisis.**

MICAH educates congregations through congregational workshops and forums, conferences, urban dialogues, its City and Suburbs - Creating Common Ground initiative, MICAH Forums, study circles, newsletters, and updates.

ACTION - MICAH acts as a catalyst for involvement in housing production and human service projects by consulting with and advising congregations interested in doing "hands on" projects: renovating a home, working at an emergency shelter, developing a transitional housing program, working with a neighborhood community development corporation.

*** The goal of MICAH's Service/Development Program is to provide opportunities for congregations to take action to meet the housing needs of homeless and low-income people.**

Opportunities for involvement include the Community Partners Program and the Suburban Initiative.

ADVOCACY - MICAH's advocacy work brings the religious community's concern for justice to bear on public policy decisions related to homelessness, affordable housing, and neighborhood revitalization.

*** The goal of MICAH's Advocacy Program is to mobilize the religious community to advocate for policy changes that increase the availability of decent, safe, and affordable housing for people throughout the metropolitan region.**

MICAH helps congregations understand public policy and become active in the political process at the local, metro, state, and federal level through MICAH Forums, action alerts, and advocacy training. MICAH works with housing advocates and elected officials to expand housing choices and increase the supply of affordable housing.

Minnesota Church Center, Suite 320
122 West Franklin Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55404

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micah@mtn.org

MICAH'S MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

ADVOCACY

- * **Passed Livable Community Act:** Worked to pass legislation during the 1995 session which empowers the Met Council to work with suburban communities to create affordable housing.
- * **Defeated NIMBYies:** Mobilized local support to overcome opposition to affordable housing projects. The result was the creation of 42 units in Eagan, 20 units in White Bear Lake, as well as approval of units to be built in Minnetonka, Mahtomedi, and Washington County..
- * **Increased State Funding for Housing:** Working with the Right to Housing Campaign, helped secure a \$10.3 million increase in affordable housing appropriations for the 1998-1999 biennium.
- * **Built the Housing Advocate Network:** The network now has over 1,000 people committed to being active on local, regional, and state housing issues.
- * **Created Coalitions:** MICAH has helped form the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability (regional issues), the Education & Housing Equity Project (a collaborative between MICAH and the NAACP), and helped initiate local efforts in suburban Ramsey (NEMCAH), and Dakota County (PADAH) and the Hastings Housing Coalition.

DEVELOPMENT/SERVICE

- * **Homeless Family Support Program:** Since 1994, sixteen congregations have made a year-long commitment to work and provide rental assistance to homeless families.
- * **Family Shelter Network:** Since 1993, twenty-three congregations have been involved in providing emergency shelter when Ramsey County shelters are full. Over 3,700 bed-nights of shelter have been provided.
- * **Revolving Loan Fund:** Over 25 units of housing have been created through nine loans to organizations such as Exodus, North Minneapolis Lutheran Coalition, and Operation Roof. Fifteen congregations have become involved in volunteer efforts through these loans.
- * **Volunteer Participation:** Seventy of MICAH member congregations have been involved in housing related work. MICAH has been directly responsible for motivating the involvement of at least 50 congregations in collaborative housing development and service projects.

EDUCATION

- * **Cities and Suburbs - Creating Common Ground:** Conferences, workshops, MICAH Forums, Metro Stability Sabbaths, and study guide have helped shape the regional debate about poverty and suburban affordable housing. 2,000 copies of MICAH's study guide have been used and over 1,000 people have participated in educational efforts related to this initiative.
- * **Working Conferences on Affordable Housing:** These conferences designed to bring together diverse groups of people to develop collaborative strategies to create affordable suburban housing have involved over 500 people.

Choices for Community

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

6:30pm -- 7:00pm MICAH Annual Meeting

7:00pm -- 8:30pm Community Circle Dialogue

Purpose:

To engage congregations in dialogue about the pivotal role of affordable housing in our community, how it impacts employment, family life, children's education and community health.

To deepen the dialogue to include the faith perspective, building on commonly held scriptural teachings, such as the neighbor factor, the heart of God, and justice.

To showcase the paired congregations model and show congregations the benefits from connecting with other congregations.

To initiate 50 community circle dialogues among paired congregations.

To reach common ground leading to specific action steps.

Tentative Agenda

- 6:30 pm MICAHA Annual Meeting
 - 7:00 Welcome
Introduce speakers
 - 7:10 State of Housing address
 - 7:15 Faith challenge
 - 7:20 Introductions to the community circle dialogue
 - 7:25 Dialogue around the first question (housing)
 - 7:50 Dialogue around the second question (faith)
 - 8:15 Wrap up
- Therefore, MICAHA will continue to engage in activities and programs across the metropolitan region to dialogue about these issues.
- MICAHA will create an environment of energy and hope.
- MICAHA will facilitate creative community responses through advisory and services.
- MICAHA will continue to be financially viable.
- MICAHA will continue to work collaboratively with other agencies.



How to mobilize congregations to integrate their neighborhoods, throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan region

Whereas MICAHA's mission is to mobilize congregations of faith to ensure decent, safe and affordable housing for everyone in the metropolitan region; and

Whereas the Twin Cities metropolitan region is the most segregated metro region in the United States; and

Whereas most people of color (find number) live in the core cities; and

Whereas the median income of households in the core cities is 50% (?) that of the suburban areas; and

Whereas (?) % of jobs created in last 5 years were in suburban areas; and

Whereas the average wage paid in those newly created jobs was \$7.50; and

Whereas the average rent for 2BR unit in suburban areas is \$800 (?) which is affordable to workers receiving an hourly wage of \$; and

Whereas the vacancy rate for suburban areas is 2%; and

Whereas households with lower incomes and people of color moving to low poverty areas find themselves isolated and potential victims of discrimination; and

Whereas the health of a metropolitan region relates directly to the health of its core cities; and

Whereas...

Therefore, MICAHA will continue to engage individuals and congregations across the metropolitan region in dialogue about these issues;

MICAHA will create an environment of urgency and hope;

MICAHA will facilitate creative community responses (both advocacy and service);

MICAHA will continue to be financially viable;

MICAHA will continue to work collaboratively with other agencies.

How to mobilize organizations to integrate their neighborhoods throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan region

What is MICA's mission is to mobilize organizations of faith to ensure racial, safe and affordable housing for everyone in the metropolitan region and

What is the Twin Cities metropolitan region is the most segregated metro region in the United States, and

What is the most people of color (and number) live in the core city, and

What is the median income of households in the core city is 50% (N) that of the suburban area, and

What is (N) of jobs created in last 5 years were in suburban area, and

What is the average wage paid in those newly created jobs was \$X.XX, and

What is the average rent for 2BR unit in suburban area is \$800 (N) which is affordable to workers receiving an hourly wage of \$ Y and

What is the vacancy rate for suburban area is 2% and

What is household with lower income and people of color moving to low poverty areas (and therefore isolated and poor) versus of discrimination, and

What is the health of a metropolitan region relative directly to the health of its core city, and

Whereas...

Therefore, MICA will continue to engage individuals and congregations across the metropolitan region to dialogue about these issues:

MICA will create an environment of urgency and hope

MICA will facilitate creative community responses for its advocacy and services

MICA will continue to be financially viable

MICA will continue to work collaboratively with other agencies

What are expectations for suburban responses?
 Can MICAH expect to meet the goal of racial and economic inclusive communities without an inclusive staff/partners/workers? How can MICAH achieve this inclusivity?

Which groups are natural allies for this work because of cultural awareness?

- Multi-racial family association.
- Families with foreign born adoptive children.
- International students groups.
- Student exchange groups.
- Families enrolled in Immersion programs.

What would it take to pull off a massive media, billboard, psa, campaign?

Staffing? Big picture purpose (anniversary of event in history), follow-up, inauguration of something?

The Connections column serves as a way to link congregations with organizations actively engaged in providing housing or related services to low-income people

Park Ave. Church and Foundation look to neighborhood for direction

Stop by Park Avenue United Methodist Church in south Minneapolis on a Sunday morning, if only to watch congregants heading to worship: you'll witness an inter-racial gathering, here in a metropolitan region where so many institutions and structures reflect not only the practices of informal segregation but also outright racism.

Creating an inter-racial community doesn't just happen.

"We're very conscious of the racial divisions in our neighborhood as well as in our congregation," says Mark Horst, lead pastor. "We've tried to focus on racial reconciliation as one of the ministries of our congregation. Race isn't just an incidental issue here; it's part of our focus."

"We really believe the ministry of Christ is a ministry that enables us to deal with racial differences and the barriers that separate our society racially. Christian love doesn't simply blind us to race. It enables us to love one another in spite of significant differences and in spite of a history of hurt and hatred, pain and heartache that racism has caused in this country."

"Our neighborhood began to change racially 30 years ago," Horst explains. "There was a significant influx of African-American families. Now the neighborhood includes a lot of Hmong families. The church made an effort early on that we wanted to reflect the neighborhood. The doors were always open here. Our worship style and leadership within the church reflect this diversity. We're doing more than opening doors. We changed the way we operated, the way we worship, the musical styles we use, the way we organize ourselves, the kind of leaders we choose."

Horst, who is white, notes that he and Pastor Keith Johnson, who is black, rotate preaching each week.

The church's efforts to stay connected with and minister to the surrounding community extend to the work of the Park Avenue Foundation, formed in 1985.

The Foundation sponsors several programs focused on youth, family health, and adult and youth education.

"At the Foundation, we really want to be responsive to community needs," says Joy Skjegstad, the foundation's executive director. "We want to listen to our neighbors and be responsive to community challenges, rather than impose ourselves. Sometimes it's not as quick, but you end up with better solutions. People feel a sense of ownership."

The Park Avenue Urban Summer program offers 30 different summer activities for youth. The Park Avenue/St. Mary's Clinic offers free health care to the uninsured or underinsured. The Park Avenue Computer Learning Center offers training, tutoring and learning opportunities for both children and adults. Along with Christ's Children, Park Avenue sponsors SIMBA, a mentoring program for young African American men.

Programs focus on building relationships, Skjegstad points out. The Foundation draws on some 350 volunteers, most from the church, to support programs serving 3,500—4,000 people yearly.

To get involved in the community work of the Park Avenue Foundation, call 822-3755.

