



A SHARED FUTURE

Fostering Communities of
Inclusion in an Era of Inequality

The Social and Economic Value of Intentional Integration Programs in Oak Park, IL

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This paper was presented as part of Panel 7 at the symposium, entitled “What would it take... To foster residential outcomes that support school integration, and vice versa?”

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Introduction

Since 1972, the Oak Park Regional Housing Center has been committed to its mission of achieving meaningful and lasting racial diversity in Oak Park. The program has been recognized as a model of best practice within the community and across the nation. This model even has a name: “The Oak Park Strategy.” Yet, despite the model’s relatively high profile, its full value and impact are not fully understood. The promotion of racial diversity, and especially racial integration, has provided Oak Park with a structure that fosters economic and social benefits for the community.

The origins of the Housing Center are rooted in twin concerns affecting the Chicago region in the 1960s—open (i.e., non-discriminatory) housing and racial re-segregation. While still 99 percent white in the 1970 Census, Oak Parkers had become increasingly supportive of the open housing movement that included an eight-month campaign in Chicago in 1966. Meanwhile, they witnessed the rapid racial change and disinvestment that occurred on the west side of Chicago. They formulated a policy that, by embracing integration as a solution, would promote open housing while avoiding block-by-block resegregation.

The idea was the brainchild of the Housing Center’s founder, Roberta Raymond. Raymond wrote her Master’s thesis on racial change in Oak Park and surveyed other communities across the nation that had been facing similar issues. After analyzing programs from other communities, she formulated the model of working proactively to assist with housing searches in order to promote integration and avoid discrimination.

The strategy was successful and can be seen in hindsight as far ahead of its time. Raymond recognized that in the entrenched environment of segregation dominating American metropolitan areas, intentional action would be required to foster integration. This remains true into the present. Without such intentional action, white communities commonly segregate in one way or another. They tend to develop as exclusive communities with formal and informal barriers to people of color, especially African Americans, or they suffer from white flight and avoidance that results in concentrations of poverty and disinvestment.

Diversity is now a fundamental component of Oak Park’s brand and value. Yet, the condition that gives diversity its strength—integration—is not guaranteed. Thus, investment in

the Housing Center and the Oak Park Strategy is critical. Community leaders now accept as fact that the Housing Center's effort to sustain integration positively affects property values, social cohesion, and civic life. It is as much an issue of community culture as of public policy and programming.

The Housing Center Model

In its earliest days, the Housing Center worked on integrating both the rental and ownership markets. Quickly, it became clear that rental integration was both more turbulent and more influential on housing patterns generally. Thus, the focus turned to the rental market. This was also due to Oak Park's significant rental stock. While firmly middle-class, the community was approximately half rental in the 1970s. Rental units still make up nearly 40 percent of all housing units in Oak Park. New rental high-rises are currently adding to that percentage.

Other important factors also encouraged the focus on rental housing. The rental market is more malleable than the ownership market. As prospective tenants are making a decision that involves only a one-year commitment, they are more likely to consider integration than first-time homebuyers who are making a 30-year commitment.¹ Rental turnover rates are also higher than ownership rates. Typical annual rental turnover across the nation is about 50 percent. In Oak Park, this rate is lower but still at least 30 percent. Thus, nearly one-third of all rental units will change tenants in a given year. This change can have either positive or negative outcomes. If intentional efforts are in place, they allow for relatively quick integration of a building and, more importantly, promote integration stability. However, if left to the market, turnover can result in rapid segregation.

The Housing Center can also have significant influence on housing providers (landlords) because it provides them with demand and services such as fair housing education, management advice, and technical assistance with marketing, tenant screening, and government relations that they would not otherwise enjoy. By providing services landlords

¹ Black-white segregation is lower for renters than for homeowners; see Friedman, Tsao, and Chen (2013).

need, the Housing Center can improve their commitment to integration and fair housing compliance.

