

ORDINANCE NO. 742

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A FAIR HOUSING ACT FOR THE CITY  
OF MONTICELLO AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

WHEREAS the City of Monticello, Arkansas, has applied to the Arkansas Department of Economic Development for an Arkansas Community and Economic Development Program (ACEDP) grant for improving the City's water and sewer systems in support of the new J. P. Price Sawmill;

WHEREAS, as a condition of receiving from the Arkansas Department of Economic Development an Arkansas Community and Economic Development Program (ACEDP) grant, the City has been requested to enact a plan to ensure fair housing opportunities for all residents;

WHEREAS, the City of Monticello deems it necessary and appropriate to enact a fair housing act;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of Monticello, Arkansas as follows:

The following shall be referred to as the **MONTICELLO FAIR HOUSING ACT**.

**Section 1. POLICY**

It is the policy of the City of Monticello to provide, within constitutional limitations, for fair housing throughout its jurisdiction.

**Section 2. DEFINITIONS**

(a) "Dwelling" means any building, structure, or portion thereof which is occupied as, or designed or intended for occupancy as, a residence by one or more families, and any vacant land which is offered for sale or lease for the construction or location thereon of any such building, structure, or portion thereof.

(b) "Family" includes a single individual.

(c) "Person" includes one or more individuals, corporations, partnerships, associations, labor organizations, legal representatives, mutual companies, joint-stock companies, trusts, unincorporated organizations, trustees, trustees in bankruptcy, receivers, and fiduciaries.

(d) "To rent" includes to lease, to sublease, to let and otherwise to grant for a consideration the right to occupy premises owned by the occupant.

- (e) "Discriminatory housing practice" means an act that is unlawful under Sections 4, 5, or 6.

### **Section 3. UNLAWFUL PRACTICE**

Subject to the provisions of Sub-section (b) and Section 7, the prohibitions against discrimination in the sale or rental of housing set forth in Section 4 shall apply

- (a) All dwellings except as exempted by Sub-section (b)
- (b) Nothing in Section 4 shall apply to
- (1) Any single-family house sold or rented by an owner: **Provided**, that such private individual owner does not own more than three such single-family houses at any one time: **Provided further**, that in the case of the sale of any such single-family house by a private individual owner not residing in such house at the time of such sale or who was not the most recent resident of such house prior to such sale, the exemption granted by this subsection shall apply only with respect to one such sale within any twenty-four month period: **Provided further**, that such bona fide private individual owner does not own any interest in, nor is there owned or reserved on his behalf, under any express or voluntary agreement, title to or any right to all or a portion of the proceeds from the sale or rental of, more than three such single-family houses at any one time: **Provided further**, that the sale or rental of any such single-family house shall be excepted from the application of this title only if such house is sold or rented (A) without the use in any manner of the sales or rental facilities or the sales or rental services of any real estate broker, agent, or salesman, or of such facilities or services of any person in the business of selling or renting dwellings, or of any employee or agent of any such broker, agent, salesman, or person and (B) without the publication, posting or mailing, after notice of any advertisement or written notice in violation of Section 4 (c) of this ordinance, but nothing in this provision shall prohibit the use of attorneys, escrow agents, abstractors, title companies, and other such professional assistance as necessary to perfect or transfer the title, or
  - (2) Rooms or units in dwellings containing living quarters occupied or intended to be occupied by no more than four families living independently of each other, if the owner actually maintains and occupies one of such living quarters as his residence.
- (c) For the purposes of Sub-section (b), a person shall be deemed to be in the business of selling or renting dwellings if

- (1) He has, within the preceding twelve months, participated as principal in three or more transactions involving the sale or rental of any dwelling or any interest therein, or
- (2) He has, within the preceding twelve months, participated as agent, other than in the sale of his own personal residence in providing sales or rental facilities or sales or rental services in two or more transactions involving the sale or rental of any dwelling or any interest therein, or
- (3) He is the owner of any dwelling designed or intended for occupancy by, or occupied by, five or more families.