MICAH Newsletter

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: LaDonna Hoy

Just a stone's throw from the fashionable shops along Lake Street in downtown Wayzata, a food shelf, clothes closet and other emergency services can be found at the modest offices of Interfaith Outreach and Community Partners (IOCP). "We offer a full spectrum of emergency services," says executive director LaDonna Hoy. The agency offers financial assistance with housing, medical expenses and car repairs. It provides pro bono legal and tax preparation services. Case management services aim to help individuals and families move "from crisis to real choices to change."

Nine west suburban churches came together in 1979 to launch the agency, which initially operated as a 100 per cent volunteer effort. Hoy, executive director since 1989, helped to found the agency as part of her work as director of pastoral ministry for St. Bartholomew's Church in Wayzata.

"We recognized early on that the lack of affordable housing was one of the most destabilizing problems that the families we were seeing struggled with," Hoy says. "It was very hard to get any families to work with us on a life improvement plan if they didn't know if they would have a roof over their heads."

IOCP's broad approach to housing encompasses a number of programs, from emergency cash to home-buyer assistance to advocacy. LaDonna Hoy helped present testimony at public hearings and met with legislators to secure support for the Livable Communities Act.

"It's taken time to build the relationships and awareness," Hoy says. "The Liveable Communities Act has given impetus to cities to get involved. The time is ripe."

As the Livable Communities Act emphasizes partnerships, IOCP is also promoting other new sorts of partnerships. At Lakeview Commons, a large apartment complex in Plymouth, IOCP, the schools, the Y, the city's park and rec department and others all are working with management and tenants to address the needs of families living there.

"We have to look holistically at what's keeping families stuck," Hoy said. Key barriers to family life include lack of affordable housing, lack of affordable childcare, lack of transportation, lack of living wage jobs. "We call them 'The Unholy Trinity Plus One,'" Hoy jokes.

Hoy, 62, grew up in Chicago. She moved to the Twin Cities in 1961. She and her husband Tom, who worked at Courage Center, raised nine children. Her community involvement began as a volunteer at St. Bartholomew's. She became coordinator of religious education programs and also served on the parish board of education. The parish's move to lay ministry led in turn to her current work at IOCP.

Hoy's grown children include a licensed social worker, a psychologist, two nurses, and a teacher. "Believe me," Hoy says, "I consult with those kids a lot!"

For more information, contact Interfaith Outreach and Community Partners @ 473-2436.

WHO WE ARE:

MICAH is a coalition of more than 100 Protestant, Catholic and Jewish congregations and housing organizations dedicated to the vision that everyone in our community should have a decent, safe and affordable place to live. To accomplish this goal, we must "think regionally, act locally, and live faithfully."

WHY WE ARE HERE:

■MICAH's mission is to move congregations and people of faith from awareness to action and from charity to justice in response to the housing crisis.

■MICAH educates congregations about the housing crisis through forums, seminars, Urban Dialogues, and the production of educational materials.

■MICAH acts as a catalyst for promoting congregational involvement in housing production and human services projects.

■MICAH advocates for policies that promote affordable housing at the national, state, metro and local levels.

For more information, call 612-871-8980.

MICAH President
Rabbi Harold Kravitz
Executive Director
Mike Anderson
Newsletter

Steve Share/Community Media Services



METROPOLITAN INTERFAITH COUNCIL
on AFFORDABLE HOUSING
Minnesota Church Center, Suite 320
122 W. Franklin Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55404

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MICAH Annual Meeting, September 8, 2:00 p.m., Todos Los Santos and Salem Lutheran Church (Chapel), West 28th St. and Lyndale Ave. So. FFI: 871-8980.

"Rebuild the City, Revive the Common Good," An Interfaith Celebration of Commitment and Action. September 8, 3:00-6:00 p.m. Todos Los Santos and Salem Lutheran Church, West 28th St. and Lyndale Ave. So., Minneapolis. *See inside story for details.*

Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless, Provider Associate Forum, September 13, 12 noon to 3 p.m., Minnesota Church Center, 122 W. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis. A Roundtable Discussion will be held on "Homelessness as a Problem of Resettlement." Registration fee: \$10 (free for provider associates). FFI: 870-7073.

"Economic Justice for All? A Decade After the Economics Pastoral: The Progress and the Challenge," Saturday, October 26, 9:00 a.m.— 2:00 p.m. Guardian Angels Parish, 8260 Hudson Blvd., Lake Elmo. Workshops, panel, keynote speaker John Carr, Secretary-Director Social Development and World Peace, U.S. Catholic Conference. Fee: \$20 includes lunch. FFI: 291-4477.

"Metropolitan Jobs Summit: Asking the Questions, Shaping the Answers," Saturday, November 9, 8:30 a.m. — 4:30 p.m. *Location to be announced.* Workshops, speakers, action on issues. Co-sponsored by St. Paul Area Ecumenical Alliance of Congregations, St. Paul Area Synod of Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Office for Social Justice of the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis. Fee: \$10 donation requested for lunch. FFI: 644-0233.

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* * *

**Cities and Suburbs --
Creating Common Ground**

* * *

METROPOLITAN INTERFAITH COUNCIL on AFFORDABLE HOUSING

"Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with your God."

Micah 6:8



Study Circle

Purpose

The Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing (MICAHA) is committed to motivating the religious community to address the issues of homelessness and lack of affordable housing. MICAHA pursues its mission by educating congregations about affordable housing issues, motivating congregations to get involved in hands-on housing projects, and training people of faith for political advocacy.

MICAHA believes that it is important for citizens to learn about housing issues, debate alternative solutions, and participate in the development of public policy. This Study Circle is designed to assist citizens in accomplishing this goal.

The material presented here is meant to be a starting point for discussion within our congregations, our neighborhoods, our city and our region. The Study Circle is not intended to provide a comprehensive discussion of all the issues involved. Rather, MICAHA has chosen specific facets of the issues to highlight the social values and moral choices inherent in the debate.

This Study Circle is intended to challenge participants to examine their own beliefs and values, and to debate proposed solutions with others in their group.

Organizing a Study Circle

This curriculum is designed to be used by discussion groups over a period of four or more weeks. The discussions are facilitated by a member of the group. A Facilitator's Guide is available to assist with this task.

Each session should be considered a starting point for more in-depth discussion. In order to assure a healthy exchange of ideas and the participation of all members, study circles should have between 5 and 20 participants.

Each session lasts approximately one hour and is directed by a well-prepared study circle leader whose role is to aid in a lively but focused discussion. A successful leader will encourage participants to freely express their thoughts, draw out the values and beliefs behind opinions, and ensure that all viewpoints are fairly considered.

A study circle is small-group democracy in action; all viewpoints are taken seriously and each participant has an equal opportunity to contribute.

At the conclusion of the Study Circle, consider what action your group, congregation, or neighborhood might take. In what way will you go beyond the education and debate that occurred?

Please call MICAHA to receive the Facilitator's Guide as well as additional copies of the Study Circle curriculum.

Funding for the Study Circle project was provided by Community Action for Suburban Hennepin.

Questions or comments about the Study Circle should be directed to:
Karen Kingsley, MICAHA, 122 West Franklin Avenue, Suite 320, Minneapolis, MN 55404 (612) 871-8980

"Essential individual service and private charity are not substitutes for public justice, or enough alone to right what's wrong with America. Collective mobilization and political action are also necessary to move our nation forward in the quest for fairness and opportunity for every American."

Marion Wright Edelman

Introduction

Creating Common Ground

Where and how people live is fundamental to how we define ourselves as individuals and as communities.

And where and how people live in the Twin Cities is increasingly divided along race and economic lines.

Housing policy plays an important role in creating and sustaining these divisions. Thus any alteration in housing policy can have a significant effect on where people live, work, go to school and worship for many years to come.

During the 1993 legislative session, Rep. Myron Orfield introduced legislation that would have required suburban communities to provide their "fair share" of housing.

This legislation was prompted, in part, by the belief that concentrations of poverty in inner cities exacerbate the problems associated with poverty. Therefore, the argument goes, dispersing poverty by providing greater housing choice for low-income people will ease the Twin Cities' growing social problems.

Although the legislation was vetoed by Governor Carlson, the debate on how to confront the growing problems of poverty, racism, crime, and affordable housing has continued.

This Study Circle is designed to help congregations and community organizations debate this issue and generate new ideas on how to solve the problems that confront the Twin Cities.

A central focus of this Study Circle is the concept of "community" -- both as an ideal and as reality.

We proceed from the underlying belief that to be human is to live in community, to be interdependent with our neighbors. As humans, we belong to a variety of communities -- which all help to define who we are.

Each community to which we belong has an explicit or implicit set of rules or mutual expectations. These rules--or covenants--guide how we live together. Citizens have an important role to play in defining -- and redefining -- these covenants.

This Study Circle will assist groups in examining the concept of community,

learning more about housing and poverty in the Twin Cities, debating legislative proposals that address these issues, and developing a plan of action for themselves and their congregation or organization.

"I believe that restoring a healthy commitment to the common good is one of the most significant social tasks of our time."

*Most Reverend John R. Roach,
Archbishop of St. Paul and Mpls.*

Defining Community

Community. This word has different meanings for each of us -- yet it is also the tie that binds us together.

In the legislative debates on affordable housing people are really arguing about community -- how to define it and how to make our "community" a healthy, safe place to live.

But before we can determine how to improve the quality of life in the Twin Cities community, we need to define for ourselves what community means.

The following excerpts provide a starting point for reflecting on the meaning of community.

In their book *For the Common Good* Herman Daly and John Cobb lay out the issue this way:

"People are constituted by their relationships. We come into being in and through relationships and have no being apart from them.

Our dependence on others is not simply for goods and services. How we think and feel, what we want and dislike, our aspirations and fears--in short, who we are--all come into being socially.

To say this does not deny that every person is something more than simply a social product. People also have some freedom to constitute themselves. Personal responsibility is based on that freedom.

[But] ... it is the quality of those relationships that makes real freedom possible. We are not only members of societies, but what more we are depends on the character of these societies. The social character of human existence is primary."

The Judeo-Christian faith tradition also points to the importance of community, as this commentary by Reverend Lawrence Pray suggests:

God is not the author of chaos. God does not call us to live in isolation. God does not ask us to abandon our

neighbors.