As renters become homeowners, those with experiences renting in integrated settings are more likely to become homeowners in an integrated setting. While local data on this is hard to gather formally, homeowners in Oak Park regularly informally communicate at community meetings and other public arenas that they first came to Oak Park as renters through the Housing Center.²

In addition, the Housing Center learned quickly to collaborate with real estate agents in Oak Park. Real estate agents cooperate with the Housing Center on efforts to integrate neighborhoods by showing homebuyers properties throughout the community. While agents cannot promote integration as directly as the Housing Center, the community is small enough that they can reasonably show houses across the community to each of their clients, even when the client asks only to see one part of the community. This strategy has been successful for decades. Housing Center employees communicate with managing brokers and many agents annually to reinforce this effort. In essence, the Housing Center outsources this activity, leveraging hundreds of thousands of dollars in activity annually among well-meaning agents and brokers.

Segregation in a rental building also has a greater impact on neighborhood perception than in single-family dwellings. It is more visible than homeownership segregation, particularly in Oak Park where people typically enter single-family homes from alleys and garages but renters enter from the street or open parking lots. Residents perceive the segregation of rental buildings as an indicator of the racial makeup of a neighborhood. If a building appears segregated, it reinforces a perception of racial isolation in the surrounding area.

Promoting a Diverse Demand for Oak Park

In order to build a diverse community, Oak Park must have a diverse demand for its housing stock. This requires an approach that includes 1) promoting the assets and desirability

² See the Oak Park Regional Housing Center's Facebook Page for videos of residents talking about their moves.

of Oak Park, 2) promoting the open and inclusive nature of the community, and 3) marketing the community so as to ensure demand from all racial backgrounds.

This seemingly straightforward approach is in fact difficult, and requires sophistication and finesse. The Housing Center's advertising always focuses on the community, never on one building or apartment. The advertising message has to highlight the amenities of Oak Park without making the community appear exclusive, and it has to promote demand from groups that are under-represented or less likely to choose Oak Park. Because the Housing Center has continuously updated data from its registered clients, it always knows which groups are under-represented or searching for homes in Oak Park at a lower rate than expected. Its mission is to communicate a welcoming and inclusive community in Oak Park.

Promoting Integration within Oak Park

Diversity of demand is only a first step in the Housing Center model. Once prospective renters choose to search for housing in Oak Park, they often have preconceived attitudes about where they want to live within the community. While many will state that they want to live in a diverse community, but also that they want to avoid certain parts of Oak Park. These attitudes correlate closely with racial demographic patterns within and surrounding Oak Park.

Oak Park is more integrated than other diverse suburbs. Moreover, almost all of the communities that surround Oak Park have clear predominant racial groups and high segregation levels. The Chicago regional residential pattern is also highly segregated.³ These patterns, which influence attitudes about Oak Park neighborhoods, are outside local control and will continue for the foreseeable future. Thus, Oak Park must continue countering these forces to remain integrated.

When searching for an apartment, people get information from friends, family, and co-workers warning them about certain parts of Oak Park. Clients who use the Housing Center often tell staff that someone from Oak Park or former residents of Oak Park warned them to stay "west of Ridgeland," "off Austin Boulevard," or "as far west as possible." All of this online and social information, in addition to general implicit biases from societal cues,⁴ is at play in the

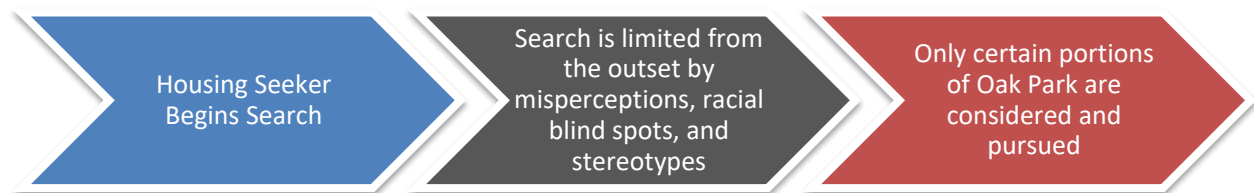
³ Breymaier, Davis, and Fron (2013).

⁴ Hipp (2012); Krysan and Bader (2009); Krysan, Couper, and Farley (2009); Rosenbaum and Argeros (2005); Charles (2000); Quillian (2002).

minds of rental seekers as they look for a place to live. Websites and social media also play a role in perpetuating false stereotypes about neighborhoods in Oak Park. The success of the Housing Center’s model lies in its ability to correct for these misperceptions through conversation with prospective renters.

