



Bringing
Focus
to the
Issues

Research Atlanta, Inc.

**The Atlanta Housing
Authority's
Olympic Legacy Program:
Public Housing Projects
To Mixed Income
Communities**



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By
Harvey K. Newman

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	1
About the Author	2
Executive Summary	4
I. Introduction	5
II. Background	6
III. Policy Changes	9
a. Overview	9
b. Techwood and Clark Howell Homes	10
c. East Lake Meadows	13
IV. Policy Implications of the Olympic Legacy Program	18
a. Public Housing Projects to Mixed-Income Communities	18
b. Privatization of the Atlanta Housing Authority	19
c. Education	20
d. Employment	22
e. Neighborhood Development	24
f. Crime in Neighborhoods	25
V. Comparisons With Housing Policy in Other Cities	28
VI. Conclusions	30
VII. References	32

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study seeks to assess the results of the Olympic Legacy Program of the Atlanta Housing Authority. It examines the policy changes by the Housing Authority that were designed to reduce the concentration of poor people living in the City of Atlanta. It is focused on the first three public housing projects that were changed to mixed-income communities.

- ?? As part of the preparations for the 1996 Olympic Games, the Atlanta Housing Authority proposed to demolish Techwood Homes, Clark Howell Homes, and East Lake Meadows, as well as ten other public housing projects and re-develop them as lower density mixed-income apartment communities. This research examines the first three projects to undergo this change.
- ?? The major policy objective was to break up the concentrations of poor people in the City of Atlanta that had been caused, in part, by the building of most public housing projects within the central city. There would be better role models for low-income adults whose children would benefit from the exposure to residents of different income levels. Children could also attend schools with more diversity than was possible when most of the children in a school lived in public housing. Adult residents of mixed-income communities would be able to benefit from expanded employment opportunities provided by their interaction with others sharing the apartment complexes. Fewer poor people living in high-density concentrations should also result in safer neighborhoods with less crime.
- ?? A new mayor and a new executive director of the AHA who were less committed to the traditional model of public housing facilitated the policy changes. This coincided with change in federal-level policies by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that made funds for the renovation of older public housing available under the HOPE VI program and did not require one-for-one replacement of public housing units that were demolished.
- ?? With demolition permits approved in 1995, 1,442 units of mixed-income apartments in Centennial Place and the Villages of East Lake replaced the 1,845 units of public housing at Techwood Homes, Clark Howell Homes, and East Lake Meadows. New schools, employment training programs, and recreational facilities were also made available for residents of the two communities. With the reduced concentrations of poverty and influx of market-rate tenants, additional private sector investment has begun in both neighborhoods.
- ?? Many of the functions of the Atlanta Housing Authority are now in the hands of private contractors. This process of privatization includes property management of all Housing Authority complexes as well as many central office functions of the AHA. A unique partner in the redevelopment of the Villages of East Lake has been the East Lake Community Foundation.
- ?? While the policy objective to reduce concentrations of poverty inside the city is being achieved, there are other implications of the reduction in the supply of low-income housing as a problem facing the entire metropolitan Atlanta area.

I. INTRODUCTION

On September 18, 1990, the International Olympic Committee awarded the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games to Atlanta. Preparations for the games provided the city with an opportunity for re-development on a scale not seen in Atlanta since General Sherman's departure in 1864. One of the important components of preparing the city for the Olympics involved the Atlanta Housing Authority's (AHA) Olympic Legacy Program. As initially proposed, the residents of four public housing complexes would be relocated while their housing units would be torn down and replaced with lower density, mixed-income apartments.

The Housing Authority received approval and funding for its initial applications and sought additional funding that would add nine other public housing complexes to the Olympic Legacy Program list of those slated for re-development as mixed-income communities. Prior to the games, the AHA relocated 114 families from Techwood Homes, 558 from Clark Howell Homes, 470 from East Lake Meadows, and 434 families from several other projects (Atlanta Housing Authority, personal communication, 1996).

The relocation of these residents and the decision to replace public housing projects with mixed-income apartments represented major changes in public housing policy for the City of Atlanta. This study examines the impacts of these new policies on three of the projects—Techwood Homes, Clark Howell Homes, and East Lake Meadows. These were among the first to be demolished and rebuilt, so they provide the most experience with the changes. Other projects are only recently completed or are still under construction. The research is focused on the objectives of this and related policy changes and the initial indications of the effects on residents and low-income housing in the City of Atlanta. As the extensive policy changes made by the AHA are relatively recent, this report does not provide a comprehensive evaluation of life within the rebuilt communities. It is hoped that this research will serve as a benchmark for further inquiry into the changes made by the Atlanta Housing Authority in light of more experience with the new policies and the availability of additional data.

Among the questions the research seeks to address are the following:

- 1) 1. What were conditions like within public housing projects in Atlanta before the start of Operation Olympic Legacy?
- 2) What were the important local and national-level policy changes that affected public housing in Atlanta.
- 3) What was done to Techwood and Clark Howell Homes and East Lake Village under the Olympic Legacy program to convert these public housing projects into mixed-income communities? And, finally,
- 4) What are some of the implications of the policy changes made by the Atlanta Housing Authority?

II. BACKGROUND

In the midst of the Great Depression of the 1930s, Atlanta's business and political leaders saw an opportunity to provide hundreds of jobs in the construction of housing for low-income whites that would replace an area of slums located between the campus of Georgia Tech and the downtown area. The result was the building of the first public housing project in America, Techwood Homes, which opened for tenants in 1935. Soon after, University Homes opened to provide low-income housing for African Americans. Demand for the new public housing was great during the midst of the depression, so that applicants were carefully screened for steady employment and good personal habits before being allowed to move into the apartments that were among the best available in the city at any price. As a result, Techwood initially housed 604 families in seven two-story row houses and thirteen three-story apartment buildings that contained the latest in electric appliances, closets in every room, and built-in bathtubs. Each of the units also provided residents with hot and cold running water, steam heat, and electricity in apartments that were hailed for the comfort, safety, and healthfulness provided to tenants (Keating and Flores 2000, 281).

Five years later, the Housing Authority constructed a second project adjacent to Techwood Homes that was named Clark Howell Homes. This project consisted on 630 attached townhouses in 58 two-story buildings. Like Techwood, its residents were drawn from the white families who met the screening requirements of the Housing Authority. The two projects were close enough that most outsiders considered them as a single complex, and, indeed, they were linked throughout much of their history.

During the decades that followed the opening of Techwood and Clark Howell Homes, many changes took place in the City of Atlanta as well as its public housing population. Among the most significant was the rapid expansion of public housing projects during the 1960s and 70s as many low-income neighborhoods were eliminated by the policies of expressway construction and urban renewal. For example, during the period from 1956 to 1966, more than 67,000 people were displaced as a result of these two public policies. At least 77 percent of those displaced were African Americans, and all of those moved from their homes were described as "poor and disadvantaged with special needs and special problems." While this disruption increased the demand for public housing, fewer than 11 percent of those whose neighborhoods were destroyed were able to relocate to public housing (Eric Hill Associates 1966).

Another important change was the result of the civil rights movement. African Americans in Atlanta and elsewhere in the nation demanded an end to segregation in all phases of public life including housing. This prompted the desegregation of Techwood and Clark Howell Homes in 1968. Those seeking to enter public housing would no longer be screened on the basis of race, family composition, and employment. The movement of large numbers of blacks into public housing contributed to the exodus of low-income whites from Housing Authority complexes, increasing the concentration of African-Americans in public housing.

Demand for housing also increased as a result of demographic changes taking place in Atlanta and other central cities.

In 1940, 77 percent of black Americans lived in the south, and almost half of these in rural areas of the region. During the next 30 years, more than 5 million African Americans moved to cities in a migration that has been described as “one of the largest and most rapid internal movements of people in history.” (Lemann 1991, 6) While many of these blacks moved to northern cities such as Chicago, Detroit, and Cleveland, others left rural areas in the south for Atlanta. Sensing the change, many whites fled Atlanta, so that by 1970, a majority of the city’s residents were black. This process of white flight from the City of Atlanta and its housing projects hastened the decline in the city’s population as more than 100,000 people left Atlanta during the twenty years after 1970. From a peak of 496,973 in 1970, the city counted only 394,017 residents in 1990. At the same time, the suburban area outside the City of Atlanta added more than 1.5 million people, creating a metropolitan area of almost 3 million by 1990.