Instead Bible story after Bible story points to harmony, community and a sense of responsibility.

In the first letter to the Corinthians, Paul explains:

The body is one and has many members, but all the members, many though they are, are one body; and so it is with Christ. It is in one Spirit that all of us, whether Jew or Greek, slave or free, were baptized into one body... If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members share its joy. You, then, are the body of Christ. Every one of you is a member of it. (1 Cor 12:12-27)

Questions for Discussion

1. Do you agree with Daly and Cobb that "we come into being through relationships?"
2. Name some of the communities to which you belong. Describe the people--age, race, income, etc. who make up those communities.
3. When asked where you live, to what community do you refer?
4. What are the rules/expectations that govern those communities (both implicit and explicit)? Are the rules of your different communities ever in conflict?
5. Regarding the article by Susan Berkson on following page, do you agree with her decision to move to the suburbs? Why or why not? Try to relate her story to your own experience.

Exercise

Think of this study circle as your "community." What characteristics tie you together as a community? What expectations do you have of each other as members of a community?

We must learn to look beyond that which would hinder us to see the hope that is before us. This is the road to common ground.

Rev. Art Tredwell

Moving to the suburbs, but standing by the city

It is not a crime but I feel like a criminal.

I'm despised by many, hated by some, laughed at by others. I'm the same person I was a month ago. Still, all of a sudden, I've become a pariah.

I'm not alone. You in Bloomington. All of you in Eden Prairie. Every single citizen of Plymouth. We're in this together. There are over a million of us, all ages, races, religions, political philosophies. Still we are stereotyped beyond belief.

I confess, I was guilty, too. I pronounced Edina with a sneer. I called Golden Valley "the country." And Minnetonka -- well, the name says it all.

I scorned the suburbs and the people who lived there.

Now I am one of them. I moved to a suburb. I tried to keep it secret, but the secret came out. I know what you city folks are thinking: Oh, she's rich. She's a coward. She's abandoning the city. She has no social conscience. She sold out. And when I tell you what suburb, you'll think: Aha! She's living on a lake. She's living in a mansion. She's a WASP. She's a Yuppie. She's a snob. She's rich. She wears Topsiders. She's blond.

None of this is true. Despite the fact that I moved to Minnetonka (I whisper it because of the assumptions that accompany it), I am neither rich, blond, WASP, Yuppie, snobbish or without social conscience. I do not live in a mansion. I do not live on a lake. And I do not wear Topsiders.

I am half of a middle-middle-class couple who dreamed of a house with an attached garage. Other people dream of fame and fortune. I dreamed of an attached garage, as did the other half of the couple, which meant we had to have an attached two-car garage.

The other half of the couple also yearned for a postwar (as in Grenada) house. Try finding that in the city at a price you can afford on a



Susan J. Berkson

block that's not in a flight path, and you begin to see the problem. In addition, we wanted to live somewhere in whose future we had full confidence -- and the sad fact is that both of us had lost two inches of confidence in the central city and its schools.

We cautiously and rather sadly started thinking about suburbs; stable, close-in, first-ring suburbs, which would allow us to say we lived in Minneapolis without stretching the truth too far. These are what the Metropolitan Council calls Fully Developed Areas. We looked in Edina. We looked in St. Louis Park. Again, we found that houses with attached two-car garages were few and expensive. The garage was nonnegotiable. Both of us had spent too many winters in Minnesota digging, scraping, brushing and praying.

The further west we went, the more forlorn I felt. Still, it was in Minnetonka, what the Met Council calls a Developing Suburb, that we finally found a lovely, modern house we could afford with the requisite attached garage. Along with the garage, we got three bedrooms, two baths, a fireplace, a washer, a dryer, a dishwasher, a Magic Chef stove, a deck, a shed, gardens, a top-rated school system, neighbors who brought us cookies, and lower taxes than in the city.

We have not abandoned the city. We recognize that we are inextricably linked to it. Any suburb that thinks it is an island is mistaken. The central city is key to the health of the entire region. When businesses think of coming to the metro area, they look at the central city. Many suburbanites work in the city. The most important cultural institutions are in the central city. Without the city, there would be no suburbs.

And if central cities decline, it is the suburbs, especially those in what state Rep. Myron Orfield calls "the Fertile Crescent," that will end up paying the bulk of the tab for state-supported institutions and programs to respond to the concentrated poverty left in the core.

You in Bloomington. All of you in Eden Prairie. Every single citizen of Plymouth. We're in this together. Our houses may be in the suburbs. Our home remains Minneapolis.

Susan J. Berkson, of Minnetonka, is a writer and broadcast commentator.

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The Twin Cities--A Snapshot

Every year when the list of America's most livable cities is published, the Twin Cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis are high on the list.

By the standards used to judge major metropolitan areas--job growth, access to parks and recreation, low crime rates, good schools and social services--Minneapolis and St. Paul are superior to many other cities.

The conclusion? The Twin Cities are still a wonderful place to live. Yet we too are not immune from the social problems of growing poverty and crime, racism, and homelessness that plague other cities.

Homelessness

The number of homeless families in both Minneapolis and St. Paul has grown (and continues to grow) at a staggering rate.

Hennepin County emergency shelters, which had prepared for a 30 percent increase over 1992, were deluged with homeless families in August and September 1993.

- An average of more than 1200 people per night stayed in emergency shelter in Minneapolis during August 1993.
- For the first time, homeless people in families outnumbered homeless individuals in the shelters -- reaching a high of 578 homeless family members on August 29.

In St. Paul, the absolute numbers of homeless people are lower, but the problem is growing there as well.

- During 1992, 2,697 family members (including 1,874 children) stayed in emergency shelters in St. Paul, a 60% increase over 1991. During the same period,

the number of homeless single adults remained fairly constant.

The fact is that both Hennepin and Ramsey County do not have enough shelter beds to shelter the high numbers of homeless families in the summer.

Affordable Housing

In addition to the growth in homelessness, the Twin Cities are experiencing a growing crisis in the lack of affordable housing, especially for low-income families.

A 1992 report by the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities documented the need for safe, decent, affordable housing in the Twin Cities.

According to that study, based on data from the 1989 American Housing Survey--

- Over 37,000 households in the Twin Cities metropolitan area spend more than 50 percent of their income on housing. (The federal government considers 30 percent to be affordable.)

- What's more, the percent of poor households in the Twin Cities paying excessive amounts for housing is greater than the national average (59 percent compared to 51 percent).

Such high housing costs leave poor families with little income for additional expenses and at risk of becoming homeless.

Communities of Color

African Americans and other communities of color are particularly affected by high housing costs because people of color are more likely to be poor.

Increasingly, the Twin Cities is becoming more diverse both economically and racially.

- Between 1980 and 1990, the combined population of communities of color in the Twin Cities metro area nearly doubled.

- The increase was particularly high among African Americans and Asians, which grew by 79 percent and 167 percent respectively.

Although the number of people of color living in the suburbs has grown substantially, it is still true that most whites in the Twin Cities metro area live in the suburbs and most people of color live in the central cities.

- Thus, while the Twin Cities (including the central cities) remain predominantly white, only 25 percent of whites (513,681 people) live in the central cities while 76 percent of African Americans do (67,988).

Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton studied racial segregation in U.S. cities in their book *American Apartheid* (pp. 130-132). They argue that racial segregation plays an essential role in the perpetuation of an urban underclass.

"Poverty, of course, is not a neutral social factor. Associated with it are a variety of other social ills such as family instability, welfare dependency, crime, housing abandonment, and low educational achievement. To the extent that these factors are associated with poverty, any structural process that concentrates poverty will concentrate them as well. Segregation, interacting with high or rising poverty rates, guarantees that blacks will face a harsh and uniquely disadvantaged social environment, no matter what their personal characteristics.

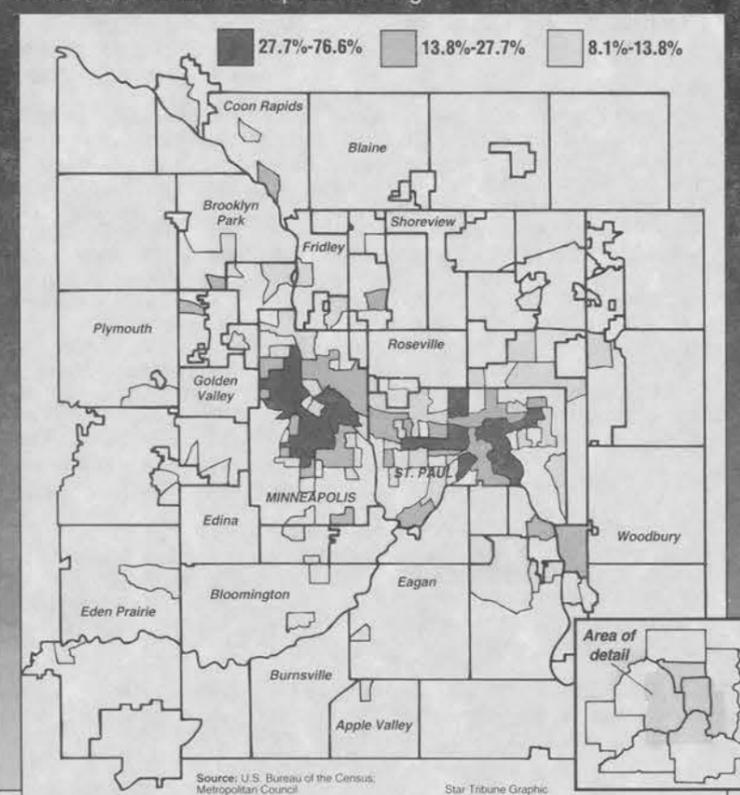
Segregation, moreover, is crucial to understanding why a self-perpetuating spiral of neighborhood decline is built into urban black communities. ... [The spiral begins when] a few owners and landlords [with lower incomes than the former occupants of the neighborhood] decide to spend less money on the maintenance of their properties. Soon their buildings begin to show signs of disinvestment in the form of physical disrepair: peeling paint, rotting gutters, unkept yards, crumbling porches, and so on.