The actual conversations are far more important than any other part of the process. It is through direct, face-to-face conversation that the Housing Center addresses irrational fears, provides missing information, replaces myths and stereotypes with facts, and engages in gentle persuasion to consider new options. This results in a much different housing search than would occur without the Housing Center. The staff can answer questions about crime, school quality, neighborhood amenities, and even the general feel of neighborhoods. This combination of data and personal experience has a level of authenticity and sincerity that can overcome the much greater amount of misinformation available online and through social networks.

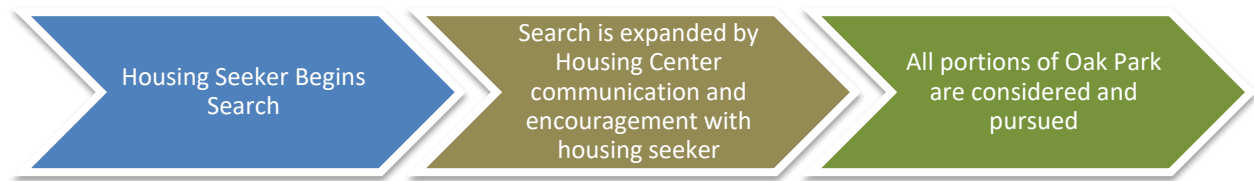
Figure 1. A Typical Housing Search without Housing Center Intervention



In a typical housing search without intervention from the Housing Center, the housing seeker begins with a limited set of options that are highly informed by racial and economic stereotypes. Often, non-African Americans avoid areas that they believe are within or near to predominantly African American areas. The search is limited in a way that will make integration nearly impossible.

A separate phenomenon occurs for African Americans. Despite the reputation and rhetoric of a welcoming community in Oak Park, prospective black residents enter with some hesitation about moving into areas perceived to be the whitest, as promises of equality are not always kept. Some begin by playing it safe, limiting their searches to eastern Oak Park to avoid possible isolation or harassment.

Figure 2. A Search by a Housing Center Client



When the Housing Center intervenes in a search, the housing seeker is presented with additional options that they normally would have ignored or actively avoided. In the process, the cycle of segregation is disrupted with new information and personalized service to encourage consideration of an affirmative move—a move that will sustain or improve the integration of a building or block. This includes both active listening and gentle challenges to reduce the reluctance towards such a move.

Advisors do not simply provide listings. They converse with a client for about 40 minutes on average in their first meeting. In about a third of all cases, clients also revisit for a follow-up meeting with an advisor that normally will last about 20 minutes. Additional calls and emails are regularly exchanged between advisors and clients during the search for an apartment. Over the previous five years, the rate for affirmative moves by Housing Center clients is 68 percent, and improves to 80 percent when clients move to units in the Housing Center’s listings from cooperating landlords.

In cases where 1) the Housing Center can suggest a unit that will result in an affirmative move, 2) it has keys to the unit, and 3) a client is interested in being shown the unit, the Housing Center will offer to have a guide show them units. Guides provide additional encouragement for an affirmative move and have further discussion with clients to overcome misperceptions about the community. Moves that result from guides showing apartments are extremely successful (94 percent) in promoting integration.

Table 1. Rental Moves and Affirmative Move Rates in Oak Park, IL

5-Year Total from 2010 - 2014	Moves by Housing Center Clients	Moves by Other Renters	Explanation
All Moves	4,612	6,687 (1)	Housing Center is responsible for 40% of moves to Oak Park.
Affirmative Rate	68%	25% (2)	Housing Center affirmative rate is 2.7 times better than the general affirmative rate. The general rate would result in rapid segregation.
Moves to Units Listed with Housing Center	2,798	2,090	Housing Center rents 57% of the units listed with us.
Affirmative Rate	80%	53%	Housing Center affirmative rate is 1.5 times better than the general affirmative rate. The general rate is just barely integrative.
Moves to Multi-Family Housing Incentives Program Listed Units	798	339	Housing Center is responsible for 70% of moves to Village-supported MFHIP buildings.
Affirmative Rate	94%	49%	Housing Center affirmative rate is 1.9 times better than the general affirmative rate. The general rate would result in segregation.

