

for the public interest



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Appeals Court Ruling Has New Implications for Gautreaux

A little noted decision of the federal appeals court in Chicago has big implications for BPI's Gautreaux case—and for the redevelopment of Chicago's public housing-dominated neighborhoods such as those surrounding Cabrini-Green and Robert Taylor Homes.

The appeals court let stand a lower court decision that Gautreaux rules, designed to foster desegregation, apply to HOPE VI, the federal program under which much of Chicago's public housing is being redeveloped.

Under federal law CHA must close some 10,000 occupied public-housing apartments over the next decade in developments such as Cabrini-Green and Robert Taylor Homes. The goal is to turn such places into well-working mixed-income neighborhoods, using public housing dollars to "leverage" additional private investment. As a result of the federal court decision, BPI is assured a seat at the planning table to help ensure that the redevelopment will include neither too little nor too much public housing, in the former case failing to take full advantage of opportunities to provide needed housing for the poor, and in the latter turning



Brand-new townhomes in the West Haven community.

high-rise ghettos into low-rise ones. BPI looks forward to working with the City and CHA's new administration in this complicated but important endeavor.

In the meantime, BPI continues to push CHA to address in its relocation efforts what one recent study has identified as a pattern of resegregation in CHA's Section 8 program. BPI is advocating that as CHA moves families out of about-to-be demolished buildings, it should provide them real opportunities, through housing search assistance and counseling, to move throughout the metropolitan area into neighborhoods that will improve, rather than diminish, their life chances. The Leadership Council's Gautreaux program did as much for more than 8,500 families; CHA's Section 8 program should build on this important success story.