There were several important consequences of this change in the city’s population. First, the expansion of public housing left the City of Atlanta with one of the highest concentrations of public housing residents per capita of any city in the nation. While cities such as New York and Chicago had larger numbers of citizens living in public housing, Atlanta had a higher ratio of public housing residents compared to those not living in public housing. Almost one out of every ten residents of the City of Atlanta lived in public housing. The presence of other poor residents in the city gave Atlanta the second highest concentration of poverty (behind Newark, New Jersey) of any city in the US. Having such a large poverty population in the central city and the contraction of the supply of low- and moderate-income housing as a result of expressway construction and urban renewal increased the demand for public housing in the City of Atlanta. With surrounding jurisdictions outside the city unwilling to allow the construction of public housing units, the bulk of public housing for the entire metropolitan area was located inside the central city. Breaking this concentration of poverty became one of the most vexing problems facing the City of Atlanta.

There were a variety of efforts throughout their history to renovate the three housing projects, Techwood Homes, Clark Howell Homes, and East Lake Meadows, in order to improve the quality of life for their residents. Beginning in the 1970s, community-organizing efforts in Techwood and Clark Howell Homes were sponsored by the Atlanta Baptist Association and the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. This could not halt the physical deterioration of the aging complexes, so that in 1980 when Mayor Maynard Jackson ordered inspections of Techwood and Clark Howell Homes, approximately 10,000 code violations were found. The mayor used these violations to press the federal government’s Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for funds to renovate the project. In 1981, HUD awarded \$17.2 million to finance the upgrade of the kitchens and bathrooms and to replace the roofs and the flooring, heating, plumbing, electrical systems, and windows to bring both complexes into code compliance by 1984 (Keating 2000).

Even though it was a much newer project, East Lake Meadows had a similar history. During the 1980s, the Urban Training Organization of Atlanta, an ecumenical religious group, attempted to organize the tenants in East Lake Meadows to improve the quality of their lives. In spite of these efforts, the physical condition of the apartments deteriorated to the point that in 1992, former President Jimmy Carter focused public attention on the complex through his Atlanta Project. He was successful in lobbying HUD for \$33.5 million in grants for the renovation of the complex. This did nothing to change the crowded conditions of the households living in East Lake Meadows. The vast majority of these households were headed by women, contributing to the concentration of poverty in the East Lake neighborhood (Harris 1992).

Another factor contributing to the physical deterioration of the buildings and the poor living conditions within the three projects was the lack of maintenance performed by the Atlanta Housing Authority. Ongoing management of housing projects and response to maintenance requests were problems for an agency that many in the city regarded as the epitome of a bureaucracy unable to perform its mission. The Housing Authority was plagued by corruption and inefficiency to such an extent that the public housing section of HUD named the Atlanta Housing Authority as one of the worst in the nation. In 1994, HUD threatened Atlanta and Chicago with the prospect that these cities would have their housing authorities taken over by the federal government. During its annual inspection in 1994, HUD gave the Atlanta Housing Authority a score of only 39 out of a possible 100, prompting the local Board to recognize the need to make significant changes in the management and policies of the AHA (R. Glover, personal communication, March 7 2000).

In addition to poor maintenance and inefficient management, the residents of Techwood and Clark Howell Homes and East Lake Meadows faced constant threats to the safety of their persons and property. Both areas were known for their high levels of crime, causing further isolation of public housing residents, as most outsiders did not enter these neighborhoods if they could avoid it. The reputation of East Lake Meadows for gunfire at night was so bad that the project was nicknamed "Little Viet Nam." Things were little better at Clark Howell and Techwood Homes. As an example, in 1994, there were 325 assaults, 141 robberies and burglaries, 84 narcotics crimes, and 66 cases of vandalism within Clark Howell and Techwood Homes (Naparstek et al 2000, 31).

III. POLICY CHANGES

A. Overview

In 1987, William Julius Wilson provoked a national debate about public housing policy with the publication of his book, *The Truly Disadvantaged*. Wilson documented the poor living conditions of what he described as an urban underclass, whose isolation in central city neighborhoods cut off residents from contacts with working- and middle-class families. Without contacts with role models from professionals and isolated in central city neighborhoods, this urban underclass lacked normal social organizations as their neighborhoods failed to provide a sense of community. These inner-city residents also have difficulty entering the mainstream of American economic life, as employment opportunities are often located in the suburbs (Wilson 1987). Following and building upon Wilson's research, other scholars focused on three issues: 1. The causes of concentrated inner-city poverty; 2. The scope of the problem; and, 3. The consequences of this concentration of poor people in central cities. The discussion on the causes of the concentration of poverty in central cities examined issues such as economic restructuring, suburban exclusionism, disinvestment in central city neighborhoods, housing market discrimination, and government policies such as public housing. On the subject of public housing, Massey and Kanauypuni argue that local governments tend to locate public housing in poorer neighborhoods where there are large concentrations of minorities. As a consequence of the location decisions, they suggest "public housing thus represents a federally funded, physically permanent institution for the isolation of black families by race and class, and it must be considered an important structural cause of concentrated poverty in U.S. cities." (1993, 120)

Jargowsky, who observed that the problem increased steadily between 1970 and 1990, treated the second issue concerning the scope of the concentration of poverty in central cities. During this period, the number of pockets of high-poverty in cities more than doubled and the number of persons living in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty increased from 4.1 million to 8 million. While this concentration of poverty in central cities was most severe in cities located in the Midwest and northeast regions of the country, Jargowsky said it was also likely to be found in cities such as Atlanta with large concentrations of racial minorities (1996). There was much written about the consequences of this concentration of poor people in central cities based on a variety of differing ideologies. Among the consequences described are the following: increased drug use, more violent crime, high drop-out rates and poor school performance, many children born out of wedlock, low labor force participation rates, the development of a culture in opposition to mainstream society, and a variety of other "underclass" behaviors (Goetz 2000).

One contribution to the policy debate on the concentration of poverty generated by Wilson's research was the 1998 report by Research Atlanta documenting the high concentration of poor people in the City of Atlanta. According to this study, the concentration of poverty declined in the Atlanta region between 1980 and 1990, but increased within the central city

during the same period. The neighborhoods in the city with high concentrations of poverty increased from 82.7 percent to 84.1 percent in the ten-year period. At the same time those neighborhoods defined as extreme poverty also increased within the City of Atlanta from 41.5 percent in 1980 to 44.1 percent in 1990. Reasons for this concentration of poverty include strong evidence of discrimination against African Americans in the housing market, a concentration of subsidized housing within the central city, and an absence of affordable housing in suburban areas outside the city. All of these issues contributed to the concentration of poor people within the City of Atlanta (Ihlanfeldt 1998). While the report made a number of policy recommendations to change the concentration of poverty in the city, there was another factor that strongly influenced policy decisions affecting the condition of public housing in Atlanta.

On September 18, 1990, the head of the International Olympic Committee made the dramatic announcement that Atlanta would host the 1996 Summer Olympic Games, culminating years of work by the city's leadership to produce the winning bid. Once the flurry of excitement died, the reality of preparing the city to host one of the largest events on the planet took hold. In his rhetorical style, Mayor Maynard Jackson captured the enormity of the task when he pronounced that Atlanta faced the challenge of climbing the twin peaks of Mt. Olympus, with one peak representing the goal of putting on the best games ever, while the second was the preparation of the city for the Olympics. Mayor Jackson often expressed a desire to use the opportunity to host the Olympics as a catalyst for the revitalization of some of the city's low-income neighborhoods located near Olympic venues. Atlanta was a city in which more than a quarter of the population lived in poverty, representing the one of the highest percentages of any city in the nation (Slater and Hall 1994). The majority of these poor Atlantans lived in public housing near sites chosen for Olympic events.

