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## LAKE COUNTY PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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### PRESS RELEASE

Everyone has a voice and everyone has a choice to help plan their community. Come be a part of the new approach to fair housing planning. You are the key to opening doors of opportunity. Community participation is essential in the preparation of a complete **Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH)**. A public meeting will be held on September 22, 2016 at Holden University Center of Lakeland Community College, from 6:30pm – 7:30pm. Interested parties are encouraged to participate at this meeting. Please let us know if you will attend by calling (440) 392-0147 or sending an email to [info@fhrc.org](mailto:info@fhrc.org). The inclusion of local knowledge and perspectives is essential to the AFH so please provide your input by answering this anonymous survey: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/AFHCommunity](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AFHCommunity)

Preparation of the **AFH** is an obligation related to receiving funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The county is fortunate that every year HUD funding has been awarded to the Lake County Commissioners via the Community Development Block Grant and Home Investment Partnership Programs (CDBG/HOME). Management of the CDBG/HOME funds is performed by Lake County Office of Planning and Community Development. Lake Metropolitan Housing Authority (Lake MHA), another recipient of HUD funds will collaborate on the preparation and submission of the AFH, while Fair Housing Resource Center, Inc. will provide consultation services.

As provided in HUD regulations, affirmatively furthering fair housing means taking meaningful actions that, taken together, address significant disparities in housing needs and in access to opportunity, replacing segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns, transforming racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty into areas of opportunity, and fostering and maintaining compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws. The AFH is designed to identify fair housing issues, determine the factors that significantly contribute to identified issues, and develop a plan to overcome them. Acting together Lake County and Lake MHA will develop an effective fair housing plan. The duty to affirmatively further fair housing extends to all of a program participant's activities and programs relating to housing and urban development.

To help with the analytical part of the plan, HUD has provided tools. Public access to data, both tables and maps are located through an online tool <https://egis.hud.gov/affht/> and while the tool is fairly intuitive a manual is available as well at <https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/4849/affh-data-and-mapping-tool-user-manual/>. While data and analysis are a central part of the new tool and rule, there are also many facets of a community that simply are not captured in data, and community participation, local data, and local knowledge will be invaluable resources when developing the assessment. Questions can be directed to Marian Norman at 350-2740.