... The presence of even a small number of dilapidated buildings is taken as a signal that the neighborhood is going "downhill." To the extent that property owners perceive a decline as possible or likely, they have little incentive to invest in upkeep and improvement on their own buildings, because money put into neighborhoods that are declining is unlikely to be recouped in the form of higher rents or greater home equity.

As a result of the initial disinvestment by a few owners, therefore, others are led to cut back on the money they invest. With every additional property owner who decides not to invest, it becomes increasingly likely that others will reach similar decisions, even if they are otherwise disposed to maintain their buildings.... Racial segregation makes neighborhoods where blacks live particularly vulnerable to this sort of disinvestment and decay. Poor blacks are more likely... to be trapped in [these] neighborhoods, because segregation acts to concentrate poverty and all things associated with it.

Where poverty is hitting hardest

Percent of persons below poverty level, 1989
Census tracts above metropolitan average



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Metropolitan Council
Star Tribune Graphic

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"Judaism involves not only a relationship with God, but with the entire community, requiring that the individual [not only] be responsive to the commandments of God, but responsible for the welfare of people everywhere."

Jerold C. Hoffberger

Poverty

According to the 1990 Census, only 8 percent of the population in the seven-county metropolitan area is poor.

Yet when we look at the poverty rate by geographic area or race, the picture changes.

- The poverty rate in Minneapolis is 18.5%; in St. Paul it's 16.7%; while in the suburbs the rate is only 4.5%.

- Among African Americans, the poverty rate in the seven-county area is a staggering 37 percent, more than six times the rate for whites (5.8%).

- For American Indians, Asians, and Chicano/Latinos, the rates are 40%, 32% and 19% respectively.

- The highest poverty rate on a city-wide basis is among Asians in St. Paul at 60%.

Poverty among children increased even more rapidly than among the general population.

- Between 1979 and 1989, there was an

almost 4 percent increase metro-wide in the number of children in poverty compared to a 1.4 percent increase in poverty in the general population.

Subsidized Housing and Poverty Rates in Selected Communities

City	% of subsidized housing units	poverty rate (%)
St. Paul	9.8	16.7
Minneapolis	8.5	18.5
Brooklyn Center	5.3	7.1
Oakdale	4.4	5.8
White Bear Lake	2.8	3.9
Apple Valley	1.5	3.5
Woodbury	0.6	2.5
Maple Grove	0.4	2.3

Source: Met Council, 1990 Census data

Hidden Poverty in the Suburbs

Poverty in suburban communities is often more difficult to see. Yet, poverty does exist in the suburbs and it is growing -- in some communities dramatically.

- Over 73,000 people in the Twin Cities suburbs live in poverty.

Stigma is perhaps the most defining characteristic of suburban poverty. Many low-income residents struggle to sustain their families while taking pride in maintaining appearances.

Section 8 apartment complexes and Section 8 renters with certificates are scattered throughout the suburbs. (Section 8 is a federally funded program that pays the difference between the actual rent and 30% of the renters' income.)

Many more residents, however, struggle with high rents in apartments or mortgages in older single family homes.

Metropolitan Areas in the U.S. -- Ranked by Income Disparity Between Central Cities and Surrounding Suburbs

The higher the index number on the far right, the larger the income differences between residents of poorer cities and wealthier suburbs. A score of 100 means that the city has its fair share of the poor people in the entire metropolitan area. A score of more than 100 means the city has more than its fair share; less than 100, the city has less than its fair share of poor people. (Source: *Cities Without Suburbs* by David Rusk.)

Central City	% metro area in poverty	% of city in poverty	Metro income change in 1980s	Fair Share of metro-wide poverty
Miami	17.9	15.3	+24.5	85%
New York	17.5	19.3	-5.1	110
Seattle	7.6	12.4	+2.7	163
Chicago	12.4	21.6	-2.2	174
Milwaukee	11.6	22.2	-12.7	191
Minneapolis St. Paul	8.1	18.5 16.7	-7.3	228 206
Detroit	12.9	32.4	-13.7	251
Wash., DC	6.4	16.9	-0.6	264
Atlanta	10.0	27.3	+7.0	273

Reforms can combat metro polarization

Myron Orfield

As in larger metropolitan areas a generation ago, middle-class flight and economic decline is accelerating in the core cities and first-ring suburbs of this metropolitan area.

As this occurs, certain Twin Cities outer-ring suburbs, with exclusive housing markets, dominate regional economic growth and job creation. This growing polarization along community housing market lines does several things:

- It concentrates poverty in core communities.
- It places jobs and economic opportunity beyond the reach of those who most need them.
- It moves resources, in the form of property tax base, from communities where social needs are increasing to those where they are declining.
- It deepens political polarization, making solutions to metropolitan social and economic problems more difficult.

Between 1980 and 1993, children receiving free and reduced-cost lunch in the Minneapolis public schools increased from 38 percent to 54 percent of enrollment, and the percentage of minority children rose from 31 percent to 57 percent. St. Paul experienced similar changes.

In the poorest 20 core census tracts of the Twin Cities, the poverty rate grew from 32 percent in 1969 to 49 percent in 1989. During the 1980s, 38 additional tracts reached poverty levels of more than 25 percent.

The residential concentration of poverty creates social consequences far greater than the sum of its parts. Physical separation from jobs, lack of middle-

class role models and dependency on a dysfunctional system reinforce social isolation and weaken work skills.

Much like the explosion in crime in isolated Chicago ghettos reported by William Julius Wilson in his classic work, "The Truly Disadvantaged," violent crime has increased dramatically and disproportionately in the poorest Twin Cities neighborhoods.

Ironically, as social demands increase, vital human and financial resources necessary to address these problems disappear. As the middle class flees poverty in schools and neighborhoods, businesses become disadvantaged by the concentration effects of poverty (crime, physical decline and loss of property value) and other issues.

One of the few northern U.S. metropolitan economies that created manufacturing employment during the 1980s, Minneapolis and St. Paul together lost more than 20 percent of their manufacturing jobs in a single decade.

During the 1980s, the largest flight of middle-class families in the nation did not occur in central cities, but in the inner-ring suburbs of Chicago and Atlanta. Similarly, in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, growing concentrations of poverty and economic instability moved into working-class inner-ring suburbs, particularly those north of Minneapolis and south of St. Paul.

Like the inner suburbs of older metropolitan areas, the long-term prospects of Twin Cities working-class suburban communities are bleaker than the cities they surround. Working-class suburbs lack the central city's elite neighborhoods, parks, social service entertainment amenities and well-developed social service systems that respond to growing instability. They have uncertain tax bases, generally without a significant commercial-industrial component upon

which to levy, when faced with increasing social needs.

By 1991, Fridley, Brooklyn Center, Columbia Heights, Roseville, Inver Grove Heights, Richfield, South St. Paul, North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale and Spring Lake Park had from 15 percent to 30 percent of their students receiving free lunch. These communities were gaining poor and minority students as a percentage of enrollment at a faster rate than were the central cities. Inner-ring suburbs such as Hopkins, Columbia Heights, Golden Valley, Richfield and Fridley had far larger proportional job losses than the central cities.

As core American metropolitan communities weaken, certain outer-ring suburbs experience large middle-class immigration and burgeoning economic growth. Similarly, in the Twin Cities, more than half of the new metropolitan jobs created in the 1980s were in southwestern outer-ring suburbs that comprise 25 percent of the region's population. Most of these jobs were entry-level and many went unfilled because of the lack of a local work force.

These suburbs, which are sometimes referred to as the "Fertile Crescent," experienced a greater than 200 percent increase in commercial-industrial valuations over the decade. To illustrate the economic strength of the southwestern suburbs, Eden Prairie and Minnetonka together had the same commercial-industrial tax base as St. Paul (\$1.5 billion), yet have only one-third as many residents and, unlike St. Paul, virtually no poor people.

Fertile Crescent communities use their economic power and local authority to restrict the access of potential moderate- and low-income residents. Through exclusive housing markets, these communities welcome throngs of middle- and upper-income migrants from core communities, but restrict the access of the

less fortunate. Hence, while the percentage of poor children soared in working-class core communities, southwestern cities such as Eden Prairie, Plymouth, Shakopee, Savage, Rosemount and Lakeville actually had a smaller percentage of poor children at the end of the decade than at the beginning. Making matters worse, when divorce or old age reduces household income, Fertile Crescent housing markets actually squeeze their own people into less-affluent core communities.

As the physical and economic separation increases, so does the political polarization. As an example, each year the Minnesota Children's Defense Fund rates legislators on their willingness to support the issues of children, particularly poor children. During the last session, representatives of central-city and working-class suburban districts in the Minnesota House on average scored over 80 percent on the Defense Fund scorecard. Those representing the Fertile Crescent suburbs scored an average of 20 percent.

In the end, a series of significant metropolitan-based reforms are necessary to redress the growing social and economic polarization of the Twin Cities and prepare the region to compete successfully in the global economy of the 1990s. Among the most important is fair housing legislation that will open up southwestern suburbs to a greater variety of housing choices.

Such legislation would do the following:

- Connect unemployed workers living in the central cities and inner suburbs with unfilled entry-level jobs in communities without a sufficient local work force.

- Help old people, young divorced mothers and others experiencing economic changes to remain in their communities.

- Break up concentrated poverty and trends toward the social and economic polarization of the metropolitan economy.

Properly executed, fair housing legislation will also allow the construction industry to respond profitably to a pent-up demand for market-rate affordable housing in job-rich suburbs and reduce freeway congestion by allowing people to live closer to work.

Myron Orfield, DFL-Minneapolis, is a member of the Minnesota House of Representatives.

Session Three

Policy Alternatives

In considering what to do about the problems of growing poverty, homelessness, and lack of affordable housing, four main solutions are proposed. In the editorials that follow, some of these positions are described in more detail.

Position One: Invest in the Cities

This position advocates that to solve poverty requires an investment of economic development resources in the inner city. Poor people who live in the city need help to develop businesses that can create new jobs and a new sense of ownership in the community.

Proponents argue that instead of targeting suburban communities, metropolitan and state government should invest the bulk of their resources in rebuilding inner city communities. According to this position, moving poor people to the suburbs does not do enough to solve the underlying problems of unemployment, lack of education, and limited opportunities.

