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CHA Board approves funding for new affordable housing at Encuentro Square in Logan Square

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CHICAGO (July 19, 2022) – The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) Board of Commissioners today approved the commitment of up to 55 Project Based Vouchers (PBVs) for Phase 1 of the Encuentro Square development in the Logan Square neighborhood. These vouchers will provide guaranteed housing stability in Logan Square for at least 20 years, with an estimated total contract value of over \$20 million.

“At CHA, we are working with our partners to invest in environments that catalyze families’ growth, health and economic independence. In the case of Encuentro Square, CHA’s investment means that families who need housing can remain in Logan Square, an area where rents are rising quickly, for years to come,” said CHA CEO Tracey Scott.

Encuentro Square Phase 1 will consist of two buildings that will include 89 total one-, two- and three-bedroom apartments, including up to 55 PBV units available to applicants from CHA’s waitlist. The entire development is structured to provide 100% affordable housing.

The CHA Board of Commissioners previously approved 37 PBVs for the development and is increasing that commitment by leveraging a new HUD funding tool. EREG Development, LLC (Evergreen) and Latin United Community Association (LUCHA) are the project's developers.

New CHA Private Security Contracts

The CHA Board of Commissioners today also approved seven new security contracts with four vendors. Resulting from a competitive bidding process, the new two-year contracts with options will enhance accountability and performance while improving overall service. Under these new contracts, most CHA properties will have a 24/7 security presence. The new contracts also allow for more flexibility so that CHA can provide additional support to properties with greater security needs on an as-needed basis.

The security vendors are Kates Detective and Security, Benford Protection Group, Page Security Inc, and Securitas Security Services US.

“The safety of our residents is a top concern for CHA. Over the past year, we have taken a systematic approach to review security needs at all CHA properties,” said CEO Scott. “These new contracts represent an important step forward to engage with our residents and be more proactive in ensuring a safe environment.”

Near South High School Proposal

The CHA Board of Commissioners today also advanced a proposal for a prospective new Near South High School to be built on 1.7 acres of CHA property on a portion of the former Harold Ickes site, bounded by 24th Street (north,) State Street (east,) 25th Street (south,) and Dearborn Street (west). This 1.7 acres of land comprises only a portion of the former Ickes site, and CHA would still build the committed mixed-income housing north of the school on the same block.

Under the proposal, CHA would retain ownership of the land and enter into a ground lease with Chicago Public Schools (CPS). In return, CHA would receive two new parcels of neighboring land, approximately two acres in size and within close walking distance. The proposed parcels CHA would acquire exceed the size of the parcel to be leased to CPS. Additional housing would also be built on the new land.

The project is still in the conceptual phase, and public engagement is ongoing. The ground lease of the land must be approved by HUD before the proposal moves forward.

“CHA’s investments in new construction are not about replacing the public housing of the past – they are about building strong communities that can sustain themselves for the future. These communities include housing, schools, green space and outdoor recreation, jobs and career opportunities, and more,” said CEO Scott. “Together with our partners, we are using our land to build communities that can thrive.”

The redeveloped Harold Ickes site, known as Southbridge, has multiple phases and will ultimately include 877 total units, including 244 for CHA returning residents and families from the waiting list. The first phase (1A and 1B) has 206 apartments (including 68 for CHA families) that are substantially completed and in the leasing process. The next phase (1C) has been awarded low-income housing tax credits, and work is underway to begin construction.

The proposed Near South High School would serve students from several CHA developments, including Southbridge.

ABOUT THE CHICAGO HOUSING AUTHORITY (CHA)

The CHA’s vision is to foster strong, vibrant communities throughout Chicago by increasing affordable housing choices for low-income families. The CHA is also the largest rental housing owner in the City of Chicago. It serves more than 133,000 people in 63,000 households across the city through our Public Housing, Housing Choice Voucher, and Project-Based Voucher programs. For more information, visit www.thecha.org.