#### **Section 4. DISCRIMINATION IN THE SALE OR RENTAL OF HOUSING**

As made applicable by Section 3 and except as exempted by Sections 3 (b) and 7, it is unlawful

- (a) To refuse to sell or rent after the making of a bona fide offer, or to refuse to negotiate for the sale or rental of, or otherwise make unavailable or deny, a dwelling to any person because of race, color, religion, or national origin.
- (b) To discriminate against any person in the terms, conditions, or privileges of sale or rental of a dwelling, or in the provision of services or facilities in connection therewith, because of race, color, religion, or national origin.
- (c) To make, print or publish, or cause to be made, printed or published any notice, statement, or advertisement, with respect to the sale or rental of a dwelling that indicates any preference, limitation, or discrimination based on race, color, religion, or national origin, or an intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination.
- (d) To represent to any person because of race, color, religion, or national origin that any dwelling is not available for inspection, sale, or rental when such dwelling is in fact so available.
- (e) For profit, to induce or attempt to induce any person to sell or rent any dwelling by representations regarding the entry or prospective entry into the neighborhood of a person or persons of a particular race, color, religion, or national origin.

#### **Section 5. DISCRIMINATION IN THE FINANCING OF HOUSING**

It shall be unlawful for any bank, building and loan association, insurance company or other corporation, association, firm or enterprise whose business consists in whole or in part in the making of commercial real estate loans, to deny a loan or other financial assistance to a person applying therefor for the purpose of purchasing, constructing, improving, repairing, or maintaining a dwelling, or to discriminate against him in the

fixing of the amount, interest rate, duration, or other terms or conditions of such loan or other financial assistance, because of the race, color, religion, or national origin of such person or of any person associated with him in connection with such loan or other financial assistance or the purposes of such loan or other financial assistance, or of the present or prospective owners, lessees, tenants, or occupants of the dwelling or dwellings in relation to which such loan or other financial assistance is to be made or given: **Provided** that nothing contained in this section shall impair the scope or effectiveness of the exception contained in Section 3(b).

#### **Section 6. DISCRIMINATION IN THE PROVISION OF BROKERAGE SERVICES**

It shall be unlawful to deny any person access to or membership or participation in any multiple-listing service, real estate brokers organization or other service, organization, or facility relating to the business of selling or renting dwellings, or to discriminate against him in the terms or conditions of such access, membership, or participation, on account of race, color, religion, or national origin.

#### **Section 7. EXEMPTION**

Nothing in this ordinance shall prohibit a religious organization, association, or society, or any nonprofit institution or organization operated, supervised or controlled by, or in conjunction with a religious organization, association, or society, from limiting the sale, rental or occupancy of dwellings which it owns or operates for other than a commercial purpose to persons of the same religion, or from giving preference to such persons, unless membership in such religion is restricted on account of race, color, or national origin. Nor shall anything in this ordinance prohibit a private club not in fact open to the public, which as an incident to its primary purpose or purposes provides lodgings which it owns or operates for other than a commercial purpose, from limiting the rental or occupancy of such lodgings to its members or from giving preference to its members.

#### **Section 8. ADMINISTRATION**

- (a) The authority and responsibility for administering this Act shall be in the Chief Executive Officer of the City of Monticello.
- (b) The Chief Executive Officer may delegate any of these functions, duties, and powers to employees of the City or to boards of such employees, including functions, duties, and powers with respect to investigating, conciliating, hearing, determining, ordering, certifying, reporting or otherwise acting as to any work, business, or matter under this ordinance. The Chief Executive Officer shall by rule prescribe such rights of appeal from the decisions of his hearing examiners to other hearing examiners or to other officers in the City/County, to boards of officers or to himself, as shall be appropriate and in accordance with law.

(c) All executive departments and agencies shall administer their programs and activities relating to housing and urban development in a manner affirmatively to further the purposes of this ordinance and shall cooperate with the Chief Executive Officer to further such purposes.

