

# Public Housing in 1961

**Excerpt from:**

**“Galveston: A History” by David G. McComb published in 1986**  
[http://books.google.com/books?id=u34YtRj\\_G\\_4C&dq=isbn:029272053X](http://books.google.com/books?id=u34YtRj_G_4C&dq=isbn:029272053X)

see pages 182-183

**“Low-cost Public Housing did not come to the Island until the opening of Oleander Homes for Whites and Palm Terrace for Blacks in 1943. The demand for wartime shelter quickly filled these places, and they did not fulfill their function as Public Housing until after the hostilities ceased. A survey of housing units in 1945 revealed that 46 percent were substandard. Thirty-six percent of the White population and 75 percent of the Black population lived in these places, which were scattered across the City. When asked if Galveston had plans to do anything about the poor housing, an official responded, “Do you want us to tear down the whole city?”**

**By 1961, with additional construction, almost 7 percent of housing in the City was public and operated by the Galveston Housing Authority. At this point 21 percent of all the private homes in the City were substandard, but this was average for the United States. The percentage of people living in Public Housing, however, was among the highest in the nation. An effort to sell part of this Public Housing in 1982 met with effective protests, and an editor commented, “Successive generations have now grown up in poverty-laden Magnolia Homes. The residents are enveloped by the Public Housing lifestyle and mentality which entraps them. The lifestyle unfortunately perpetuates itself.” Poverty has always been a problem, in Galveston and elsewhere, and seems destined to remain.”**

**Conclusion: 51 years of maintaining a very high percentage of Public Housing, as well as other forms of subsidized housing, such as Section 8 and Tax-Credit, has helped the City go from**

**67,000+ residents in 1960 to 47,000+ residents in 2010, while the State population has doubled over the same period!**

**Therefore, it makes perfect sense that as GHA continues this “very successful policy”, it will attract new middle class residents to the City!**