



Building Mixed-Income Communities: Jazz on the Boulevard Case Study

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

NUMBER THREE

UNDERSTANDING THE CHOICE TO LIVE AT JAZZ

Homeowners and subsidized renters

For higher income residents, the decision to move to Jazz was driven by *price, location*, and particularly for the market-rate buyers, the *investment potential*.

Higher income residents explained the appeal of Jazz as its prime location and affordability. They were not necessarily seeking to be part of the city's grand experiment to transform inner-city housing.

They were less focused on the mixed-income composition. Instead, they moved to Jazz because the development met their real estate needs and interests.

A subsidized renter said: "I thought it was a good investment. I thought the area was up and coming. . . I felt that I could get more for my

Why move to Jazz?

Residents shared with us the aspects of Jazz that appealed to them or concerned them, revealing differences in the motives behind their choice to live at Jazz on the Boulevard.

Homeowners and renters made their decision based on location, price, and potential for appreciation.

Many former public housing residents based their decision on the peaceful environment and diverse setting.

money. . . A good location. The price was right. All the upgrades: the hardwood floors, appliances, the carpet. I feel (with the) upgrades, the price wasn't that much."

One market-rate homeowner stated:

"Location (was most important). . . it's close to the lake-front. It was closer to our jobs."

For yet another market-rate homeowner, "it was the location, the affordability, being close to the lake. . . whenever I make a decision, being that I'm a banker, I always think of the appreciation. . . What is this home going to return for us over the next five years? . . . I had to do with the location, the environment, the cost."

Former public housing residents

The decision by former public housing residents to move to Jazz was driven by very different factors. Many of them told us their decision was more based on the *demographic make-up* of the development (*what kind of neighbors will I have?*), *lifestyle issues* (*will it be peaceful and quiet?*), and the *social environment* that would exist (*how will people behave and interact?*).

Many former public housing residents were looking for stability, diversity, and new opportunities at Jazz. As one resident described it:

"The thing I like most about it is it's real quiet and I'm able to get rest, because I have to go—everybody has to get up and go to work. And I don't hear all that chaos and noise that I used to hear. . . And I love the people in the area, seeing different people of different races. . . I never lived with, you know, people of a different race. I was always in [an] all-black community. So now that I'm, you know, interacting with people of a different race, it's nice. I like it. They are all respectful. . . and they stick together."

Study overview

THE JAZZ ON THE BOULEVARD CASE STUDY IS DOCUMENTING A NEW MIXED-INCOME DEVELOPMENT ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF CHICAGO BEING BUILT AS PART OF THE CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY (CHA) PLAN FOR TRANSFORMATION.

THE DEVELOPMENT TEAM AT JAZZ IS A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE THRUSH COMPANY, HEARTLAND HOUSING AND GRANITE DEVELOPMENT. THE SERVICE PROVIDER IS HEARTLAND HUMAN CARE SERVICES.

TO-DATE, IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS HAVE BEEN CONDUCTED WITH 46 RESIDENTS OF ALL INCOME LEVELS AT THE DEVELOPMENT, REPRESENTING ALMOST HALF OF THE CURRENT POPULATION, AS WELL AS 69 PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS WHO HAD EXPRESSED INTEREST IN MOVING TO A MIXED-INCOME DEVELOPMENT BUT DID NOT MOVE TO JAZZ.

THE CASE STUDY ALSO INCLUDES INTERVIEWS WITH DEVELOPMENT TEAMS AND THEIR PARTNERS AND OBSERVATIONS OF MEETINGS AND COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES.

FOR PAPERS AND MORE BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT THIS AND OTHER MIXED-INCOME DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, GO TO [HTTP://MSASS.CASE.EDU/FACULTY/MJOSEPH/INDEX.HTML](http://msass.case.edu/faculty/mjoseph/index.html).



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Why move to Jazz?

“I THINK ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT THINGS [ABOUT MOVING TO A MIXED-INCOME DEVELOPMENT] WAS EXPOSING MY SON TO DIFFERENT OPPORTUNITIES AND DIFFERENT PEOPLE.”

Some former **public housing residents** mentioned they were hoping to avoid certain types of people (and behaviors) by moving to Jazz.

A few talked about wanting to be in a development with a limited number of public housing residents. Several referred to drug use, drug dealing, and other illegal or delinquent behavior, while others talked about lifestyle issues.

One former public housing resident said moving to Jazz would expose her children to a better environment:

“When we were at [our former development], we had all

the gang-bangers, pants hanging all off your butt, and I didn’t want that for my son. And then the girls over there started having babies much, much younger. I didn’t want that for my daughter, so that’s why I made sure she didn’t go to school in the community and make friends outside.”

Many former public housing residents discussed the appeal of living around other types of people. For some, living in a more diverse setting such as Jazz could expand their understanding of the world outside of public housing:

As one former public housing resident stated: *“I think one*

of the most important things [about moving to a mixed-income development] was exposing my son to different opportunities and different people. Not that I don’t want him to know our people. I’m a very, very proud black woman, very proud. But this world is not just black. This world is not just black and white either. You have to be able to live with, and communicate with, all people in order to be successful. And you need an area that will make that happen for you, and you need to be somewhere where those people in that area can come together and feel safe together and get to know each other.”

Many former public housing residents discussed the appeal of living around other types of people.



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Concerns about moving to Jazz

During our interviews, residents shared their thoughts and concerns about moving to Jazz. Former public housing residents, subsidized renters, and homeowners shared similar concerns about the development.

Will I be safe?

Residents of all income levels were concerned about the safety of the neighborhood and the units.

"I think the first question I had was about the level of security...looking at some of the activity (on the street)...and seeing some of the stragglers at night."
—Market-rate homeowner

"I was mainly worried about the door...it's built with glass, so I was kind of worried about maybe would someone try to break in."
—Former public housing resident

What will it be like to live with public housing residents?

Some residents, including public housing residents, expressed concerns about the presence of public housing residents.

"Let's keep it real. I hope 'they' keep up their property."
—Market-rate homeowner

"That was one of my very first questions: 'How many [CHA] units are you going to have over here?'"
—Former public housing resident

Will I have what I need in my neighborhood?

Homeowners and renters expressed concern about the lack of retail and services in the neighborhood surrounding Jazz.

"It just doesn't have anywhere to go and hang out."
—Market-rate homeowner

"No place to shop. No decent neighborhood stores. Everywhere you go, you have to drive if you have to go out to the store."
—Subsidized renter

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Research Highlights series

This Highlights Series explores the early experiences of residents of all income levels who have moved into Jazz on the Boulevard:

1. Movers versus non-movers: Who are they?
2. The resident population at Jazz.
3. Understanding the choice to live at Jazz.
4. Resident perspectives on mixed-income development.
5. Early resident experiences: General satisfaction.
6. Early social relations at Jazz.

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