B. Techwood and Clark Howell Homes

Perhaps the most vexing concentration of public housing residents were those crowded into the nation's oldest project, Techwood Homes, and the adjacent project, Clark Howell Homes. These two projects were located on valuable land between the campus of the Georgia Institute of Technology and downtown Atlanta. Georgia Tech was designated as the site of several Olympic events and was an important participant in the preparation of the successful bid for the games. Another neighbor of the Techwood and Clark Howell Homes was the international headquarters of the Coca-Cola Company that had long been a major supporter of the Olympic movement. As the city prepared itself for visitors and media attention from all over the world, here was an opportunity to improve the conditions of residents who were living in poorly maintained housing located in an area of high crime. Table One provides an indication of the condition of the neighborhood prior to the Olympics based on the Uniform Crime Report's seven categories of crime—criminal homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, and auto theft—for the years 1992 through 1995. These data are taken from the reports from the Atlanta Police Department's Zone 5 that includes downtown and the area of Techwood and Clark Howell Homes.

TABLE ONE

Crime Rates for Zone 5

	1992	1993	1994	1995
Homicide	29	37	25	27
Rape	106	65	75	65
Robbery	1,297	1,280	1,266	1,208
Ag. Asslt.	1,429	1,478	1,417	1,266
Burglary	1,639	1,743	1,494	1,555
Larceny	11,034	9,590	10,252	10,554
Auto Theft	1,579	1,788	1,734	1,408

Source: Atlanta Police Department

The crime reports suggest that neither persons nor property were safe within or near the two housing projects.

In spite of the problems of security and maintenance, the two projects provided 1,195 units of housing. These units provided homes for more than 1,125 households, representing an occupancy rate of more than 90 percent when the announcement was made awarding the Olympics to Atlanta. These public housing tenants represented a high concentration of poverty with average household incomes of \$4,142 in 1990. Most of these households were headed by women with a median length of residence of 7.95 years (Keating 2000). While, on the one hand, the length of stay by residents of the two projects may be related to the limited housing options available to these low-income households, it may also be a reflection of the fact that the housing provided “use value” to residents with its proximity to downtown. The availability of public transportation, health care, employment, and other attractions of downtown may have compensated for the problems of maintenance and security (Logan and Molotch 1987).

With Georgia Tech serving as the site for several Olympic venues and the downtown area at the heart of events connected to the games, the Techwood Homes complex seemed like an ideal location for the Olympic Village where athletes would be housed. The chair of the AHA Board proposed to finance renovation of the Techwood apartments by renting some of the land in the project to the Atlanta Olympic organizers. Mayor Jackson responded by appointing a task force to consider the issue. Financed by a \$250,000 grant from the housing authority and an identical sum provided by the Woodruff foundations of the Coca-Cola Company, the task force hired a real estate development consulting team known as PATH. This group was a consortium of several developers, who proposed a mixed-income community for the area, the renovation of Techwood, and the demolition of Clark Howell Homes. HUD rejected the PATH plan as it relied too much on \$70 million in funding from the federal agency and because the plans for Techwood and Clark Howell Homes failed to provide enough replacement housing.

In 1992, the condition of the Atlanta Housing Authority itself was near an all-time low. Poor management caused repair requests to back up, and HUD regarded the AHA as among the

worst in the nation. Faced with local criticism from residents and the press, Mayor Jackson sought to improve the reputation and performance of the AHA by hiring the Executive Director of the Miami Housing Authority, Earl Phillips. He was credited with turning around conditions in that city's housing authority, and, it was hoped, Phillips could improve the AHA. Phillips abandoned the plan to convert the two complexes into mixed-income housing. Instead, he proposed to sell a small portion of Techwood Homes to provide space for the Olympic Village and to raise money to finance renovations of Techwood and Clark Howell Homes, so that both would continue to serve as public housing. His plans won approval from HUD, but the election of November 1993 changed local as well as national housing policy priorities. After a four-year return to office, Maynard Jackson decided not to seek re-election as mayor, clearing the way for a successful campaign by former city council member, Bill Campbell. Within a few weeks of Campbell's inauguration as mayor, Earl Phillips resigned as Executive Director of the AHA. Renee Glover, an attorney and AHA Board Member, who agreed to become interim director of the agency, replaced him.

At the national level, a change in control of Congress resulted in passage of new federal legislation involving public housing. In 1992, Congress had passed new legislation called HOPE VI that made grants available to local housing authorities for the revitalization of the most distressed public housing. Requirements were still in place that mandated one-for-one replacement of any public housing that was torn down with exactly the same number of units of public housing. The new Congress repealed this legislation in 1995, so that one-for-one replacement was no longer required to qualify for HOPE VI funds. Under the leadership of Ms. Glover, the AHA proposed that the Clark Howell and Techwood Homes be demolished and replaced with 900 units of mixed-income apartments. Thus, the 1,195 units of the two public housing projects would be replaced with substantially fewer units available for low-income residents. Considerable controversy surrounded the decision to remove the residents of the two public housing projects and replace the units with a mixed-income community.

Between the spring of 1990, when the two projects were more than 90 percent occupied, and April 1993 the occupancy rate of the projects dropped to less than 50 percent. By August 1993, with Earl Phillips as director of the AHA, the vacancy rate rose to 77 percent, and by December 1994 the vacancy rate reached 94.1 percent. While part of this drop was due to normal attrition, there were multiple causes for the accelerated departure of residents from Techwood and Clark Howell. Phillips ordered a change in AHA policy that increased the eviction of residents for minor lease infractions. The Housing Authority also refused to accept partial rent payments that had been permitted previously. Once the vacancy rate in the two projects reached 50 percent, other residents probably left because of security concerns created by the empty housing units (Keating 2000). According to the former Deputy Executive Director of the AHA, many moved out of the two projects prior to demolition because of the living conditions in the apartments. Carol Naughton described the condition of the projects in these words: "The buildings were extremely distressed." (Interview with D. Wright, March 22, 2001) With many residents leaving the complexes prior to their

demolition, the Housing Authority stopped keeping track of these individuals, making it impossible to determine where they relocated.

There were also tensions between residents of the Clark Howell and Techwood Homes during the period in which the AHA was making policy changes. Disputes between groups of residents led to litigation over who really represented the tenants in dealings with the Housing Authority (Keating and Flores 2000). This conflict further weakened the ability of residents of the two projects to respond to the proposal to replace the public housing with mixed-income apartments.

One of the most serious concerns raised by critics of this process was what would become of the residents of Clark Howell and Techwood after they left the projects. Of the 1,115 households in residence in 1990, a total of 545 households received relocation assistance from the AHA. Of this number, 367 received Section 8 housing voucher certificates and 178 moved to other public housing (Keating 2000). This suggests that more than half of the total number of residents in 1990 moved or were evicted without any assistance or the ability to track their locations.

C. East Lake Meadows

The change in public housing policy did not just affect the Techwood and Clark Howell housing projects. With the Olympics coming and federal funds available under the HOPE VI program, the AHA proposed an Olympics Legacy Program that would replace four projects with mixed-income communities. Other projects added to the initial list included Eagan Homes, John Hope Homes, and East Lake Meadows. HUD approved funding for the proposed changes and relocation of the residents proceeded in advance of the games. The residents relocated were: 340 from Eagan Homes, 64 from John Hope Homes, and 470 from East Lake Meadows (Newman 1999). The process of changing from public housing projects to mixed-income apartments continued to expand with a total of fifteen housing projects scheduled for demolition and reconstruction. This number included the small Martin Street Plaza housing project located near the Olympic stadium that was initially to be reconstructed and privatized with the thirty households changing their role from tenants to owners of the renovated units.

The process of change at the East Lake Meadows project was different from Techwood and Clark Howell Homes in several respects. Much of this difference reflects the unique history of the area. While Techwood was the oldest public housing project in the nation, East Lake Meadows was a more recent project built in an aging neighborhood that had experienced a change in racial composition from white to black and a decline in property values. Most of the houses in the East Lake neighborhood were built just after the beginning of the twentieth century as part of a separate incorporated town. The area was considered a fashionable getaway for well-to-do Atlanta residents who had second homes in the town of East Lake. At the center of community life was a championship golf course built by the Atlanta Athletic Club in 1903. Among the prominent members of the East Lake Country Club was Asa

Candler, the Coca Cola magnate. Perhaps the greatest fame of the area was that East Lake's golf course was the home course for Atlanta's amateur golf legend, Bobby Jones. East Lake became part of an expanding Atlanta metropolitan area, and eventually in 1928, the separate town was annexed into the City of Atlanta. After World War II, full-time residents began moving into the area, as they were now able to commute into the city for employment.