Position Two: Fair Share

A second position argues that to confront poverty and the social problems associated with it, we need to disperse concentrations of poverty.

The argument is based on the assumption that poverty alone is not responsible for social problems but that concentrations of poverty breed social problems.

Requiring suburban communities to supply their "fair share" of low and moderate

income housing helps to disperse poverty by providing greater options to poor people about where they live.

Providing housing choice for low-income people means they can choose to live closer to

employment opportunities, many of which are being added in the suburbs.

This position goes on to argue that government, particularly metropolitan-wide government, is best suited to determine whether each community has contributed its fair share toward resolving housing and poverty problems.

Position Three: Mobility

A third position argues that what poor people in the inner city really need is access to jobs that pay a living wage. Therefore, it is necessary to invest government resources in building reliable and cost-effective transportation system that connect unemployed people with jobs.

In turn, proponents argue, low-income people and people of color will move to the suburbs once they have achieved economic stability through their jobs. A related position argues that racial integration will more likely be achieved through diversity in the workplace than in housing-related options.

Position Four: Big Government is Bad Government

A fourth position advocates that local, decentralized government is best suited to respond to the needs of citizens. Metropolitan government or state-wide initiatives interfere with the right of local government to determine where and how people live in their community.

This position goes on to state that the central cities are responsible for meeting the needs of their citizens, and that suburban communities (while they are responsible for providing for their own citizens) should not be required to provide services --or pay for services-- for people in the inner city.

A related argument states that it is not the role of government, but rather that of the individual, to solve poverty and the problems associated with it.

Questions for Discussion

1. What do you think are the most significant problems facing your immediate community? the broader metropolitan community?

2. Looking at the demographics and the charts, is there anything that surprises you?

3. Would you say the Twin Cities is racially segregated? Do you think it is becoming more or less segregated? Is your neighborhood racially segregated? economically segregated?

4. How does the data about poverty, housing and communities of color relate to your neighborhood? Does your own experience confirm the statistics?

5. Is there a difference between suburban and urban poverty? What are the differences?

Many must share responsibility for Twin Cities' future

By Oliver E. Byrum

The media present a lot of stories about Twin Cities social and economic problems: stories about crime, drugs, gangs, unemployment, poverty, school failure and other problems facing us and communities across the nation. These stories are about conditions that destroy lives, that threaten the Twin Cities' economic competitiveness and erode our communities.

However, the Twin Cities do not have to follow the paths of other metropolitan areas. The trends are complex and powerful, but they can be understood and are not inevitable. We have the leadership, brainpower and persistence to do better, but we must recognize that our social problems are also issues of metropolitan development. While Minneapolis, St. Paul and some suburbs struggle with these issues, lasting progress depends upon all communities sharing responsibility for a common future.

Most Minneapolis neighborhoods are great places to live. Minneapolis has successful initiatives for neighborhood revitalization, community policing, crime prevention, early education and learning centers and public health. We can be proud of our new initiative against racism, AAA credit rating, employment training, job-intensive economic development, housing rehabilitation and park programs.

However, city governments neither cause nor can change all the forces that create "big-city problems." Around the country, these conditions occur in all political situations: Republican, Democrat and nonpartisan; in cities with all forms of city government; in well-managed cities and poorly managed ones; in cities with white majorities and cities with non-white majorities.

The causes for "big-city problems" in central cities, and the reasons that metropolitan areas are divided into "have" and "have-not" neighborhoods, can be found at the intersection of the national economy, national tax policy, the metropolitan housing market and development and housing policies. These forces are beyond the power of cities alone to reverse.

In our economic system some people do very well, most do OK and an increasing number do very poorly. We end up sorted into economic classes. Some end up with low incomes or in poverty. There are clear disparities by race and gender in who ends up poor.

The resulting income distribution determines choices in the metropolitan housing market. Market dynamics then combine with national, state and metropolitan policies to bring about geographic division by income

and race. People who have little income are concentrated in older housing, generally near the center of the metropolitan area. Those with more income are encouraged by markets and public policy to move away.

After the economy separates us by income, and the housing market isolates us by geography, decline begins in some areas. Not only poor people are concentrated in some central-city and first-ring suburban neighborhoods, but the troubled, the troublesome and the criminal tend to concentrate in the same places. This is also encouraged by public policy.

Underemployment increases, even though most people are working; rents and values become too low to support housing maintenance, and basic neighborhood services deteriorate. People become increasingly isolated from social and economic opportunities. Some lose faith in the ability of institutions to work for them. Poverty generates poverty; despair generates despair.

Alarmist and shallow journalism and advertising (including the Star Tribune's promotion of the "Strengthening the Core" series), "everyday" real estate practices and racial attitudes feed decline.

Disconnection, isolation and division are reinforced by thousands of individual, group and public decisions. Transportation projects encourage outward expansion of residential development. Jobs follow. Local governments implement zoning and development practices that restrict housing choices and keep people from following the jobs. Churches leave neighborhoods or split into suburban and inner-city

congregations. And most of us dissociate from the problem as if we had no part in the process and abdicate any responsibility for change.

Many solutions are recommended — education, prisons, drug treatment, light-rail transit, job training. All are related, but the "panacea of the year" approach will not work. The complexity of our situation requires a multifaceted and long-term strategy that slows, stops and reverses decline and gradually puts us back together.

■ First, we need an aggressive, collaborative metropolitan strategy to reduce poverty. Conservatives and liberals generally agree that the permanent way out of poverty is employment or entrepreneurial opportunities that pay at least enough to support a family.

Improvement requires an economy that produces the needed jobs, individuals prepared to work with education and skills and adequate wage levels. The city of Minneapolis, the Greater Minneapolis Chamber of Commerce, Hennepin County and suburban communities, with McKnight Foundation funding, are now examining why we are failing on all three counts and will develop a strategy for improvement. This should become a metropolitan and state strategy.

■ Second, we need metropolitanwide choice in housing location for everyone. Our present housing policies are based on worn-out assumptions that have effectively become our metropolitan housing policy. One assumption is that when more low-income housing is needed, it should be provided primarily by devaluing neighborhoods in central cities and older suburbs.

Another premise is that low-income people, particularly minorities, should not live in developing suburb locations in any significant numbers.

A third assumption is that suburban communities have the right to use public powers, primarily development regulations, to deny a basic principle of democracy — people's right to choose where to live. At the simplest level, any municipality that does not permit construction of high-

density and rental units is violating democratic and free-market principles and being discriminatory. To achieve a new, choice-based approach to housing, we must set aside, by legislation or judicial process, zoning and development restrictions that go beyond basic constitutional principles and are intended to socially engineer white upper-income communities. We must expect local governments to put as much effort into rental and low-income housing as they put into high-income housing.

We also need a financing program to help developers and building owners provide housing for very low-income people, particularly in areas where new jobs are developing. This should be a relatively small amount, perhaps \$50 million per year, as compared to the approximately \$500 million per year that Twin Cities homeowners receive in federal and state income tax savings through their mortgage interest deductions.

These proposals are not about telling people where to live or about "spreading the problem around." Rather, they are about not using government to keep people out. Twin Cities programs of the 1970s proved that many low-income people will pick suburban locations if given the choice. Research also shows that most will then do better in education and employment than those who continue to live in central-city public housing.

■ Third, in addition to reducing poverty and changing housing policy, we must rethink transportation, job locations and social service delivery.

Metropolitan planners and decision-makers should seek ways to reconnect the inner city to the rest of the region with programs and projects that build community rather than further dividing us. New highways should not be built to spread development. Light-rail transit should be designed to connect inner-city neighborhoods with suburban jobs. Metropolitan planning should push almost all new job growth to presently developed areas.

■ Fourth, there must be sufficient metropolitan resources and local government innovation directed toward existing low-income neighborhoods to maintain their livability. Our metropolitan goal and expectation should be that children in low-income neighborhoods will be as safe, as healthy, as educated and as prepared for a successful life as those in any other place. To the extent we continue our present policy that poor children will be concentrated in a few neighborhoods, any other expectation is blatantly discriminatory.

■ Finally, this requires that metropolitan leadership step forward. With luck a combination of altruism, dedication to democratic and market principles, enlightened self-interest, and fear of things getting worse will stimulate the needed leadership. It is not too late to begin, but it is time.

Oliver E. Byrum is director of planning for the city of Minneapolis. His 1992 book, "Old Problems in New Times," (Planners Press and the University of Chicago), is about these issues and situations.

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Without urban-suburban unity, cities' future looks bleak

Forty percent of America's cities are programmed to fail. Gary, Camden, East St. Louis are already clinically dead.

Bridgeport, Newark, Hartford, Cleveland, Detroit are on life support systems. New York, Baltimore, Chicago, St. Louis, Philadelphia are sinking. Though seemingly healthy, Boston, Minneapolis, Atlanta are already infected.

These cities — and a hundred more like them — will fail because they are programmed to be their own suburbs' poorhouses. The burden of black and Latino poverty is crushing these "inelastic" cities, which, for many reasons — bad annexation laws, hostile neighbors, myopic city politics, anti-black prejudice — have remained trapped within their city limits.

Contrast the "inelastic" cities with "elastic" cities — Columbus, Indianapolis, Kansas City, Nashville, Memphis, Little Rock, Raleigh, Charlotte, Jacksonville, Dallas, Houston, Austin, Phoenix, San Diego and Portland.

These 15 "elastic" cities have expanded their city limits over 700 percent,

capturing 42 percent of their metro area's population growth in their own suburban-style subdivisions. Several cities, in effect, include their own suburbs — "cities without suburbs."

The New York area had its shot at being elastic in 1898, when far-sighted New York legislators abolished the nation's first and seventh largest municipalities. They created the country's first metropolitan government — the 315-square-mile, five-borough New York City.

For 50 years, New York City was highly successful as Manhattan and Brooklyn suburbanized in largely vacant Queens, the Bronx and Staten Island. Only after mid-century did New York City's fiscal and social problems accelerate as more and more middle-class residents departed for Long Island, Westchester, Connecticut and New Jersey.

The racial and economic consequences of the elastic city are striking. With the same percentage of black residents metro-wide, elastic cities have more racially integrated neighborhoods, average city income levels equal to suburban levels, only slightly more than their "fair share" of poor people and municipal credit ratings four grades better than the inelastic cities.