Notes: Grayed data is based on estimates.

(1) Estimate based on remaining 60 percent of market turnover minus a 2 percent vacancy rate.

(2) Estimate based on rate of integrated moves in the Chicago region using the Panel Study of Income Dynamics data and a 50 percent increase in that rate as an “Oak Park effect”

These services are unique to the Housing Center. Landlords do not offer them, primarily for two reasons. First, as owners and managers of housing, landlords do not have the same legal ability to engage in integration activity that the nonprofit and property-free Housing Center enjoys. Second, landlords are, as would be reasonably expected, profit-driven, not mission-driven. Their primary function is to rent out their units in a profitable manner, not to promote racial integration.

Another factor that makes it difficult for owners to market their units affirmatively is that, with a few exceptions, landlords in Oak Park do not own property in enough different areas of the village to encourage integration. Many landlords own three or fewer buildings. In nearly all of these cases, their buildings are located near each other. The supply available to each landlord does not allow for them to pursue wider integration efforts without help from the Housing Center.

Data shows the Housing Center's efficacy in producing residential integration in Oak Park. In moves where the Housing Center advises a client, the integration rate is significantly higher than when the Housing Center is not involved. Of 2,778 moves made by Housing Center clients to listed units from cooperating landlords within Oak Park, 2,224, or 80 percent, were affirmative. Of the 2,090 moves to units listed with the Housing Center but rented by non-clients, only 53 percent were affirmative. As shown in Table 1, this disparity is even greater for moves to units in the Multi-Family Housing Incentives Program (MFHIP), which are the most vulnerable to segregation.

It is also worth noting that even for the moves by "Other" renters on this graph, the Housing Center is exerting some influence through its technical assistance to the cooperating landlord listing the unit. The nonprofit Residence Corporation's buildings are also included in these numbers. If this graph included only for-profit private landlords, the affirmative rate for "Other" moves would fall below 50 percent.

Unique in the Area

Oak Park is unique in the region for its racial stability and integration. Neighboring communities are showing greater tendencies toward overall population shifts, as Table 2 demonstrates.

Table 2. Changes in Population Shares for Oak Park, IL and Adjacent Communities, 2000 - 2013

Race/Ethnicity	Austin	Berwyn	Cicero	Elmwood Park	Forest Park	Oak Park	River Forest
White	-1%	-25%	-11%	-11%	-5%	-1%	-5%
Black	-4%	5%	2%	0%	2%	-1%	1%
Asian	0%	-1%	-1%	0%	1%	1%	3%
Latino	5%	22%	10%	10%	2%	1%	0%

Source: 2000 Census and 2013 American Community Survey

Berwyn, Cicero, and Elmwood Park are experiencing rapid racial changes in their populations. Forest Park and River Forest are experiencing changes at a slower rate. However, population losses are only in the white category. In Forest Park, these changes are resulting in a greater deviation from the regional average for population shares. In River Forest, recent changes could signal progress toward integration if future trends begin to include black and Latino populations at a greater rate. While already predominantly African American, Austin continues to lose white population but is now experiencing an increase in Latino population.

Only Oak Park is experiencing small, demographically stable changes. This stability is important for planning purposes and for community cohesion. Moreover, those changes are bringing Oak Park closer to regional population averages, indicating that people of all races are looking to Oak Park as a place to live. Indeed, with the exception of its relatively small share of Latinos, Oak Park is closer to regional averages for population shares than any of its neighbors (see Table 3). Oak Park’s overall difference from the regional average is also the smallest. It is an amazing accomplishment given that prior to the Housing Center, Oak Park was 99 percent white and deviated wildly from the regional averages.