During the 1960s as expressway construction and urban renewal forced thousands of blacks from their homes, some African-American families began moving into the East Lake area starting a wave of white flight from the neighborhood. In 1960, there were about 8,000 whites in the East Lake neighborhood and only 9 blacks. Ten years later, a wave of panic selling depressed property values in the area, as white residents of the neighborhood sold to blacks eager for home ownership. By 1970, almost 10,000 blacks lived in the East Lake area, while more than 7,000 whites had fled. Membership in the East Lake Country Club declined as well since the area was less attractive to members who generally lived elsewhere. The decline in membership prompted the Atlanta Athletic Club to sell one of two golf courses it owned at the country club to the Atlanta Housing Authority. The Athletic Club used funds from the sale of the golf course for a down payment on a new location on the north side of the metropolitan area. The former site of the segregated golf course in East Lake became the location for 650 units of public housing built on 55 acres of land. The result was a complex that had a high density of low-income residents isolated in an area where the concentration of poverty was reinforced by the conditions in the neighborhood.

When first constructed in 1970, the East Lake Meadows public housing project was supposed to become a positive addition to the neighborhood as a community of garden apartments with a 30-acre city park, a shopping center, government offices, and an elementary school. The economic boost for the area failed to materialize as the park was never completed, the government offices never came or quickly left the area, and the shopping center was never constructed. Drew Elementary School was completed but enrolled children from the public housing project and the low-income households in the neighborhood. Crime rates from juvenile delinquency, vandalism, and illegal drug dealers were extremely high in the East Lake Meadows project, giving the area the nickname "Little Vietnam" due to the frequency of gunfire and drive-by shootings. Crime rates for the East Lake Meadows area are shown in Table Two.

TABLE TWO
Crime Rates for Zone 6

	1992	1993	1994	1995
Homicide	23	17	17	20
Rape	86	7	54	47
Robbery	798	841	689	665
Ag. Asslt.	1,224	1,559	1,365	1,362
Burglary	2,318	2,303	1,949	1,582
Larceny	4,066	3,549	2,994	3,833
Auto Theft	1,048	1,012	958	999

Source: Atlanta Police Department

The AHA bases these data on the Uniform Crime Reports for the seven categories of crime recorded by the Atlanta Police Department for Zone 6 that includes the East Lake Meadows area during the years preceding the policy changes. Residents of East Lake also complained that law enforcement officers were often slow to respond to calls for assistance.

Another problem in East Lake Meadows was caused by the neglect of maintenance requests to the AHA. Poor management frequently caused these maintenance requests to be neglected for months at a time. Part of the problem providing public services to the neighborhood was caused by the location of East Lake within the portion of the City of Atlanta in unincorporated DeKalb County. Calls for police, fire, and emergency medical services were often delayed by the uncertainty over which local government was responsible for providing a response.

Residents of the project described East Lake Meadows as a political wasteland since it was the only Atlanta Housing Authority project located outside Fulton County. Another criticism of the complex was its lack of recreational opportunities with no parks, swimming facilities, or playing fields located nearby. The entire East Lake area was best known for its poverty and high crime rates. An effort to provide a job-training program for teenagers by the DeKalb County Private Industry Council resulted in frustration as the participants were turned over to the city's program and few found employment. The president of the tenant association, Eva Davis was quoted as saying "We don't have anything in East Lake Meadows but dirt, gullies, heat and built-in crime, we're sitting over here in no man's land on 55 acres." (Cowles 1986, p. A-6) By 1991, all but 140 of 2,900 households in the neighborhood were headed by women. Yet, for many young mothers, the East Lake Meadows housing project was where they had to raise their children. More than 34 percent of the residents of the project were under the age of 9, and 63 percent were under the age of 20. In 1991, there were 135 empty apartments out of the total of 650 in East Lake Meadows (Blackmon 1991).

As former President Jimmy Carter launched his Atlanta Project, he focused on East Lake Meadows as the first target for his ambitious program to bring together business interests, religious organizations, and others to address the needs of clusters of poverty in the area. Using his influence in Washington, Carter helped to secure a \$33.5 million grant from HUD to renovate the East Lake project. This represented the largest single grant for the renovation of a housing project in the southeast. East Lake Meadows had been built in 1970, but was regarded as the most poorly constructed housing project in the city. The grant would be used for replacement of storm drains, sidewalks, water lines, and electrical systems as well as to provide new windows, roofs, patios, furnaces, and water heaters for all 650 units. Concerns about security would be addressed as well with new fencing and lighting to make East Lake Meadows a safer place. The grant was awarded in late 1992, when Earl Phillips was Executive Director of AHA. His schedule called for a year of planning, with the actual renovations getting underway in 1994 and completion two years later. According to Phillips, at least 10 percent of the workers hired for the renovation would be East Lake residents. During the process, the tenants would be "checker boarded" or temporarily relocated to apartments in other housing projects until their apartments at East Lake Meadows were

renovated. At the time the announcement of the grant was made, AHA indicated there were 1,764 residents in East Lake Meadows, with an average annual income for the head of household of \$5,318 (Harris 1992). This represented a concentration of poverty in a section of Atlanta that included other poor residents in the area surrounding the East Lake Country Club.

In 1993, the chairman of Cousins Properties, Atlanta developer Tom Cousins, purchased the East Lake Country Club that included 177 acres of land, three lakes, and a Tudor-style clubhouse. Cousins made the purchase himself without the involvement of his company, announcing at the time that no final plans had been made for renovating the golf club. By the following year, the East Lake neighborhood had been re-discovered by higher-income whites that began buying the older homes for renovation as part of the gentrification of the area (Cauley 1994). These new “gentry” displaced the poorer blacks that had lived in the neighborhood in a house-by-house process of upgrading the area. With the change in leadership at the AHA following Earl Phillips’ departure and new policies in place at the federal level, the planned renovation of East Lake Meadows as public housing never took place. Instead, the project was added to the list of those to be demolished and replaced with mixed-income housing as part of the Olympic Legacy Program of the AHA. Making this redevelopment unique was the involvement of a major developer, Tom Cousins, and the history of the golf club as the center for the neighborhood.

Cousins moved quickly to renovate the East Lake Golf Club and its buildings to restore them to the condition they were in when Bobby Jones played the course. The renovations were completed by July 1995, when the grand re-opening took place. Corporate memberships in the golf club were sold to raise money for the larger renovation of the East Lake Meadows housing project. Cousins also established a non-profit organization known as the East Lake Community Foundation to serve as coordinator of the redevelopment effort. In June 1995, the plan for the “New Community at East Lake” was presented to residents of the housing project. According to the plan, the 650 units of East Lake Meadows would be replaced with 406 single-family homes, duplexes, and garden apartments built around a 150-acre recreation area that would include an 18-hole public golf course. Only half of the new housing units would be for public housing tenants with the rest available for higher income market-rate tenants. Realizing that many of the public housing residents would not be able to return to East Lake, the president of the tenants association, Eva Davis, reacted to the plan by saying “A lot of residents feel like this is a sneaky way to get rid of us.” She added that she suspects “they’re just pushing us away from the golf course.” Greg Giornelli, the Executive Director of the foundation responded, “We have no intention of pushing anyone out of anywhere . . . We want to help families with safe housing, improving the schools, giving kids things to do . . . We’re talking about creating a radical new concept for public housing that will be a model for what can happen across the nation.” According to Giornelli, funding for the redevelopment of East Lake would come from a \$32.5 million grant from HUD and an estimated \$20 million from the foundation in land purchases and building (Morehouse 1995, p. C-1).