Our national myth holds that smaller government is better government. Our national reality is that small governments act to exclude racial and economic groups. Broad-based governments can promote diversity. In short, multiple, independent suburbs are machines to keep poor blacks and Latinos trapped in inner cities away from middle-class America.

What's to be done? Only two alternatives offer real hope:

- Expand inelastic cities to include their suburbs through annexation and city-county consolidation to create more metropolitan governments.

- Make suburbs accept their fair share of responsibility for poor blacks and Latinos through metrowide affordable housing requirements, metrowide public housing programs and metrowide revenue sharing.

Such strategies will not only save inner cities. They will also help save inner city people. The most effective anti-poverty program is to help poor people just get out of ghettos and barrios. High levels of crime, unemployment, dependency, broken families and illegitimacy are substantially the result of concentrated poverty.

This is the toughest political task in America. And reorganizing urban governance isn't a task primarily for a bankrupt federal government. It has neither

the constitutional tools nor the money to do the job.

Metropolitan reform must focus where the responsibility and money are really found. Governors and state legislators have the constitutional responsibility. Most metropolitan areas — city and suburbs — have the talent and money to solve their own inner city problems.

Admittedly, ~~barried~~ ~~New Yorkers~~ have had enough of bloated government, so envisioning an even bigger metro government is hardly credible. However, there will be no halt to New York's or Newark's or Bridgeport's decline until all governments in the greater New York region accept a shared responsibility for the region's poor.

Is forging a new, shared responsibility between city and suburb impossible? As Abraham Lincoln testified, miracles can be wrought in the American soul and spirit "when again touched, as surely they will be, by the angels of our better nature."

It is time to call forth the angels of our better nature.

Rusk, a former New Mexico legislator and mayor of Albuquerque, is a consultant on urban policy in Washington and author of *Cities Without Suburbs*. Distributed by the Los Angeles Times Washington Post News Service

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Eden Prairie working to provide even more low-income housing

By Douglas B. Tenpas

The remedy to improving housing conditions of the central cities, as suggested by many contributing to the "Strengthening the Core" series, is to decentralize the inner-city poor by providing more low-income housing in the suburbs.

During the last year this concept has largely been credited to Rep. Myron Orfield, DFL-Minneapolis, and more recently to the former mayor of Albuquerque, N.M., David Rusk.

Providing diverse housing in the suburbs is also supported by many suburban communities, especially Eden Prairie. But unfortunately the message by many advocates of this concept is that suburbs are responsible for the ailments and decline of the central cities. This has been the underlying theme of editorials over the past weeks.

We agree that we are in this together. However, blaming the growth of the suburbs for the decline of the core central cities will only polarize positions and not result in productive solutions. The fact that people are leaving the cities for the suburbs is a symptom of the problems pervading the central cities.

But the complex problems facing the central cities cannot be ascribed to one cause. Solutions need to be identified, examined and implemented. We are interested in real solutions to the housing problem.

To his credit, Gov. Arne Carlson vetoed the legislation introduced this spring that would have required suburban communities to provide low-income housing because that legislation was incomplete. The bill imposed penalties on cities that did not comply with undefined housing allocations and did nothing to provide tools and incentives necessary to develop low-income housing.

It was structured more as an anti-growth bill than one that would solve any housing problems. Also, many suburban communities oppose giving the Metropolitan Council further regulatory control as proposed in the legislation, especially when some current council

policies stifle cities' efforts to develop low-income housing.

We support the basic concept of all cities providing a "fair share" of low-income housing. This is confirmed by our efforts in working with Orfield to change the bill into something that would facilitate cities' low-income housing efforts instead of inhibiting them. Although the bill was vetoed, it is expected to be back next year, and if it is, specific tools should be identified and made available to cities to help them develop more low-income housing and to provide necessary social service and transportation support networks.

- The bill should allow cities contributing to Fiscal Disparities to retain funds specifically for devel-

Specific tools should be available to help develop more low-income housing.

oping new low-income housing projects, or, more preferably, for converting a percentage of existing market rental projects to low-income projects on a scattered basis. Eden Prairie contributed \$17 million to the Fiscal Disparities in 1992 to share revenue with the rest of the region.

Some legislators who support requiring suburbs to provide low-income housing oppose the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) by suburbs. TIF laws are difficult to use for low-income housing and should be made more flexible.

- Central cities also need to do more to integrate low-income housing throughout their communities instead of concentrating the poor in certain neighborhoods.

- Suburbs could work with the Minneapolis Community Development Agency to use federal housing money outside Minneapolis rather than to further concentrate low-income housing in existing areas.

- Allow the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency the flexibility and financing it needs to deal specifically with providing low-income housing options in the suburbs.

- The Department of Housing and Urban Development could decouple Section 8 subsidies from site-specific projects and transfer them to market-rate projects on a scattered basis.

Such a bill should apply not only to suburban communities but to all cities within the metro area, including Minneapolis and St. Paul.

The high concentrations of low-income housing in Minneapolis can be attributed in part to bad planning. For political reasons or otherwise, Minneapolis concentrated most of its Section 8 housing in the northern area of the city. Integrating this housing throughout the city will help disperse existing concentrations of poverty. The bill also should examine whether social and transportation services can be efficiently provided to low-income residents if they are scattered around the region.

Eden Prairie wants to provide more low-income housing, and we have made that a priority in our comprehensive plan. Eden Prairie now has over 500 low-income housing units, the fourth-largest number of all metro suburbs.

Because of a lack of financial resources at the federal, state and local levels, we are creating and developing alternative ways to increase the number of low-income housing units in our community. We are not the problem. We are part of the solution. If the Minnesota Legislature is genuine in its efforts to develop more low-income housing, it must realize that you cannot solve today's problems with yesterday's solutions.

So far, proposed legislation regarding low-income housing in the suburbs has been counterproductive to our efforts. Our goals are the same: The difference is that in Eden Prairie, we are making it work, despite a lack of funding.

Douglas B. Tenpas is mayor of Eden Prairie.

Suburbs worthy of more than center-city arrogance

"Cities Without Suburbs." Sound appealing? Not to suburbs that have dealt with Minneapolis lately.

The suggestion "Must suburbs be abolished to save cities?" (Star Tribune, July 11) may be full of insight, but unfortunately in Hennepin County this option is downright scary.

Minneapolis displays an arrogance today in which another Midwest city once indulged. In St. Louis, a doughnut of suburbs now forms a county that surrounds but does not include the city. Years ago, the political giants who engineered an era of unprecedented St. Louis success (witness the glamour of the 1904 World's Fair), made a decision.

"Why," they reasoned, "should this jewel city, this center of Midwestern influence, devote its resources to the livability of the surrounding sticks?" The city declared itself a county of its own.

Today, the legacy is a deadly boundary line inside which real estate taxes overwhelm the value of crime-ridden buildings. Over the border in the "county," high-rises and flowers grow, and subdivisions with privately owned streets have guards who survey for the entrance of unknowns — from "the city."

Minneapolis, our gleaming citadel — the site of Philip Johnson's IDS jewel, the World Series and Super Bowl — seems to think that it, too, owes nothing to its neighbors.

While I was mayor of Richfield (three years ago), our citizens viewed the need for a displaced airport with skepticism. Our metropolitan airports commissioner, appointed from south Minneapolis, told us bluntly that he would ignore our views.

Legislative redistricting has put our suburb further under the city's toenail. Our state senator, also gerrymandered from Minneapolis, takes the view that a narrow I-35W, which saves a few more south Minneapolis homes, is the only solution, regardless of whether the constricted highway overflows cars into every Richfield neighborhood.

Bloomington's and Burnsville's needed freeway capacity is in limbo, too, because of Minneapolis' renegeing on

an I-35W compromise. And Rosemount cannot plan, because an airport reservation has been imposed upon its land, spearheaded by Minneapolis legislators anxious to deport their airport noise.

Is it any wonder that seething beneath a quiet Minnesota nice there is a dislike, perhaps a serious distaste, among suburbanites for the big city and what it means? The chance that we would want to be governed by Minneapolis politicians is pretty much gone.

But perhaps that is good: Lately, successful solutions for dealing with rings of urban blight seem to come more from the laboratories of suburban innovation than from the bureaucracies of the central city. The struggles of Minneapolis' own neighborhoods, through mazes of protocol and department turf wars, show how even the innovative Minneapolis Revitalization Program can be negated beneath the politics of large-city government.

Smaller communities have the capability to innovate with programs that turn the tide in housing reconstruction, business redevelopment and crime control.

Just over the Minneapolis line, for example, there already is rebirth. The Richfield Rediscovered program is replacing obsolete houses with new homes that spur adjacent reinvestment. Last year, this first-ring suburb experienced a 75 percent increase in permits for moderate- and greater-cost house improvements. Suddenly Richfield's own residents view their community as getting better, rather than as losing ground.

While we may wistfully wish we had all grown up as one single city, sharing with each other, today's center-city attitudes make that ideal frightening.

Until Minneapolis leaders see themselves as part of an interdependent community, it is legitimate to fear that giving them more power would only harm the metro area.

There is better hope that solutions will come from a resurgent fire ring of suburban innovation. We should be glad that our suburbs are here.

Steve Quam, Richfield. Principal, municipal program planning firm.

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Questions for Discussion

1. Do you agree with Byrum's assertion that "zoning and development restrictions ... are intended to socially engineer white upper-income communities?" Do those policies exist in your own community?

2. Is there low-income housing in your community? If not, why not?

3. Do you support the proposal that suburban communities (and upper income neighborhoods in the city) should be required to develop more low-income housing? How would such a proposal impact your neighborhood?

4. What policies do you think will most successfully attack today's social problems?

Exercise

You are a member of the Housing Committee at the Minnesota Legislature. On today's agenda is Rep. Myron Orfield's Housing Choice legislation.

The bill requires that all metro area cities provide their fair share of housing at various income levels. If cities do not work to reduce barriers to affordable housing in their community, they will be penalized by having their state funding cut. The bill as presented does not include state money for building low-income housing.

As a member of the Committee, how would you vote on the bill? Explain your position. If you don't support the bill, do you have any alternative suggestions? If the option you propose requires funding, where will that funding come from?