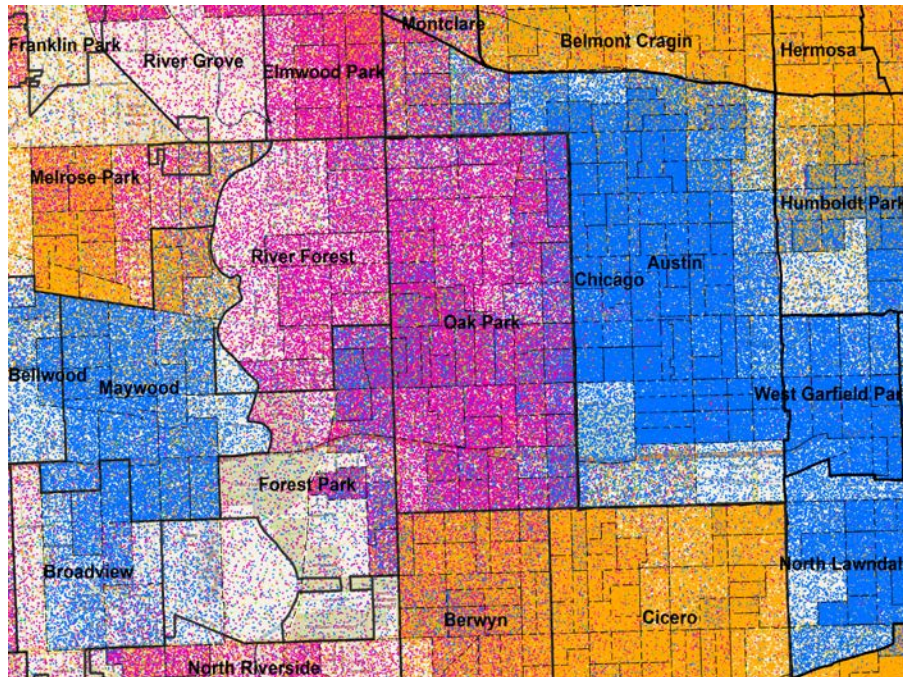
Table 3. Variance from Regional Population Shares for Oak Park, IL and Adjacent Communities, 2013

Race/Ethnicity	Region	Percentage Point Difference between Region and Community						
		Austin	Berwyn	Cicero	Elmwood Park	Forest Park	Oak Park	River Forest
White	53%	-49%	-22%	-45%	20%	-7%	11%	28%
Black	17%	68%	-12%	-15%	-17%	15%	3%	-12%
Asian	6%	5%	-4%	-6%	-4%	2%	-1%	-1%
Latino	22%	-13%	38%	66%	-1%	-12%	-15%	-17%
Total Variance	N/A	135%	76%	131%	42%	35%	31%	58%

Source: 2013 Area Community Survey

The segregation within surrounding communities also has an influence on decisions to move to Oak Park. Even as the Housing Center continues to promote integration within the community, segregation dominates most of western Cook County as the following dot density map of 2010 Census data shows.

Figure 3. Dot Density Map of Population by Race/Ethnicity in Oak Park, IL and Surrounding Area



Source: Oak Park Regional Housing Center analysis of 2010 Census data
 Key: Pink=White Blue=African American Orange=Latino Green=Asian; 1 dot = 10 persons

The Value of the Housing Center and Integration

The intentional effort to sustain the integration of our diverse community is an investment with many social and economic benefits for Oak Park. It results in a more harmonious and a more prosperous community.

Typically, when a community sees a change in diversity, that change is accompanied by patterns of segregation. Examples of this are abundant in the Chicago region, including in nearby community areas and suburbs. Moreover, this trend has continued throughout history to the present day. In fact, segregation has been a historically consistent and fundamental form of perpetuating inequality in America, particularly since the Reconstruction era. During the Great Migration to Midwestern and Northeastern cities, segregation was heavily enforced by local, state, and federal government policies. As a result, 24 of the 30 most segregated cities and metropolitan regions in the nation are in the Midwest and Northeast. Chicagoland consistently ranks in the top five most segregated regions.⁵

Even in communities that at one time had integration efforts in place but later scaled them back or abandoned them, diversity has been accompanied by segregation. Shaker Heights, Ohio and University City, Missouri, both had integration programs predating even the Oak Park Strategy, but they dramatically scaled back these efforts; they have subsequently sustained diversity but experienced diminished integration.