Fears about the displacement of residents from East Lake Meadows were met with assurances from the Executive Director of the AHA, Renee Glover, that the plan was just a proposal and that nothing would happen without resident consent. As proposed, the plan called for the replacement of the 650 units of public housing with 203 low-income units available in the new mixed-income community. Almost two-thirds of the 1,500 other residents displaced from East Lake Meadows would be given vouchers for Section 8 housing or relocated to other public housing sites (Fears and Helton 1995). During the next few months, representatives of the AHA, the residents association, and the East Lake Foundation met to reach an agreement on the redevelopment plan. The residents of East Lake vowed to block the redevelopment unless a suitable relocation plan was in place. There was a strong feeling that the AHA had done a poor job relocating the residents of Techwood and Clark Howell Homes. This prompted the East Lake Meadows residents' association president to say, "We are not going to do what Techwood did," and move off the property until a plan was agreed upon. AHA Executive Director, Renee Glover responded by saying "The whole distrust issue relates to the failure of the housing authority to deliver goods and services, and failed promises. We're trying to build credibility by doing what we say we're going to do." (Reid 1995, p. G-3)

Tensions between the Housing Authority and the Tenants Association resulted in a lawsuit filed by the residents in an effort to stop the change to mixed-income housing. This delayed the discussions, and made the negotiations between the East Lake Community Foundation, the Housing Authority, and residents a lengthy process. Reflecting back on the discussions, Eva Davis, former head of the tenants association said, "Mr. Tom Cousins treated us (the residents) very well. The Housing Authority walked all over us and pushed people out." (Interview with D. Wright, February 23, 2001) When the final agreement was reached between the parties, the number of units in the redeveloped mixed-income community known as the Villages of East Lake was increased to 542, with half of these reserved for former public housing residents. Other amenities included in the Villages are an 18-hole public golf course, a new charter school, a YMCA branch, and recreation facilities such as a swimming pool, tennis courts, and a golf academy for children to learn the game. Demolition of the old project began during the fall of 1996. Residents began returning to the completed Phase I of the Villages of East Lake in March 1998. The construction of Phase II of the Villages of East Lake was completed in April 2001.

IV. POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF THE OLYMPIC LEGACY PROGRAM

A. Public Housing Projects to Mixed-Income Communities

There is little doubt that many of the policy objectives of the Atlanta Housing Authority under the leadership of its Executive Director, Renee Glover, are being achieved. The goal to reduce the concentrations of poverty in public housing projects within the City of Atlanta has been accomplished with the demolition of housing projects such as Techwood and Clark Howell Homes as well as East Lake Meadows. The population of public housing residents was reduced in each instance as the projects were replaced with mixed-income housing at lower densities. Prior to the decision to demolish and rebuild the complexes, Techwood and Clark Howell Homes provided 1,195 units of public housing for more than 1,100 households. East Lake Meadows provided 650 units of public housing for more than 500 households. After rebuilding, the Centennial Place apartments contained 900 units of mixed-income housing and the Villages of East Lake contained 542 units of mixed-income housing. Of the 900 units at Centennial Place, 360 (40 percent) are for former public housing residents, an additional 180 (20 percent) are tax credit units offering residents a smaller subsidy, and 360 are market-rate apartments. In the Villages of East Lake, 271 (50 percent) of the units are for former public housing residents, while the other half are market-rate housing units. This represents a considerable reduction in the concentration of poor people in the two areas of the city.

According to Carol Naughton, the former Deputy Executive Director of the AHA, a total of 1,211 families were affected by the policy change to mixed-income housing at the three complexes, Techwood Homes, Clark Howell Homes, and East Lake Meadows. Of these households, the largest number, 592, received Section 8 Housing Vouchers, enabling them to find private apartments or houses to rent elsewhere in the Atlanta area. The next largest group, 326, relocated to other public housing complexes. A total of only five families were eligible for home ownership programs, and eighteen households relocated to live with family or friends. Seventy-four individuals died during the process of relocating residents from public housing. The tougher enforcement of rental payments and criminal background checks on residents resulted in the eviction of 76 households. Another 106 families moved without notice, generally “skipping out” to avoid rent payments, and 14 moved without any assistance (C. Naughton, Interview with D. Wright, March 22, 2001). When the number of public housing residents from other projects being demolished to make way for mixed-income housing is added to that of the three investigated here, the policy change is an even more substantial reduction in the concentrations of low-income residents within the city.

When the data on the location of Section 8 Housing Voucher recipients are examined, they show a pattern of wide dispersal throughout the city as well as DeKalb County. Between March 1995 and November 2000, the Housing Authority relocated a total of 1,494 families from seven sites (including East Lake, Techwood, and Clark Howell). Members of this group received Section 8 Housing Vouchers that can be redeemed in any location selected by the recipient. The vast majority of all the Section 8 recipients, 83 percent (1238 families), stayed

within the City of Atlanta. However, the entire group was widely scattered with the largest single location consisting of 11 percent who relocated to DeKalb County. The next largest group of 8 percent (115 families) relocated inside the city to the Campbellton Road area of Southwest Atlanta. The next largest concentrations were five clusters of 3 percent each located in Benteen-Custer Avenue (Southeast Atlanta), Bolton (Northwest Atlanta), Carey Park-Almond Park (Northwest Atlanta), Oakland City (Southwest Atlanta), and West End (Southwest Atlanta). The remaining Section 8 recipients are scattered among 87 different neighborhoods in the city with each area receiving 2 percent or less of the total (B. Dona and Smith, Inc. 2000).

This suggests that the AHA's policy shift to move residents from public housing in order to reduce isolated concentrations of poor people within the City of Atlanta is having some of its desired effect. At the same time, there are two concerns raised by the moving of almost 1500 families from public housing to Section 8 housing by the AHA: 1. In their scattered locations, these Section 8 recipients may not be able to receive the same level of social services that could be delivered to more concentrated groups of public housing residents. 2. The fact that 83 percent of the families receiving Section 8 Housing Vouchers remained within the City of Atlanta suggests that the overall concentration of poor people within the central city has not been significantly reduced. This may be a result of the lack of affordable housing outside the city.

B. Privatization of the Atlanta Housing Authority

Another significant change in the city's public housing policy is a new role for the AHA. Prior to 1994, the role of the Housing Authority was to provide public housing for low-income residents. Its duties included building, managing, and maintaining the housing units. With the Olympic Legacy Program, the role of the AHA has changed considerably from the provision of a public service. Private sector developers became partners not only in rebuilding the mixed-income properties such as Centennial Place and the Villages of East Lake, but also in the management of the properties. Centennial Place was redeveloped and managed by a consortium of private companies known as the Integral Partnership of Atlanta. East Lake was redeveloped by another group of developers known as the East Lake Housing Corporation (R. Glover, personal communication, March 7, 2000). The Lane Company does management of the Villages of East Lake under contract. This means that such tasks as rent collection and processing maintenance requests are handled by employees of the private company rather than by AHA employees. Other functions of the Housing Authority itself have also been transferred to the private sector. For example, the Alisias Group is responsible for public relations and records management for the AHA.

This privatization enables the AHA to reduce the size of its staff and places functions such as apartment maintenance that were poorly performed by the Housing Authority itself into the hands of for-profit corporations. Private companies manage even the remaining AHA public housing projects that are not being redeveloped. Conditions for residents in these projects seem to have changed little under private management. Maintenance staffs have been

reduced causing delays in repairs and preparing vacant units for occupancy. Private management companies in public housing projects also lack incentive to provide social services and recreation facilities for residents. There is also vigorous enforcement of a “one strike, you’re out” rule that not only applies to persons accused of crimes, but also for some who complain about Housing Authority policies.

With the incentive provided by its profit motive, the private sector should be able to provide more efficient service than the public sector. It should be noted, however, that the literature concerning the privatization of public services is extensive and varied with conclusions shaped more by ideological perspectives than empirical research. In general, the cost savings of privatization are often less than proponents claim (See U.S. General Accounting Office 1997 a and b). Regarding the privatization of functions by the AHA, the lack of comparable data does not permit cost comparisons between agency operations before and after contracting with the private sector. Privatization decisions are frequently driven by political considerations rather than strictly economic advantage (Van Slyke and Hammonds 2000). In the decision to replace public housing in Atlanta with mixed-income housing, there were both local political considerations and federal-level policy changes described in the previous section. It is sufficient to observe the policy implication that the Housing Authority is no longer in the role of direct housing service provider. Its role has changed to a public sector partner responsible for developing and monitoring contracts with private companies. The private management companies are responsible to the Housing Authority to improve security, maintenance of both interior and exterior conditions in the complexes, occupancy rates, and lease management and enforcement. Critics of the privatization of the AHA wonder if the Housing Authority has given up its reason for existence. After all, public housing exists because the private sector did not adequately serve low-income residents. Others suggest that the use of the private sector to manage public housing is an innovation that has made Atlanta a national model for other housing authorities (White 1997).

