

PRESS RELEASE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Northern Suburbs Prove to be Welcoming Communities

Residents' Voices and Open Communities' Advocacy Foster More Welcoming Places to Live

Winnetka, IL, March 24, 2015 – Open Communities continues to expand our services to be able to foster more welcoming and inclusive communities in Chicago's northern suburbs. In addition to the free and confidential services we provide, our advocacy also allows for more community members to be able to choose where they want to live.

Our first few months of 2015 have been very successful and we have several other campaigns underway. Here is a look at our wins so far:

1) Glenview: "We Want to Be a Welcoming Community"

In March 2015, the Village of Glenview reversed its own August 2013 ordinance that allowed landlords to discriminate against voucher holders (Section 8) despite Cook County's inclusion of Housing Choice Vouchers as protected under "source of income" in its fair housing law. Glenview also has been developing and planning for affordable housing.

We applaud the Village of Glenview for their work to reserve the ordinance. We also thank the many Glenview residents, congregations, and the League of Women Voters of Glenview for their passionate testimony and advocacy on behalf of low-income families and all people who have historically suffered from discrimination and who are protected by fair housing laws.

More in the Pioneer Press: [Glenview reverses stance on housing vouchers](#)

2) Open Communities Discourages Crime Free Ordinances

Open Communities supports Senate Bill 1547, which will protect tenants and landlords from evictions, fines, or loss of business simply because they call the police for help. In at least 35 municipalities in Illinois, Crime Free Rental Housing, or Nuisance Property Ordinances have been enacted and include penalties when police are called to the property. These ordinances are punitive against survivors of domestic violence and people with disabilities. They also disproportionately affect people of color. Thanks to a grant to Open Communities from HUD through the Fair Housing Initiatives Program, we are working with the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law to design a Healthy Homes Ordinance to address these issues in a positive and non-discriminatory manner.

In March 2015, the Northfield Village Board has also decided to abandon plans for a new rental housing ordinance.

More in the Chicago Tribune: [Victims of crime hurt by crime-free laws](#)

More in Pioneer Press: [Northfield gives up on rental housing ordinance](#)

3) A Win for Group Homes in Skokie

Last summer, the [Village Skokie began considering a six month moratorium on group homes](#). Open Communities emphatically stood against the idea, which would further segregate housing for the elderly and people with disabilities. The group home providers believe that, "Skokie is a wonderful community and a great place to be able to have a group home." The Skokie Plan Commission on March 5 recommended only minor changes in requirements for group home facilities after village staff carefully studied the issue.

More in the Pioneer Press: [Tweaks recommended in group home requirements](#)

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About Open Communities

Open Communities, formerly Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs, is a nonprofit organization that advocates for fair and affordable housing in 16 northern suburbs of Chicago. Our mission is to educate, advocate and organize to promote just and inclusive communities in north suburban Chicago. We are a leading voice for housing, economic and social justice in north suburban Chicago, working to promote inclusive communities that are welcoming to all. We work with current and prospective residents and local groups to promote economically and culturally diverse communities in north suburban Chicago. We provide fair and affordable housing counseling services, community education, advocacy, and organizing for welcoming communities.

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