Meanwhile, segregation often results in negative economic consequences, particularly in areas that have higher minority populations, but also for whole communities. The Voorhees Center at the University of Illinois at Chicago has mapped how incomes have declined in Chicago census tracts that have racially segregated to become predominantly minority tracts. They also demonstrated that the current income inequality divide is almost identical to the pattern of racial segregation in Chicago.⁶

Arguably, the negative effect on a whole community is more pronounced in suburban contexts where populations and geographical areas are smaller. Often, the negative

⁵ The Chicago region is the 5th most segregated. 3 adjacent regions are 1st (Gary, IN), 3rd (Milwaukee, WI), and 74th (Rockford, IL) according to CensusScope http://www.censuscope.org/us/rank_dissimilarity_white_black.html.

⁶ Nolan (2015).

consequences of segregation overtake a whole suburb, resulting in lower property values, lower tax revenue, and diminished services. The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning has mapped regional opportunity. This geospatial index includes access to employment, good schools, and other important quality-of-life factors. It also includes the fiscal capacity of each municipality. There is an extremely close correlation between communities of color, constrained fiscal capacity, and a lack of opportunity.⁷ Thus, racial integration strategies in diverse communities are more than social justice programs: they promote economic prosperity as well.

Many of the Chicago region's majority-black south suburban communities formed a collaboration called Diversity, Inc. to promote diverse and integrated communities. All of these communities continue to provide housing for middle-class or working-class households. However, they suffer economically, probably due to perceptions of majority-black communities that are influenced by implicit biases, racial blind spots, and stereotypes.

Two phenomena particularly detrimental to majority-black communities, depressed home values and retail redlining, are pronounced in these poor south-side neighborhoods. If segregation were to occur within Oak Park, it is reasonable to expect that areas with greater African American populations would lose value and be less desirable for retail development. This is a consistent outcome of segregation. The structural forces of racism result in negatively skewed home values in neighborhoods of color.

Table 4 shows that even though the southern suburbs of Flossmoor and Olympia Fields have higher median incomes than Oak Park, their median home values are lower. In the case of Flossmoor, the difference is astonishing. While median income is \$22,000 higher, median home value is \$102,000 lower. Homewood and Matteson have slightly lower incomes, but the corresponding home values are about half those in Oak Park. These lower property values reduce property tax revenues and strain the fiscal capacity of these communities to provide high quality services and comfortable lifestyles.

⁷ See Breymaier, Davis, and Fron (2013), 46, Map 10: "Regional Areas of Opportunity."

Table 4. Median Income and Median Home Value for Oak Park, IL and Comparable Municipalities in Chicago’s South Suburbs

Community	Median Income	Median Home Value
Flossmoor	\$100,941	\$256,500
Olympia Fields	\$85,917	\$246,500
Oak Park	\$78,802	\$358,800
Homewood	\$70,121	\$180,100
Matteson	\$70,000	\$167,500

Source: 2010 US Census

Arguably, Oak Park is more conveniently located than Flossmoor. The west-side suburb of LaGrange has a location more comparable to Flossmoor’s: both towns have commuter rail access and a similar commute time into downtown Chicago. The two communities have nearly identical median incomes, and both are similarly residential, with about the same owner-to-renter ratio. The only significant difference is race: Flossmoor is 41 percent white, while LaGrange is 82 percent white. The difference in home values is striking. Median home values in LaGrange are \$437,600, while in Flossmoor they are \$256,500. Race appears to be a significant influence on the differing home values in the two communities.

Retail redlining also harms majority-black communities. They lose retail opportunities due to the perceptions associated with the racial makeup of the communities. William Bellinger and Jue Wang found that African American communities are systematically underserved by retail, even though Latino and low-income communities are not.⁸ Direct discussion with south suburban municipal officials concurs with this research. They struggle consistently to attract new businesses to their communities despite the fact that they have middle-class populations.

To most Oak Parkers’ minds, an equally unappealing change would be a community that segregated toward an exclusivity that significantly reduced populations of people of color. While research does not indicate that this would typically result in economic losses, Oak Park would certainly suffer socially. Diversity is a core value of Oak Park. Failure to sustain a diverse and integrated community would be a loss to the identity and sense of place in Oak Park. In