C. Education

There are other implications of the AHA policy changes taking place in the neighborhoods surrounding the redeveloped mixed-income communities. Part of the renovation of both Centennial Place and the Villages of East Lake involved replacement of older, poorly performing schools. Fowler Elementary School served the children who lived in Techwood and Clark Howell Homes. Prior to its replacement, 99 percent of the school’s population qualified for the free and reduced cost lunch program provided by the federal government for children from low-income households. The new Centennial Place Elementary School is designed as a partnership with a variety of nearby organizations including Georgia Tech, the Coca-Cola Company, Bank of America, Bell South, the YMCA, and All Saints Episcopal Church. The major curriculum focus of the new school reflects this partnership with an emphasis on science and mathematics. An important component of this focus is the use of technology to enhance student learning. The new branch of the YMCA in the neighborhood provides before and after school care for the children of working parents. The recreational facilities of the YMCA are also used for the school’s physical education classes. The school

has set as its ambitious goal to have all of its students achieve above the national norm on standardized performance measures (Centennial Place Elementary School Narrative).

In 1994, only 45 percent of the students at Fowler Elementary School were able to score at or above national norms on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills. During its initial year of operation in 1999, 52 percent of the students at the new Centennial Place Elementary School were able to achieve reading test scores at or above the national norm. The new school in mathematics made slightly higher gains from 46 percent at or above the national norms in 1994 to 55 percent in 1999. These positive trends continued in 2000, as 59 percent of the children at Centennial Place Elementary tested at or above national norms in Reading, while 60 percent of the students tested at or above national norms on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills in Mathematics (www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/schoolsw/R&E/Testing2/itbs01.htm). While the number of children from low-income households is slightly lower in Centennial Place Elementary School than was the case in the old Fowler Elementary, there are still many challenges facing the leaders of the new school. For example, in 1999, 75 percent of the students at Centennial Place Elementary School were eligible for the lunch subsidy program. However, in a reflection of the changing population of the school, this percentage dropped to 61 during the 2000 school year.

Like its counterpart at Techwood, Drew Elementary School served the residents of East Lake Meadows. Along with the other changes in the area, the Atlanta Board of Education to the East Lake Community Foundation as the city's first charter school leased Drew Elementary. This status means that the school operates without the direct supervision of the Atlanta Board of Education and is evaluated based on the performance of its students. Initially the charter school served students from kindergarten through grade 5, with one grade added per year beginning in 2001-2002 to expand through grade 8. The Drew Charter School is designed for 720 to 800 students when it reaches its total number of grades. Funding for the charter school comes from the Atlanta Public Schools and the East Lake Community Foundation. The curriculum focuses on reading and math competencies with an extended day program and additional days to extend the school year from 180 to 200 days. Most of the student body is African American and 73 percent are eligible for the subsidized school lunch program. No test scores are available to assess the performance of the school that was in its initial year of operation in 2000-2001.

Designed to serve the Villages of East Lake, children from the mixed-income apartments were given preference for enrollment in the Drew Charter School. There are currently 177 children from the Villages enrolled with the remaining 63 slots filled by a lottery among 206 applications from the surrounding East Lake neighborhood. The school faces a difficult challenge to improve the performance of the initial group of children in which 84 percent tested below their grade level in reading skills. In an effort to overcome these educational deficiencies, the children at Drew Charter School are receiving intensive individualized instruction by teachers and volunteers (Drew Charter School 2001).

Another unique feature of the Villages of East Lake is the Junior Golf Academy. It began in 1995, working with 11 children from East Lake Meadows and has expanded each year to enroll more than 275 children from kindergarten through grade 10. The East Lake Junior Golf Academy is part of the Community Foundation's after school program and is designed to use the central feature of the neighborhood, the 18-hole public golf course. On two afternoons per week after school, children are given golf instruction by the Academy staff and volunteers. On the other days there are opportunities to focus on reading, math, and homework from school as well as enrichment programs featuring ballet, soccer, and science. The largest number of children come from the after school program of the Drew Charter School. Within this group the middle school division enrolls 25 children in a program focused more on golf and academics. In the middle school division, students are mentored and given an intense focus on preparation for college. The high school portion of the Golf Academy provides instruction in golf for the eight members of the Southside High School golf team. As a service to the East Lake neighborhood, the Golf Academy also provides golf instruction to community groups in the area such as the partnership with the Atlanta Masjid of al-Islam. There are approximately 30 children in the community program who also participate as part of the physical education program for the Clara Mohammed School (G. Giornelli, interview with D. Wright, March 10, 2001). The Community Foundation as well as corporate donations supports the East Lake Golf Academy. There is also a Caddy School for older children aged 14 and up to provide students with the opportunity to learn more about golf and earn money working at the East Lake Country Club (East Lake Community Foundation Inc. video, n.d.). The Caddy School provides summer employment and has awarded 17 college scholarships to participants. Five graduates of the Junior Golf Academy now participate as high school students in the caddy program (J. Stratigos, personal communication, August 2001).

D. Employment

Another impact of the new housing policy is on the employment of residents. The concept of mixed-income communities was designed not only to improve educational performance for children, but also to encourage adults to improve their employment conditions. There were two reasons for the emphasis on employment for public housing residents. First, a goal of the mixed-income communities was to provide the poorer residents with the benefits of interacting and networking with their neighbors, who would not be drawn from the same background of poverty. Next, the federal welfare reform legislation requires that anyone receiving welfare benefits that are able to do so must seek employment. The old federal welfare program, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, was replaced by the new legislation known as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. This legislation sets a limit of 60 months for a family to receive federal welfare assistance, giving urgency to local efforts to help recipients to find employment.

To assist public housing residents affected by the new law, the AHA established the Work Force Enterprise Program. Its objectives were to help welfare recipients achieve independence and self-sufficiency. The Work Force Enterprise Program is designed as a

partnership for residents of public housing communities with the AHA and employers who can provide jobs for persons completing the program. It offers participants an assessment of their job skills, education toward completing the GED high school equivalency examination, life skills training, and employment. Transportation and childcare are also available for those taking part in the program. Once the participants complete the job readiness and motivation classes to prepare them for the workplace, employment is provided by a variety of partner organizations such as the Metropolitan YMCA, the Citizens Trust Bank, and H. J. Russell and Co. (AHA video, 2000).

Residents between the ages of 17 and 54 who moved back into the mixed-income communities are required to work. If they are not already employed, they must participate in the Work Force Enterprise Program or another approved program as a requirement of their leases. The Metropolitan YMCA runs the training program at Centennial Place, while the East Lake Community Foundation operates the employment program for the Villages of East Lake (C. Naughton, interview with D. Wright, March 22, 2001). No data are available yet for the graduates of the programs; however, current information on the employment condition of AHA residents of the mixed income communities is as follows: Centennial Place has a total of 164 heads of household who are employed, while 43 heads of household are unemployed. In the Villages of East Lake, there are 232 heads of household who are employed, while 61 heads of household are unemployed (AHA open records request by D. Wright, March 5, 2001). According to Janie Stratigos of the East Lake Community Foundation, the self-sufficiency program run by the foundation has been successful in improving the employment of low-income residents of the Villages. Program participants have an 85 percent employment rate and are earning an average income of \$15,000 per year (personal communication, July 2001).