Next Steps

Given what you have learned from the earlier sessions -- the questions that have been raised and the solutions proposed -- what can you as an individual, congregation, or neighborhood group do to make your community what you want it to be?

In the concluding editorial from Strengthening the Core series, *Star Tribune* editors argued that cooperation between Minneapolis, St. Paul and the suburbs is what's needed to solve the Twin Cities social problems. The following excerpt explains their position:

"The problems of Minneapolis and St. Paul can't be solved solely by those cities acting on their own. They need help from state and federal governments. They especially need the cooperation of their suburban partners in this sprawling by indivisible socioeconomic entity called the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

... While the cities are afflicted with serious and deepening problems of poverty, crime, blight and joblessness, those ills generally remain concentrated in a few neighborhoods. The cities overall remain healthy and vital. They are not places to flee, or disinvest from, or give up on.

Still, the very fact that poverty, crime, blight and joblessness are so concentrated in the inner cities may be the biggest problem of all. When confined to the core, the infection feeds on itself more easily, resists treatment more vigorously and inevitably saps the strength of the entire metropolitan body.

That's why the problems of the inner city are problems for everyone, and finding solutions should be a high priority for every layer of government--local, state and federal.

... There is reason for hope. The problems of the cities aren't the result of immutable forces over which people have no control. Residents of the Twin Cities area can choose to come together

and create a more positive outcome for everyone. It will require effort, shrewdness and a lot more cooperation than has been shown in the past. But it can be done. With enough leadership and cooperation, it will be."

God's Promises to Zion

The word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying:

Thus says the Lord of Hosts: I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath.

Thus says the Lord: I will return to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of the Lord of Hosts shall be called the holy mountain.

Thus says the Lord of Hosts: Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with staff in hand because of their great age.

And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets.

Thus says the Lord of Hosts: Even though it seems impossible to the remnant of this people in these days, should it also seem impossible to me, says the Lord of Hosts?

Thus says the Lord of Hosts: I will save my people from the east country and from the west country;

And I will bring them to live in Jerusalem. They shall be my people and I will be their God, in faithfulness and righteousness.

Zechariah 8:1-8

"Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf for in its welfare you will find your welfare.

Jeremiah 29:7

What Can Be Done?

Suggestions from the *Star Tribune* Strengthening the Core series

The federal government can:

- Resume its leadership role in funding low-income housing.

State government can:

- Offer more forceful leadership on urban problems.
- Increase funding for low-income housing.
- Shift the emphasis on support for low-income housing from central cities to the suburbs.
- Reduce local building- and zoning-code barriers to low-income housing.
- Empower the Metropolitan Council to more effectively address central-city problems on behalf of the entire metropolitan area.

Local government can:

- Aggressively pursue new strategies for economic revitalization.
- Lower or remove building- and zoning-code barriers that now stand in the way of low-income housing in many suburbs.
- Continue central-city efforts to improve quality of housing stock and speed up removal or rehabilitation of abandoned units.

Business and civic leaders can:

- Provide more support for inner-city job creation, including minority-owned and minority-employing businesses.
- Expand support for non-profit low-income housing programs.

You can:

- Become more aware of the contributions and needs of central cities and recognize that their health is essential to a healthy metropolitan area.
- Write or call your elected officials to express support for measures to improve city life.
- Examine your own attitudes about diversity, prison, guns, causes of gangs, welfare, poverty, schools. Are your views grounded in myth or reality?
- Speak out against racism whenever you encounter it.
- Accept your city's obligation to assure that affordable housing is locally available for the community's low-income residents and workers.
- Don't join in bashing Minneapolis and St. Paul. Recognize instead the potential for positive words and deeds to preserve and enhance the quality of life in the central cities, for the benefit of the whole region.

Questions for Discussion

1. Do you believe that everyone has a right to decent, safe, affordable housing? If so, whose responsibility is it to provide that housing -- government? the private sector? the religious community?

2. What does your faith tradition teach you about individual and social responsibility in addressing social problems?

3. How have your opinions on the social problems facing the Twin Cities been affected

by your participation in this Study Circle?

4. Describe what you want your community to look like in the year 2000. What can you do as an individual to make that a reality? What can your congregation or organization do?

Options for Further Action

- Research your city's zoning laws - do they make it easy or difficult to develop low-income housing in your area? How about group homes?
- Join MICAH's Housing Advocate Network to become politically active on housing issues

Introduction

Reviving the Common Good: A Pastoral Letter on Social Justice, John R. Roach, Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis (St. Paul, 1991).

Session One

For the Common Good, Herman Daly and John B. Cobb Jr., (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989) pp. 160-161.

Theological Reflections, Reverend Lawrence Pray, United Church of Christ of Montevideo (MICAH: 1990).

"Moving to the suburbs, but standing by the city," Star Tribune, October 4, 1993.

Session Two

A Place to Call Home: The Crisis in Housing for the Poor, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (Washington, DC, August 1992).

Profiles of Change: Communities of Color in the Twin Cities Area, Urban Coalition Census Project (St. Paul, August 1993).

American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass, Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).

Cities without Suburbs, David Rusk (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1993).

"Reforms can combat metro polarization," Myron Orfield, Star Tribune Strengthening the Core Series, August 1, 1993.

Session Three

Star Tribune Strengthening the Core series, July 11 - August 8, 1993. Reprints of the series are available for \$1.50 from the Star Tribune Public Relations Department. (Oliver Byrum, 8/1/93; Steve Quam, 7/24/93; Doug Tenpas, 8/3/93).

"Without urban-suburban unity, cities' future look bleak," David Rusk, St. Paul Pioneer Press, June 10, 1993.

Session Four

Star Tribune Strengthening the Core series, August 8, 1993.

ADDITIONAL READING

When Elijah Knocks: A Religious Response to Homelessness by Rabbi Charles A. Kroloff.

Race Matters by Cornell West.

The Truly Disadvantaged by William Julius Wilson.

'Re-build the City' plans summer work weeks with MICAH support in St. Paul's East Side neighborhood

Homes along a two-block stretch of Cook Avenue in St. Paul's East Side will get a facelift this summer, thanks to a developing collaboration between MICAH, local congregations, East Side Neighborhood Development Company (ESNDC), and the District 5 Planning Council.

A total of \$45,000 is available to the project from both charitable and public sources. MICAH is providing \$25,000 from our Jubilee Fund and the City of St. Paul STAR program is providing \$20,000.

Along with neighborhood congregations, ESNDC will deploy volunteers to help make exterior improvements to homes in this target area during two designated "work weeks" this summer.

The work weeks will run July 13-20

and August 14-24 and will help launch "Rebuild the City: the Ezra Nehemiah Project."

"This new initiative aims to involve East Side congregations more directly in neighborhood improvement efforts," said Mike Anderson, MICAH's former executive director, now executive director at ESNDC. Avodah B'Yachad/Service Together will recruit metro-wide volunteers from the Jewish community (see page 3).

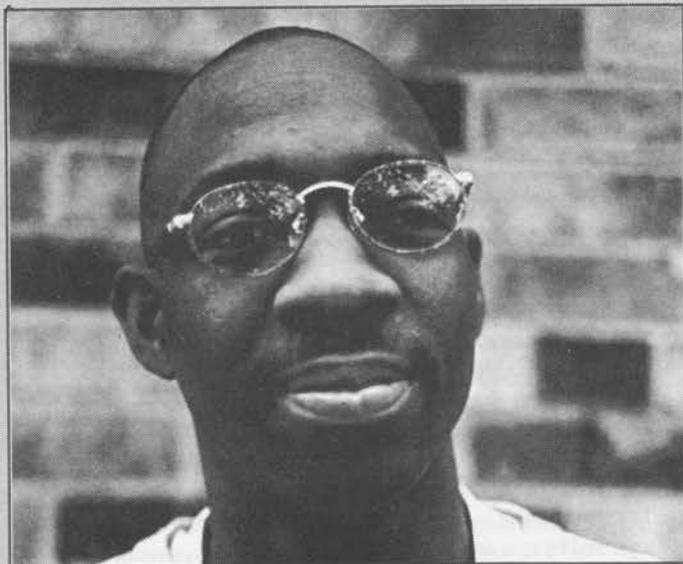
"It's an opportunity to involve a lot of people in doing something for the community," said Chuck Eversman, an ESNDC board member who also is the pastor at Peace United Church of Christ. "Hopefully, the work will give people a chance to meet one another and to join

together in a common effort."

Along Cook Avenue, the project hopes to upgrade the exterior of 15-20 homes. Up to \$2,000 per home will be available for materials. Homeowners who receive assistance must contribute up to 20 hours in sweat equity towards completion of the work, working alongside congregational and community volunteers.

"We're interested in good housing as well as the spiritual side of things," noted Vern Anderson, Senior Pastor of Arlington Hills Lutheran Church, the host of planning meetings for the work weeks.

For more information about "Rebuild the City: the Ezra Nehemiah Project," contact ESNDC at 771-1152 or MICAH at 871-8980. Volunteers will be needed!



MICAH will spin-off homeless family programs, bids 'farewell' to John Ruffin

John Ruffin, who helped MICAH launch the Metropolitan Homeless Family Initiative, leaves MICAH's staff as the programs he helped build move to the St. Paul Area Council of Churches. We salute John and the many churches and volunteers who contributed to the success of this service! See page 2.

Community Circles meet in metro-wide dialogue

Representing study groups from Stillwater and Bayport on the east, to Minnetonka on the west, and from Eagan and Apple Valley on the south, to Champlin on the north, participants in the Community Circle project met at Weyerhaeuser Chapel at St. Paul's Macalester College May 29 for an evening's discussion about the challenges of education, housing and racial segregation.

The evening drew a multi-racial crowd of 122 people, including both Community Circle participants and invited guests. George Latimer, former mayor of St. Paul, and Vivian Jenkins Nelsen, director of INTER-RACE, moderated the event.

"I think we had a very good discussion about segregation and about race," said Community Circle coordinator Dick Little. "That was a breakthrough." Little added: "there was honesty that evening. We got past Minnesota Nice."

MICAH is a sponsor of the Community Circle project, which seeks to bring a diversity of metro residents together to examine the impacts of segregation on housing and children and to propose solutions.