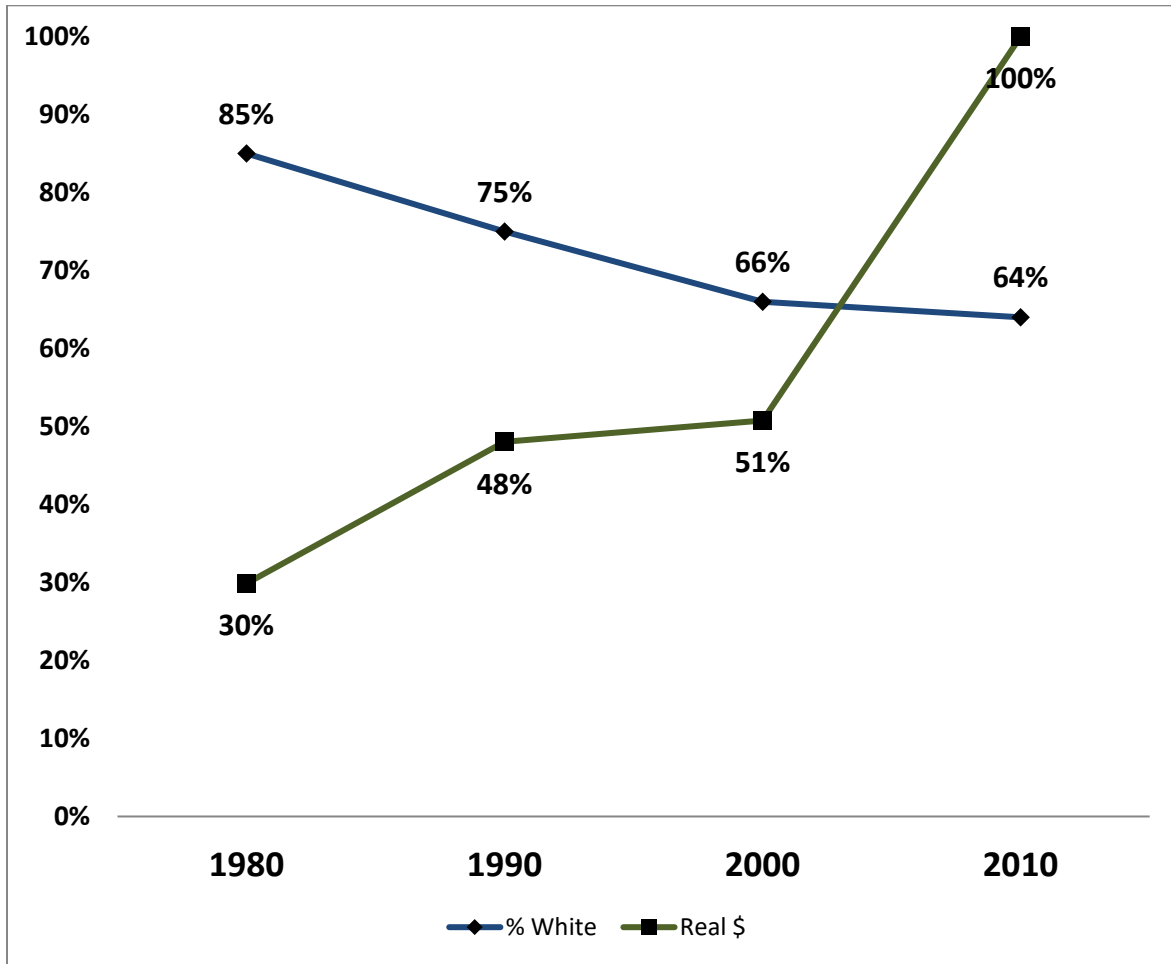
⁸ Bellinger and Wang (2011).

essence, the integrated diversity of the community is its brand. A loss of diversity and integration would likely cause some instability as more progressive-minded homeowners reconsidered their commitment to living in the community.

Through intentional efforts to sustain integration, Oak Park has built diversity into a competitive advantage. Those searching for a predominantly white community with a quality of life similar to Oak Park have hundreds of choices in the Chicago region. What brings them to Oak Park is a unique quality of diversity with prosperity. This diversity also sustains other parts of Oak Park life that residents value. It enhances arts and cultural life and fosters a civic mindedness and generosity among residents. The diversity of Oak Park sets it apart from other communities in the region and often puts it in a positive media spotlight that markets the community nationally.