The low-income adult residents of the Villages of East Lake are also being mentored by a select group of volunteers who are part of a program known as the Strategic Neighbors Program. The Strategic Neighbors are market-rate residents of the Villages of East Lake selected by Chris and Rebecca Gray, who are the Executive Directors of the Family Consultation Service (FCS) Urban Ministry and who also serve as chaplains of the Villages. There are currently 21 Strategic Neighbors with plans for a total of 40 in the future. The Strategic Neighbors receive a stipend ranging from \$50 to \$200 per month for their work with the low-income residents of the community. The activities of the Strategic Neighbors include spending a minimum of 16 hours per month with their low-income neighbors in a variety of tasks such as mentoring teenage girls, providing classes for children, tutoring, organizing single-mother support groups, and holding Bible study for the elderly. While the Strategic Neighbors program is faith motivated and all of the participants are Christians, they are not related to a particular denomination (R. Gray, interview with D. Wright, July 25, 2001). The FCS Urban Ministry, through its Charis Housing Program, also provides a homeownership program for low-income residents of the Villages of East Lake. One low-income family from the Villages of East Lake has already qualified for the homeownership program and has moved into their own home (J. Stratigos, personal communication, July 2001).

E. Neighborhood Development

One of the effects of Housing Authority policy change is the deconcentration of poverty in the neighborhoods of the new mixed income communities. Many of the low-income residents have moved to other areas and higher-income residents have taken their places in the re-developed housing. This has resulted in change in the neighborhoods that were once the location of public housing projects. In the case of the Techwood and Clark Howell Homes the real estate occupied by the former housing projects is valuable because of its location. The Georgia State and Georgia Tech dormitory buildings that were built to serve as the Olympic Village for the visiting athletes now occupy a portion of the land. As the land is near downtown its value has increased as the area around Centennial Olympic Park is developed for residential and commercial purposes. In addition to the new elementary school, YMCA branch, community center, and police precinct, several private sector investments have followed the opening of Centennial Place as a mixed-income community. SunTrust Bank took an old Carnegie library building and renovated it for a branch bank to serve the neighborhood. The successful adaptive re-use of the old building was recognized for its excellence with an award in May 2001 from the Atlanta Urban Design Commission. Plans are also being discussed to construct a new grocery store at the corner of Alexander Street and Centennial Drive to serve the mixed-income neighborhood. Several smaller shops are also supposed to be built adjacent to the grocery store. Land for the new retail center was contributed by the Integral Partnership of Atlanta (which redeveloped Centennial Place), the AHA, and the Georgia Tech Foundation (www.ci.atlanta.gs.us, 19 May, 2001).

The rebuilding of the East Lake Country Club and the Villages of East Lake has also increased real estate prices in the surrounding neighborhood. As the redevelopment of East Lake Meadows began, housing sales and prices in the neighborhood increased as gentrification took place bringing young families and singles into the East Lake area. Home sales prices averaged only \$45,884 in 1994, but increased to nearly \$70,000 by 1997. During this period of rapid increases in property values, the president of the East Lake neighborhood association proclaimed that the area was experiencing a “really strong wave of rejuvenation.” (Reid 1996) This wave has included the first new residential construction in the East Lake neighborhood in more than 30 years with the building of a \$7 million townhouse development. A second townhouse development is currently under construction, and a new subdivision is planned for the neighborhood. Between 1996 and 2000, property values in the East Lake neighborhood increased by more than 20% per year, the largest increase in the metropolitan Atlanta area (East Lake Community Foundation, Progress Report 2001). As Table Three shows, property values in East Lake have continued to increase with the average home sales price in 2001 more than \$166 thousand (CF Foundation).

TABLE THREE
Average Home Sales Price

Year	East Lake	DeKalb County	Metro Atlanta
1994	45,884	\$105,075	\$123,234
1996	52,050	118,842	132,086
1998	88,467	139,694	151,489
2000	154,973	169,622	172,738
2001	166,771	182,603	184,303

Source: CF Foundation

Commercial investment in the area is also increasing following changes in the East Lake neighborhood. A new Publix grocery store is under construction across the street from the Villages of East Lake. Several other new retail and commercial investments are also planned for the East Lake neighborhood since the opening of the mixed-income community.

The changing demographics of the former public housing neighborhoods are having other influences on the city. There are not only differences in class in the newer residents who are moving into these communities, but also differences in age and race. While tract-level data on income and race have not been released by the Census Bureau from the 2000 census, the City of Atlanta registered a population increase for the first time since 1970. According to the Census Bureau, the City of Atlanta's population in 2000 was 416,474. Within this increase were larger numbers of whites as the city's black population declined to 61.4 percent, while the white population increased to 33.2 percent (census.gov 2001). These changes are already reflected in a decrease in the percentage of registered black voters in the city. Among the 56.6% of African-American voters remaining in Fulton County, there is considerably more diversity in income and lifestyle than before the redevelopment of the public housing projects. According to a campaign official who has worked for Maynard Jackson's elections since the 1970s, public housing was an essential element in turning out black voters in the city. This campaign official was quoted as saying, "It used to be that Techwood Homes was a prime place. You could go and hustle up 1,000 people . . ." This once-accessible constituency has been scattered as a result of the re-development of public housing projects. In many neighborhoods affected by gentrification, older African-American voters with long-standing ties to the community have been replaced by younger professionals who lack commitment to the elected public officials who represented the city in the past such as Maynard Jackson and Andrew Young (Hairston 2001, pp. H-1 & 6). The dispersal of the concentration of low-income black voters has potential to change voting patterns in City of Atlanta elections, although the extent of the change remains unclear. This is an indirect result of neighborhood changes caused by AHA policy decisions.

F. Crime In The Neighborhoods

The improvements in the neighborhoods resulting from the changes in housing conditions in East Lake and Centennial Place were also expected to reduce crime rates in the two

neighborhoods. To reduce the concentrations of poor people living in relatively high-density public housing and to replace these with mixed-income, lower density apartments should reduce crime rates. Another factor that should influence crime rates in these areas is the more careful screening of residents. The AHA announced a “zero tolerance” policy with the opening of Centennial Place and the Villages of East Lake, so that families having a member with any sort of criminal record would not be allowed to move into the renovated housing. The new complexes are also fenced and have security gates permitting closer monitoring of entry into Centennial Place and the Villages of East Lake. The crime statistics for the seven categories of criminal activity recorded by the Atlanta Police Department for the Uniform Crime Report are included in Tables Four and Five.

TABLE FOUR
Crime Rates for Zone 5
(Centennial Place Area)

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Homicide	15	11	15	13	1
Rape	48	44	53	44	33
Robbery	810	839	844	803	702
Agg. Assault	1,019	897	904	833	888
Burglary	1,437	991	1,110	1,025	1,130
Larceny	12,111	9,059	8,381	8,600	8,177
Auto Theft	1,313	1,098	1,287	1,332	1,434

TABLE FIVE
Crime Rates for Zone 6
(East Lake Area)

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Homicide	13	18	12	6	15
Rape	49	43	45	38	29
Robbery	636	656	527	489	461
Agg. Assault	1,188	1,003	877	697	688
Burglary	1,467	1,402	1,270	1,264	1,490
Larceny	3,762	2,936	3,322	2,992	2,917
Auto Theft	1,022	964	808	764	706

Source: Atlanta Police Department

These data indicate that most categories of criminal activity have declined during the period between 1996 and 2000. For instance, in the Centennial Place area there were declines in six of the seven categories (all except Auto Theft). In the East Lake area that is included in the Atlanta Police Department’s Zone 6 there were declines in all categories except Homicide and Burglary. It appears the policy changes that reduced the density of low-income residents of the two areas may have contributed to making the neighborhoods safer. This is evident when the crime rate data from Tables One and Four as well as Tables Two and Five are

compared. However, considerable care should be taken when drawing conclusions from Uniform Crime Report data. Over time there are differences in patterns of data collection and classification as well as many changes in the demographic and economic characteristics of a community that can influence crime statistics. The lower crime rates were part of a national trend of reduced rates of criminal activity during the last decade that also included the City of Atlanta as a whole. For instance, as this period was generally a time of national economic prosperity, there were lower rates of economically motivated crimes within cities throughout the country. It seems likely that the lower crime rates in the Atlanta Police Department's Zones 5 and 6 were influenced not only by local policy changes, but also by these larger national trends as well. One would need to be cautious in ascribing changes in crime rates to a single local variable such as the policy changes by the AHA.