The project has published a study guide which examines the scope of the problem and outlines policy options.

A second round of Community Circle study groups will begin this fall, building on the lessons learned this spring

To participate, or to get more information, contact Dick Little, executive director of the Education and Housing Equity Project: 871-8980.

MICAH's Metropolitan Homeless Family Initiative will spin-off, continue with new sponsor

MICAH's Metropolitan Homeless Family Initiative, which has provided emergency housing and support to homeless families in Ramsey County since 1994, is growing up and moving away from home come July 1.

This offspring is not going far, however. The new sponsor will be the St. Paul Area Council of Churches, MICAH's collaborator in launching the project three years ago. The project has two components: the Family Shelter Network and the Homeless Family Support Program. John Ruffin, who coordinated the programs for MICAH, stressed that all along MICAH intended for the programs to spin-off after they became established. "After three years and a lot of hard work, I'm happy to say we've reached that point," Ruffin said.

The Family Shelter Network provides emergency housing during the summer

months at rotating locations hosted by St. Paul area congregations and supported by congregational volunteers (see MICAH's Winter 1997 newsletter).

The program's contract with Ramsey County, along with its volunteer network and equipment, will be transferred July 1 to the St. Paul Area Council of Churches. "Everything just shifts over," Ruffin explained. He will serve as an independent consultant to the program for six months to ensure a smooth transition.

"There were many families and many stories," Ruffin said of his work with families helped by the Homeless Family Support Program. A couple of families from the program's first year, he said, now have stabilized their lives and now are looking (with pre-approved financing!) to buy their own home.

Laurel Bunker, associate pastor at Progressive Missionary Baptist Church in St.

Paul, a host congregation, shared another story of a family helped by the program: her church hosted a homeless family with five children newly-arrived from Chicago. The parents were separated. Now she reported, the parents are reconciled, they're employed, and they're active in her church and helping other families in the program.

Come July 1's spin-off date for the Homeless Family Initiative, John Ruffin is moving on to new opportunities, too. He's pursuing a degree in Human Service Administration from Metropolitan State University and he also is working to establish a new organization, HOME, an acronym for "Helping Our Men to Escape Homelessness." This new initiative will aim to provide African American men with culturally-sensitive support in overcoming homelessness.

"It's going to take more grassroots involvement to really bring about change," Ruffin said.

MICAH receives several new grants, hires new staff

MICAH has received several new grants in support of our collaborative work with other housing organizations.

Grants of \$5,000 from the Cowles Media Foundation and \$2,000 from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will support MICAH's African-American Housing Initiative. This program provides technical and financial support to community-based affordable housing initiatives originating in the African-American community.

MICAH will be adding two new full-time congregational organizers to our staff to assist MICAH member congregations in service projects, education and advocacy.

The Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation has awarded MICAH a one-year grant of \$15,000 to support our new congregational organizers' work with the Jewish community. One new congregational organizer will work part-time with Avodah B'Yachad/Service Together to help support and coordinate volunteer participation in hands-on housing activities (see page 3). The second new congregational organizer will work part-time with Jewish Community Action on that group's education and policy work.

Elaine Lyford-Nojima has been hired to fill one position and will work with Avodah B'Yachad. As this newsletter went to press, hiring was still underway for the second position.

A Letter from MICAH's New Director

Dear Friends of MICAH:

Greetings, friends! I'm excited to introduce myself to you as MICAH's new executive director. I've worked for more than ten years in the fields of homelessness and affordable housing and I've worked for five years in legislative advocacy. I also bring to my work here a lifetime of leadership through my faith community. As you get to know me, you will discover that I am a practical person with a strong vision for the future of our Twin Cities metropolitan region.

I envision a metropolitan community where everyone has a decent, safe and affordable place to call home. I see strong, inclusive communities making our core cities, older suburbs and developing suburbs vibrant. I see people of faith building bridges across culture, class and religion to call for positive change in our region.

For more than eight years now, MICAH has been a hub of action, mobilizing congregations and individuals to respond to God's call for justice and compassion. For this year, we have some tremendous successes to announce:

- In June, Washington County approved a plan to create 60 homes for low income families.
- This spring, 500 concerned citizens participated in 40 Community Circle study groups about housing and education in our region.
- This session, the Minnesota State Legislature increased funding for affordable housing by \$10 million.

■ In July, MICAH's Metropolitan Homeless Family Initiative, launched three years ago and now solidly established, will spin-off to the St. Paul Area Council of Churches. We thank John Ruffin, program director, for developing this initiative. We will miss him and hope to support his new work.

Many thanks to all of you who were active in creating these successes!

Our challenges remain. The federal government is slashing funds for affordable housing. Our metropolitan community is increasingly separated by race and income. And local communities are demolishing rather than creating affordable housing. Hard work lies ahead.

I invite you to share your vision for our region. Please call me to talk about these issues, your ideas, your concerns and your questions. I look forward to meeting you and working with you to further MICAH's mission to ensure safe, decent and affordable housing for everyone in the metropolitan region.


Joy Sorensen Navarre
Executive Director, MICAH



"My children, our love should not just be words and talk: it must show itself in action."

1 John 3:18

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The Community Partners column serves as a way to link congregations with organizations actively engaged in providing housing or related services to low-income people

Avodah B'Yachad/Service Together leads Jewish community's work in Congregations in Community

"The Jewish community has a long tradition and a strong history of involvement in service to the community," says Paula Beugen. Jewish tradition places an emphasis on performing *mitzvot*—good deeds. Beugen stresses this tradition as the Jewish community participates in a new collaboration, Congregations in Community. Congregations in Community (CIC) is a three-year action initiative, sponsored by The McKnight Foundation, involving Christians, Jews and Muslims. By 1999, Christian, Jewish and Muslim congregations intend to mobilize 7,000 volunteers to work with families in neighborhoods in the Twin Cities. The goal: to strengthen families and neighborhoods impacted by poverty.

Five organizations, including the Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC), received CIC grants from McKnight to coordinate this campaign. Avodah B'Yachad/Service Together is JCRC's response. Paula Beugen directs the program, which is housed in JCRC's downtown Minneapolis office.

MICAH also will be supporting Avodah B'Yachad's work, thanks to a grant from the Jay and Rose Phillips Family Foundation (see page 2). The grant will support a part-time staff position to help coordinate community improvement projects.

"We see MICAH assisting us with some of the on-site support and educational aspects of the work we're doing," Beugen says. "We're pleased to be collaborating with MICAH."

Work dates planned

In April, Avodah B'Yachad completed its first year, a year dedicated to community-building, education and service.

"We're now really moving into a greater focus on volunteer service," Beugen says. "We are now putting together a series of service dates over the summer."

Scheduled activities include:

July 20, August 24 and September 14, working with East Side Neighborhood Development Company in St. Paul.

July 27, working with Habitat for Humanity (location to be determined).

Service dates are scheduled for Sundays, to avoid conflict with the Jewish Sabbath on Saturdays.

"We've been laying the groundwork and developing relationships to prepare for more of these types of experiences," Beugen says. "The need is great."

"Working with and through existing organizations, Avodah B'Yachad aims to stimulate volunteerism in the Jewish community.

"People are really anxious to be involved in direct service," Beugen notes. "Now we need to make a match between the opportunities and the interest."

For more information, or to volunteer, contact Paula Beugen at Avodah B'Yachad/Service Together: 338-7816.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: Laurel Bunker

"I have always been, at my core, a caring, nurturing person," says Laurel Bunker. Concern for other people marks Bunker's work with youth as the new area director for Young Life-St. Paul Metro and as associate pastor for Progressive Missionary Baptist Church on St. Paul's East Side.

Bunker's ties to MICAH's work began in 1995, when a letter arrived in the mail at Progressive Missionary Baptist Church. The letter was from John Ruffin, director of MICAH's Homeless Family Support Program. He was calling on African-American churches to respond to homelessness in the African-American community and to get involved in a program to support families seeking greater stability in their lives.

"We looked at the contract, we asked a lot of questions," Bunker recalls. "We prayed about it. We said yes. We decided to get involved." Since then, a formerly homeless family, assisted by Bunker and others at Progressive Missionary Baptist Church, has made the transition to a promising future (see story, page 2).

Bunker, 30, was born Laurel Williams and was raised in St. Paul. She attended the former Regina High School in Minneapolis and then Hamline University in St. Paul, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Communication. Continuing her education, she earned a Master of Arts in Cross Cultural Ministries from St. Paul's Luther Seminary.

She lives now in Roseville with her husband of one year, Joshua Bunker, who works with youth diversion programs for the State of Minnesota.

Time to be involved in "relational ministries"

In Bunker's view, working directly with people on the issues they face in their lives is an important "relational ministry."

"Let them know other people love them... and there are good people in the world who love them and will help them," she says.

Bunker adds, "you have to empower people to know that God has given them strength to make changes in themselves and in their communities."

"People have become skeptical that there's good in the world," Bunker notes, maintaining that "if you hope and you pray long enough, you see the goodness in the darkest hour."

She's quick to stress that action must follow prayer and talk.

"People of faith need to be reminded to stop talking, start doing," she says. "It's time to be involved in relational ministries."

"Let's get out of our churches and mosques and synagogues and get into the streets."





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‘The problem of the cities is, at its root, a spiritual problem. Individuals and municipalities must recognize that we are part of the same community.’

—Reverend Steve Van Kuiken

Pastor, Presbyterian Church of the Apostles, Burnsville

WHO WE ARE:

MICAH is a coalition of more than 100 Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and Islamic congregations and housing organizations dedicated to the vision that everyone in our community should have a decent, safe and affordable place to live. To accomplish this goal, we must “think regionally, act locally, and live faithfully.”

WHY WE ARE HERE:

- MICAH’s mission is to move congregations and people of faith from awareness to action and from charity to justice in response to the housing crisis.
- MICAH educates congregations about the housing crisis through forums, seminars, Community Circles, and the production of educational materials.
- MICAH acts as a catalyst for promoting congregational involvement in housing production and human services projects.
- MICAH advocates for policies that promote affordable housing at the national, state, metro and local levels.

For more information, call 612-871-8980

E-mail: micah@mtn.org

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Program Director: John Ruffin
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Newsletter

Steve Share/Community Media Services