With its integration strategy, Oak Park has created an environment where diversity and prosperity coexist. It is unlike communities where diversity broadens without an integration strategy. The following graph shows the uncommon nature of Oak Park by charting the change in white population percentages and the change in the equalized assessed value of real estate in the community standardized to 2010 dollars. As Oak Park lost white population, property value increased in real dollars. This return on investment for homeowners and property investors has run counter to the conventional wisdom that diversity brings disinvestment and instability.

Figure 4. White Population Share and Standardized Property Value based on the Equalized Assessed Value in Oak Park (2010 dollars)



Sources: US Census 1980-2010 and Oak Park Township Assessors Office

Housing and Schools

One final factor regarding integration in Oak Park is the connection between housing and schools. The Oak Park Strategy has also included efforts to promote school integration. At the high school level, the community has always had only one campus. While the high school has approximately 4,000 students, this single campus ensures that all children attend the same high school and that attendance boundaries will not affect neighborhood choice.

The elementary and middle schools required greater intervention. The community once had ten K-8 schools that all served as neighborhood schools. This did encourage segregation to

some degree, as school reputations influenced neighborhood choice. It became clear that some elementary districts were experiencing a degree of white avoidance in the late 1970s.

To overcome this issue, two of the elementary schools were converted to middle schools. The boundaries of the remaining eight elementary districts were redrawn with integration in mind. This system dramatically reduced the influence of schools on housing choices. All of the new boundaries included at least modest integration. Over time, the boundaries have been adjusted as needed. Today, seven of the eight districts are similar in their diversity patterns. Only one continues to have lower than normal percentages of African American and Latino students.

The two middle schools were also set up to promote integration. Each receives students from four elementary schools. One receives from the northeastern and southwestern schools. The other receives from the southeastern and northwestern schools. This checkerboard pattern corrects for small segregation patterns that might occur at the elementary level.

School board policies over the past ten years have also accounted for the effects of historic and geographic momentum. The four schools on the eastern side of Oak Park receive slightly more resources than those on the western side of the community to ensure that they remain both aesthetically and academically desirable for new residents. While there is no significant difference in school performance across the eight elementary schools, the lasting effects of past disparities remain an influence. This state of affairs is among the factors that the Housing Center has to discuss with clients as they consider where to move in Oak Park. As with other factors, a combination of data and personal experience allows Housing Center staff to improve understanding about school quality and eliminate schools as a factor in the housing choice process.

Finally, the schools play a role in educating the community regarding its integration strategy. In collaboration with the Housing Center, presentations about how Oak Park works intentionally to promote diversity and integration ensure that the next generation will understand the effort required to sustain the community's core values.

Conclusion

The Oak Park Strategy serves Oak Park both economically and socially. The Housing Center ensures strong and stable property values and provides a foundation for community harmony that makes diversity an important community asset. Its mission to achieve meaningful and lasting racial diversity in the community is critical to the public brand and core values of Oak Park.

Because the housing market is always in motion, the work of the Housing Center constantly remains relevant. Thousands of moves into and within Oak Park occur annually. Each one of these moves can result in either integration or segregation. As the data show, the Housing Center is critical to ensuring positive outcomes of these moves.

This sustained success of the Housing Center and the Oak Park Strategy has provided a replicable model for other communities. It has transformed Oak Park from a 99 percent white community to a community that reflects the diversity of its metropolitan region. Moreover, as diversity broadened and integration improved, the community also enjoyed greater prosperity and an increased commitment to social harmony. Today, it exhibits many of the qualities that fair housing and racial justice advocates hope to achieve elsewhere.

The community's focus on integrating its housing also ensures an integrated school system. Oak Park can maintain a neighborhood school system because of the integration in its housing market. This residential integration also has an effect on integration in social networks, park utilization, business ownership, and community participation.

Perhaps the most succinct justification for Oak Park Strategy comes from Dr. King. While in the Midwest, he plainly stated, "For as long as there is residential segregation, there will be de facto segregation in every area of life."⁹ Oak Park has shown that the converse is also true. For as long as integration has been promoted in the housing market, integration has improved in every area of life within Oak Park.

⁹ A transcript of King's speech at Western Michigan University, December 18, 1963, is available at <http://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/MLK.pdf>.

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