#### **Section 9. EDUCATION AND CONCILIATION**

Immediately after the enactment of this ordinance, the Chief Executive Officer shall commence such educational and conciliatory activities as will further the purposes of this ordinance. He shall call conferences of persons in the housing industry and other interested parties to acquaint them with the provisions of this ordinance and his suggested means of implementing it, and shall endeavor with their advice to work out programs of voluntary compliance and of enforcement.

#### **Section 10. ENFORCEMENT**

(a) Any person who claims to have been injured by a discriminatory housing practice or who believes that he will be irrevocably injured by a discriminatory housing practice that is about to occur (hereafter "person aggrieved") may file a complaint with the Chief Executive Officer. Complaints shall be in writing and shall contain such information and be in such form, as the Chief Executive Officer requires. Upon receipt of such a complaint, the Chief Executive Officer shall furnish a copy of the same to the person or persons who allegedly committed or is/was about to commit the alleged discriminatory housing practice. Within thirty days after receiving a complaint, or within thirty days after the expiration of any period of reference under subsection (c), the Chief Executive Officer shall investigate the complaint and give notice in writing to the person aggrieved whether he intends to resolve it. If the Chief Executive Officer decides to resolve the complaints, he shall proceed to try to eliminate or correct the alleged discriminatory housing practice by informal methods of conference, conciliation, and persuasion. Nothing said or done in the course of such informal endeavors may be made public or used as evidence in a subsequent proceeding under this ordinance without the written consent of the persons concerned. Any employee of the Chief Executive Officer who shall make public any information in violation of this provision shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than one year.

(b) A complaint under Sub-section (a) shall be filed within one hundred and eighty days after the alleged discriminatory housing practice occurred. Complaints shall be in writing and shall state the facts upon which the allegations of a discriminatory housing practice are based. Complaints may be reasonably and fairly amended at any time. A respondent may file an answer to the complaint against him and with the leave of the Chief Executive Officer, which shall be granted whenever it would be reasonable and fair to do so, may amend his answer at any time. Both complaints and answers shall be verified.

(c) If within thirty days after a complaint is filed with the Chief Executive Officer, he/she has been unable to obtain voluntary compliance with this ordinance, the person aggrieved may, within thirty days thereafter, file a complaint with the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Chief Executive Officer will assist in filing.

(d) If the Chief Executive Officer has been unable to obtain voluntary compliance within thirty days of the complaint, the person aggrieved may, within thirty days hereafter commence a civil action in any appropriate court, against the respondent named in the complaint, to enforce the rights granted or protected by this ordinance, insofar as such rights relate to the subject of the complaint. If the court finds that a discriminatory housing practice has occurred or is about to occur, the court may enjoin the respondent from engaging in such practice or order such affirmative action as may be appropriate.

(e) In proceedings brought pursuant to this section, the burden of proof shall be on the complainant.

(f) Whenever an action filed by an individual shall come to trial, the Chief Executive Officer shall immediately terminate all efforts to obtain voluntary compliance.

### **Section 11. INVESTIGATIONS; SUBPOENAS; GIVING OF EVIDENCE**

1. In conducting an investigation, the Chief Executive Officer shall have access at all reasonable times to premises, records, documents, individuals, and other evidence or possible sources of evidence and may examine, record, and copy such materials and take and record the testimony or statements of such persons as are reasonably necessary for the furtherance of the investigation: **Provided, however,** that the Chief Executive Officer first complies with the provisions of the Fourth Amendment relating to unreasonable searches and seizures. The Chief Executive Officer may issue subpoenas to compel his access to or the production of such materials, or the appearance of such persons, and may issue interrogatories to a respondent, to the same extent and subject to the same limitations as would apply if the subpoenas or interrogatories were issued or served in aid of a civil action in the United States district court for the district in which the investigation is taking place. The Chief Executive Officer may administer oaths.