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V. COMPARISONS WITH HOUSING POLICY IN OTHER CITIES

While the policy changes in Atlanta were initiated as part of the preparations of the city for the 1996 Olympic Games, other cities across the country have also responded to federal-level initiatives such as HUD's HOPE VI program. This enabled housing authorities to replace older public housing projects, to provide residents of these projects with help to achieve economic self-sufficiency, and to contribute to the development of communities that could replace isolated housing projects. In many instances, the policies adopted by local housing authorities are similar to those in Atlanta. Dilapidated housing projects have been torn down and newer apartments built at much lower densities in order to reduce the concentrations of poverty within public housing. For example, Seattle, Washington replaced its worst public housing project, Holly Park, with a mixed-income development called New Holly. In similar fashion, Columbus, Ohio used HOPE VI funds to rebuild its Windsor Terrace housing project as a new community known as Rosewind that was part of a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plan. Baltimore also demolished its high-rise public housing project known as Lafayette Court and replaced it with a lower density mixed-income community called Pleasant View Gardens (Naparstek et al 2000). Boston (like Atlanta) was awarded one of the initial HOPE VI grants in 1993 to redevelop one of its most distressed housing projects called Mission Main. This site was similar to Centennial Place in its location near an education institution as well as a medical center. It was an isolated poverty enclave with affluent neighbors. Conflict between the public housing residents and the Boston Housing Authority delayed more than five years the implementation of the plans to demolish the housing project and replace it with mixed-income apartments. The first 300 of the 545 new town homes were opened by 2000, and plans were underway for a second HOPE VI replacement of the Orchard Park housing project by the Boston Housing Authority (Vale 2000).

All of these efforts were part of comprehensive plans by local officials to reduce the density and isolation of public housing residents. These plans were aimed at more than better housing conditions for their residents. They had a common theme of community building and self-sufficiency for the residents of these formerly distressed projects. The best practices of these and other local housing authorities, including Atlanta, are described by Naparstek et al (2000). Many of the 81 sites in 55 cities that received HOPE VI grants between 1993 and 1998 have suffered a variety of delays caused by legal challenges and resident protests. The experience of the Atlanta Housing Authority was unique in the fact that the time pressures of the deadline posed by the Olympic Games speeded up the process of relocating residents, demolishing public housing projects, and their replacement with mixed-income communities (U.S. General Accounting Office 1998).

Based on the available evidence it appears that the policies adopted by the AHA are unique primarily in their scale as the Olympic Legacy Program is being used to transform more than a single housing project in a single neighborhood, but in thirteen former projects scattered throughout the city. Some cities, such as Milwaukee and El Paso, had a different experience with the HOPE VI program than Atlanta. There seems to have been less conflict between residents and local housing officials in their use of HOPE VI grants. Two factors contributed

to this lower level of conflict: 1. The grants were used to rehabilitate projects rather than demolition and replacement. 2. These cities seem to have had more extensive resident involvement in the planning and implementation of the HOPE VI programs. The HOPE VI program guidelines require four principles in regard to the involvement of residents affected by the demolition of their public housing and its replacement by new apartments: “collaboration, inclusion, communication, and participation.” (Naparstek 2000, 67) Certainly mistakes were made in the initial treatment of the residents of Clark Howell and Techwood Homes during the conversion process. This caused more distrust when the Housing Authority and the East Lake Community Foundation began discussions with the residents of East Lake Meadows. The lessons learned in the conversion of these two areas appear to have been used in the more peaceful transitions in other Atlanta projects.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The living conditions of many public housing residents in the City of Atlanta have changed dramatically during the period since the announcement that the city would host the 1996 Olympic Games. As Ihlanfeldt demonstrated, the central city had extremely high concentrations of poor residents, almost 10 percent of who lived in public housing (1998). These residents lived in apartments that were crowded, poorly maintained, and located in areas where crime rates were among the highest in the city. Most of the households in public housing were headed by females, and many housing projects were located where employment opportunities for residents were limited. The children from public housing projects went to schools that drew their enrollment almost exclusively from within these concentrations of poverty. As part of the Atlanta Housing Authority's Olympic Legacy Program, major policy changes took place with the decision to demolish many of its public housing projects and replace these with mixed-income communities. The impacts of these policy changes by the AHA may be seen most clearly in the first three housing projects to be demolished and replaced—Techwood and Clark Howell Homes and East Lake Meadows.

The 1,845 units of public housing in these three complexes have been replaced with 1,442 mixed-income units in Centennial Place and the Villages of East Lake. At Centennial Place 40 percent of the units (360 units) are reserved for public housing residents and an additional 20 percent (180 units) are tax credit units, which offer their residents a smaller subsidy. The remaining 360 units of Centennial Place are market-rate apartments. At the Villages of East Lake, 50 percent (271 units) are for public housing residents and the rest are market-rate apartments. Thus, the two mixed-income communities provide housing for 811 low-income households, creating a net loss of more than 1,000 subsidized housing units. Most of the relocated public housing residents received Section 8 housing vouchers, while others were placed in other public housing. As living conditions deteriorated prior to the demolition of the public housing projects, many residents moved out and were not able to be traced.

The Housing Authority contracted for the management of the new mixed-income apartments with private companies. Changes in federal welfare policy as well as AHA regulations required all eligible public housing residents to participate in the Work Force Enterprise Program to provide employment training and jobs. New schools were built to serve the mixed-income neighborhoods with additional recreation and after school programs provided by the YMCA and other organizations. In response to the lower concentrations of poor people in Centennial Place and the Villages of East Lake, property values in the neighborhoods have increased. There has also been renewal in the form of private sector investments in these areas as additional residential and commercial development is taking place in both the Centennial Place and East Lake neighborhoods.

While census tract-level data from the 2000 census are not available, it is obvious that the policy changes by the Atlanta Housing Authority have significantly reduced concentrations of poverty within the City of Atlanta. The lives of those former public housing residents who returned to the mixed-income communities are certainly different. While their reduced

numbers will mean less political influence in city government, other impacts of the neighborhood changes will need to be examined in the future. Critics of the AHA policy changes suggest that the loss of “hard units” of public housing and its replacement by fewer numbers of mixed-income housing will further reduce the already limited supply of affordable housing in the Atlanta metropolitan area. They also argue that the increased use of housing vouchers in place of public housing subjects more poor people to the political whims of the U.S. Congress, which can reduce support for the Section 8 program at any time. There is also criticism of the privatization of the Housing Authority itself since it is by no means certain if the private sector can adequately serve the interests of low-income residents. It is clear that the role of the AHA changed from the management of public housing a decade ago to the partner in a process now largely managed by the private sector. For those low-income residents living in the new mixed-income communities such as Centennial Place and the Villages of East Lake, conditions have improved significantly during the last ten years.

In many respects, Atlanta has led the nation in the implementation of new public housing policy. In 1935, Techwood Homes opened as the first federally-funded public housing project in the U.S. Faced with the upcoming Olympics, Techwood and Clark Howell Homes and East Lake Village were approved in 1995 for demolition and replacement by Centennial Place and the Villages of East Lake. These became among the first mixed-income communities in the nation to replace public housing. Since their opening, the AHA and HUD have hailed these communities as models for the future of public housing in America. Other cities have rushed to use HOPE VI funds to replace at least some of their older and most distressed public housing. Atlanta has followed the transition in these three initial projects with the conversion of most of its low-income family housing to mixed-income communities. This is evidence of a larger scale of conversion than in other cities using the HOPE VI program.

Yet, the impacts of these major policy changes on the total supply of low-income housing in the metropolitan Atlanta area remain unclear. Certainly, the concentrations of poverty within the City of Atlanta caused by public housing projects have been reduced. On the other hand, the struggle to find safe, sanitary, and decent housing for poor people continues as it now shifts to older suburban apartments which lack many of the social services provided in public housing. While the residents of public housing projects in Atlanta were primarily African-American, the suburban pockets of poverty have taken on an increasingly international character as many poor immigrants from Latin America and Asia compete for space in aging apartment complexes outside the city limits of Atlanta. As changes in public housing policies by the Atlanta Housing Authority reduce concentrations of poverty inside the city, one unintended consequence may be to transfer the problem to the private-sector apartments in the suburbs. Further study is needed to determine how to increase the supply of low- and moderate-income housing throughout the metropolitan area. Then, Atlanta might serve as an outstanding model of housing policy for the nation.

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