

RESOLUTION NO. 21-24

BY: Earl Williams

Proclaiming April 2021 as Fair Housing Month in Shaker Heights, recognizing and celebrating the 53rd anniversary of the Federal Fair Housing Act, and reiterating the City's support for housing without discrimination in the City and the maintenance of an inclusive community.

WHEREAS, Fair Housing Month is celebrated each April across the United States in commemoration of the enactment of the 1968 Fair Housing Act, which became law one week after the April 4 assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and which prohibited discrimination based on race, color, national origin, and religion; the Act being amended in 1974 to include discrimination based on gender, and again in 1988, to include familial status and persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, in 1992, the City was one of the first cities in the nation to be recognized by the federal government as having a fair housing law, enacted by Ordinance No. 92-35, that is substantially equivalent to the federal law, making the City a federally recognized Fair Housing Assistance Program (FHAP) eligible for grants from the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD); and

WHEREAS, the City's fair housing ordinance was amended in 2006 by Ordinance No. 06-20 to include sexual orientation and gender identity as additional protected classes; and in 2019 by Ordinance No. 19-49 to clarify and add "gender identity or expression"; and

WHEREAS, the City has, since 1992, maintained a Fair Housing Office as a federally recognized FHAP, with an active enforcement program, as well as planning and conducting activities that creatively and affirmatively promote fair housing through education and outreach; and

WHEREAS, in addition to prohibiting housing discrimination, desegregation is an explicit mandate under the original 1968 landmark Civil rights-era legislation, and this obligation continues to the present day through HUD's statutory duty to affirmatively further the promotion of housing choice and integration, also known as "affirmatively furthering fair housing" (AFFH); and

WHEREAS, HUD's regulations appropriately reflect this dual obligation to both promote housing choice and pursue integration, including the requirement that HUD take meaningful actions, in addition to combating discrimination, that overcome patterns of segregation and foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to opportunity based on protected characteristics and replace segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns; and

WHEREAS the City remains committed to affirmatively furthering the goals of the Fair Housing Act through progressive efforts to address real impediments to fair housing choice and foster inclusive communities of opportunity; and

WHEREAS, the City has committed to HUD that the City joins HUD and other FHAPs in our dedication to the full implementation of President Biden's January 20, 2021 Executive Order 13988, *Preventing and Combating Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity or Sexual Orientation*, and HUD's requirement that all FHAPs immediately administer and fully enforce local fair housing ordinances to prohibit discrimination because of sexual orientation and gender identity, which the City has been doing since 2006; and

WHEREAS, on this 53rd Anniversary of the Fair Housing Act, and on the recommendation of the City's Fair Housing Review Board, this Council wishes to reaffirm and support the right of all citizens, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, handicap, familial status, sexual orientation, or gender identity or expression to enjoy equal access to housing and to reside in communities that provide integrated and balanced living patterns.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Shaker Heights, State of Ohio:

Section 1. This Council hereby designates April 2021 as Fair Housing Month in the City of Shaker Heights and reaffirms its commitment to the goals of promoting housing choice and pursuing integration, as mandated in the 1968 Federal Fair Housing Act and the principles guaranteed under the City's Fair Housing Ordinance.

Section 2. This Council hereby celebrates and recognizes the 53rd anniversary of the Federal Fair Housing Act, and joins the rest of the nation in rededicating itself to combating unlawful housing discrimination and encouraging the development of balanced residential living patterns, both in the greater Cleveland area and throughout the country, through continued implementation and enforcement of the federal government's mandate to affirmatively further fair housing in all communities.

Section 3. The Clerk of Council is hereby directed to forward a copy of this resolution to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Cuyahoga County Council.

Section 4. This resolution is hereby adopted as an administrative measure not subject to referendum, and therefore this resolution shall take effect immediately upon its enactment and approval by the Mayor.

Adopted

Approved this ____ day of _____, 2021.

DAVID E. WEISS, Mayor

Attest:

JERI E. CHAIKIN
Clerk of Council