2. Upon written application to the Chief Executive Officer, a respondent shall be entitled to the issuance of a reasonable number of subpoenas by and in the name of the Chief Executive Officer to the same extent and subject to the same limitations as subpoenas issued by the Chief Executive Officer himself. Subpoenas issued at the request of a respondent shall show on their face the name and address of such respondent and shall state that they were issued at his request.

(c) Witnesses summoned by subpoena of the Chief Executive Officer shall be entitled to the same witness and mileage fees as are witnesses in proceedings in

United States district courts. Fees payable to a witness summoned by a subpoena issued at the request of a respondent shall be paid by him.

(d) Within five days after service of a subpoena upon any person, such person may petition the Chief Executive Officer to revoke or modify the subpoena. The Chief Executive Officer shall grant the petition if he finds that the subpoena requires appearance or attendance at an unreasonable time or place, that it requires production of evidence which does not relate to any matter under investigation, that it does not describe with sufficient particularity the evidence to be produced, that compliance would be unduly onerous, or for other good reason.

(e) In case of contumacy or refusal to obey a subpoena, the Chief Executive Officer or person at whose request it was issued may petition for enforcement in the Municipal or State court for the district in which the person to whom the subpoena was addressed resides, was served, etc.

(f) Any person who willfully fails or neglects to attend and testify or to answer any lawful inquiry or to produce records, documents, or other evidence, if in his power to do so, in obedience to the subpoena or lawful order of the Chief Executive Officer shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than one year, or both. Any person who, with intent thereby to mislead the Chief Executive Officer, shall make or cause to be made any false entry or statement of fact in any report, account, record, or other document submitted to the Chief Executive Officer pursuant to his subpoena or other order, or shall willfully neglect or fail to make or cause to be made full, true, and correct entries in such reports, accounts, records, or other documents, or shall willfully mutilate, alter, or by any other means falsify any documentary evidence, shall be fined not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

(g) The Grantee's Attorney shall conduct all litigation in which the Chief Executive Officer participates as a party or as amicus pursuant to this ordinance.

## **Section 12. ENFORCEMENT BY PRIVATE PERSONS**

(a) The rights granted by Sections 3, 4, 5, and 6 may be enforced by civil actions in State or local courts of general jurisdiction. A civil action shall be commenced within one hundred and eighty days after the alleged discriminatory housing practice occurred: **Provided, however,** that the court shall continue such civil case brought pursuant to this Section or Section 10 (d) from time to time before bringing it to trial or renting dwellings; or

(b) Any person because he is or has been, or in order to intimidate such person or any other person or any class of persons from:

- (1) Participating, without discrimination on account of race, color, religion or national origin, in any of the activities, services, organizations or facilities described in Sub-section 15 (a); or

- (2) Affording another person or class of persons opportunity or protection to participate; or
- (3) Any citizen because he is/has been, or in order to discourage such or any other citizen from lawfully aiding or encouraging other persons to participate, without discrimination on account of race, color, religion or national origin, in any of the activities, services, organizations or facilities described in Sub-section 15 (a), or participating lawfully in speech or peaceful assembly opposing any denial of the opportunity to so participate shall be fined not more than \$1,000, or imprisoned not more than one year, or both; and if bodily injury results shall be fined not more than \$10,000, or imprisoned not more than ten years, or both; and if death results shall be subject to imprisonment for any term of years or for life.

**Section 13. SEVERABILITY**

Should any section of this ordinance be deemed unconstitutional or unenforceable for any reason, the section so deemed shall be severed from the ordinance and all other provisions of the ordinance not deemed unconstitutional or unenforceable shall remain in full force and effect.

**Section 14. EMERGENCY CLAUSE**

Whereas there is an urgent need to provide and assure fair housing opportunities for all residents of the City, therefore, an emergency is hereby declared to exist; and this Ordinance, being immediately necessary for the preservation and protection of the public peace, health, safety and welfare, shall take effect and be in force from and after its adoption.

ADOPTED on this 15 day of February, 2007.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
City-Clerk-Treasurer

APPROVED on this 15 day of February, 2007.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor