

PAM
362.84
U72 non
1956

**Nonwhite Neighbors and Property
Prices in Portland, Oregon**

~~~~~ and ~~~~~

**Residential Attitudes Toward  
Negroes As Neighbors**

Two Surveys by

**The Urban League of Portland**



**Affiliate of National Urban League  
Member, United Fund**

- (8) A house bought for \$8,450 in 1948 was sold for \$8,750 in 1950; this house was sold again in 1953 for \$10,000.
- (9) A house bought for \$7,625 in 1947 was sold for \$7,500 in 1950; it was sold again in 1952 for \$9,000.
- (10) A house bought for \$5,000 in 1944 was sold for \$7,500 in 1950.

A strong tendency to sell was evidenced in T-1 when the Negro family moved into the area. However, no mass panic selling resulted, and the area later tended to stabilize. All houses that were sold after the nonwhites came in were bought by white families. An interesting development is the fact that two new homes were built for white occupancy after 1950, one of them next door to the nonwhite residence, the other only two houses away.

### CONTROL AREA ONE

Location: one mile south of T-1, in a neighborhood adjacent to the University of Portland. Majority of houses in area constructed in late 1940s and 1950s; current value range \$6,500 to \$13,500, with estimated average value of \$10,000.

The average market price for homes sold in each year rose gradually from \$6,300 in 1945 to \$7,900 in 1951, then jumped to \$12,900 in 1952, a year in which four new homes were built at an average price of \$13,200 each. One home sold for less on resale than it had in a previous sale.



Resales in the control area were fewer than in the test area, but these sales reflect the general price trend:

- (1) A house bought for \$8,750 in 1946 was sold for \$9,750 in 1948 and sold again for \$11,500 in 1954.
- (2) A house bought for \$7,025 in 1944 was sold for \$7,950 in 1945 and again for \$12,500 in 1951.
- (3) A house bought for \$7,000 in 1949 was sold for \$5,500 in 1951 and again for \$5,875 in same year.

### COMPARISONS — 1

A comparison of sales prices in the test and control areas shows an upward trend in both areas corresponding closely to the upward price trend for the city as a whole,<sup>8</sup> with very little variance between the two areas from 1945 through 1951 (the year after the nonwhite family entered T-1). A sharp rise occurred in C-1 sales in 1952, and continued in subsequent years attributable to a late rash of new construction. Sales in T-1 in this later period occurred mainly in older homes.

A comparison of price gains and losses in resales in the two areas reveals a total average gain of 12.5 per cent on resale in T-1 as compared with an average gain of 31.1 per cent in C-1.

### TEST AREA TWO

Location: Northeast Portland (Halsey Street area) four miles east of city center. Test house, built in 1940s on 100x100 corner lot, purchased by

<sup>8</sup> Records of the County Assessor show that the average residential sales price in Portland rose from \$4,393 in 1944 to \$9,385 in 1954.

Negro dining car waiter and family in 1951 for \$10,000. Wide variety in age of structures, with a few new homes and some vacant lots. Current value range \$5,500 to \$14,000, with estimated average value of \$9,500.



The average market price for homes sold showed a gradual rise from \$6,000 to \$8,500 over the 10-year period. Two houses sold for less after the nonwhites came in than they had sold for in a previous year.

These sales were subject to the impact, if any, of the presence of the nonwhites:

- (1) A house purchased for \$8,000 in 1948 sold for \$10,300 in 1951 and again for \$10,600 in 1953.
- (2) A house bought new for \$8,500 in 1950 was sold for \$10,000 in 1951.
- (3) A house bought for \$8,500 in 1944 was sold for \$8,200 in 1953.
- (4) A house bought for \$8,950 in 1951 was sold for \$10,000 in 1953.
- (5) A house bought for \$7,500 in 1949 was sold for \$9,600 in 1950 and again for \$9,000, in 1953.
- (6) A lot sold for \$1,500 in 1951 and again for \$2,000 in 1953.

There was no evidence of panic selling in T-2 following the entrance of the Negro family, and all other houses purchased were for Caucasian occupancy. A lot on the opposite corner to the nonwhite dwelling was bought for \$1,250 in 1951 and sold for \$1,900 in 1954. It has since become the site of a new home, valued at approximately \$14,000.

### CONTROL AREA TWO

Located in an adjacent neighborhood just southeast of T-2. The age and average value of homes were approximate to those in the test area.

The average market price for homes sold each year showed a steady rise, with minor fluctuations, from \$4,300 in 1944 to \$9,100 in 1954. One house was resold for less in this all-white area than it had sold for previously.



Sales trends comparative to the test area are reflected in the following sales:

- (1) A house bought for \$6,000 in 1947 was sold for \$8,000 in 1953.
- (2) A house bought for \$8,750 in 1949 was sold for \$9,500 in 1951.
- (3) A new home bought for \$14,500 in 1948 was sold for \$16,000 in 1950.
- (4) A new house bought for \$8,950 in 1947 was sold for \$11,000 in 1952.
- (5) A house bought for \$9,950 in 1951 was sold for \$11,500 in 1954.
- (6) A house bought for \$4,500 in 1945 was sold for \$9,000 in 1954.
- (7) A house bought for \$7,450 in 1945 was sold for \$7,000 in 1953.

### COMPARISONS — 2

An examination of price trends in Test and Control Areas Two for the ten-year period shows prices in T-2 beginning slightly above and ending slightly below those in C-2. On resales, homes in the integrated area (T-2) sold for an average of 15.8 per cent more after the nonwhites came in than in previous sales, while homes in the area of continuing all-white occu-

---

**A Final Word . . .**

## **THE CHALLENGE IS YOURS**

Herein are the facts. These facts debunk the myth of the devaluation of property by race in our community. They also present a picture in racial attitudes that is far from perfect. They throw new light on the problem of racial segregation in housing in Portland. The business of meeting this problem is up to you, and you—and all of us. Whether you are a builder, a businessman, a clergyman, a civic leader, a real estate broker, a public official or a private homeowner, you have a responsibility to help eliminate the false notions, prejudice, discrimination and injustice which plague our minorities in their quest for adequate, modern, non-segregated housing. You can work earnestly and honestly in your own field of activity to remove this blotch from the escutcheon of democracy, and you can join with the Urban League in its community-wide educational campaign to make Portland the nation's best city in race relations.

---

Survey Text by John S. Holley,  
Community Services Secretary

Published 1956

URBAN LEAGUE OF PORTLAND  
506 Dekum Building  
519 S. W. Third Avenue  
Portland 4, Oregon

Robert W. Fritsch, President

E. Shelton Hill, Acting Executive Secretary