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Contact:

Office of Communications – Chicago Housing Authority

Adaku Onyeka: (312) 913-7482; aonyeka@thecha.org

2010 Landmark Year for CHA Plan for Transformation

Completes a Decade of Transforming Lives

Plan for Transformation is 74 percent complete

CHICAGO (Dec. 29, 2010) – 2010, the end of the first year of a new decade, was replete with milestones for the Chicago Housing Authority and the Plan for Transformation – the ambitious undertaking to fully restore or replace 25,000 units of public housing.

Since the Plan’s launch in 1999, an aggressive and innovative initiative led by Mayor Richard M. Daley, CHA has invested more than \$3 billion in public and private resources and completed 74 percent of housing under the goal.

The Plan for Transformation is guided by the basic belief that all residents should have the same opportunity to share in Chicago’s promise, break the cycle of poverty and rebuild lives. Not only does the Plan call for the demolition of high-rise structures that were in disrepair and had become havens for criminal activity, CHA is also offering its residents training in life skills that will assist them as they move into mixed-income communities and continue to be productive members of society.

“Today, all across the city, new mixed-income communities are close to good schools, jobs and shopping. Thousands of CHA residents have moved to better housing, found stable employment and nearly doubled their incomes. We have been successful in establishing Mayor Daley’s Plan for Transformation, which is considered a model throughout the country,” said Lewis Jordan, CEO of CHA.

Most recently and by far the most widely covered milestone, was the shuttering of the last family housing high-rise. In mid-December, the last tenant moved out of 1230 N. Burling in the Cabrini-Green Homes. Since 1996, due to rulings of insufficiency by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), 23 high-rise dwellings have been shut down and demolished at Cabrini. CHA has begun replacing the development with mixed-income apartments and condominiums in three-flat and mid-rise buildings.

Yet, other milestones are equally notable. Earlier this month, CHA announced the completion of all handicap-accessible senior units, and the 98 percent

completion of all 9,382 senior-designated housing units promised under the Plan for Transformation.

In June, for the first time in more than a decade, CHA opened registration for its family housing wait list online. In October, CHA began selecting and screening families from the new list of 40,000 names selected by the random lottery.

In May for the first time in 23 years, CHA was given the right to once again direct its own development activity when U.S. District Court Judge Marvin Aspen ended the receivership he placed on the agency. The receivership ordered The Habitat Company to direct all CHA land development including the acquisition and construction of units for scattered-site and mixed-income housing under the Plan for Transformation. While Aspen ended the receivership, at the request of CHA, Habitat will continue to work with the CHA for the next three years to ensure a smooth transition.

“This has been an important and gratifying year and we are proud of the progress we, along and our private sector partners, have made in completing the rehab or new construction of more than 18,000 units of housing – 74 percent of the commitment under the Plan,” said Jordan. “Needless to say, we are equally gratified by the recognition our efforts have received, most strikingly embodied in Judge Aspen’s decision to end more than two decades of receivership.”

In all, 18,555 units of housing have been completed under the Plan for Transformation including:

- 9,178 rehabilitated senior units (98% of goal)
- 2,555 rehabilitated scattered-site units (100% of goal)
- 3,779 rehabilitated family units (76% of goal)
- 3,043 public-housing units in mixed-income developments (39% of goal)

With an eye toward youth, CHA expanded its summer youth opportunities to give public housing children and young adults the opportunity to learn, work or play while school was out of session.

Summer offerings varied from academic workshops to spur scholastic advancements, recreational activities that included life skills preparation, leadership programs that encouraged active participation in community development and career training programs that provided meaningful professional opportunities in the workplace. All told, 5,492 youth living in public housing engaged in a summer program this year.

Jordan said that equally important is the progress that adult CHA leaseholders are making. This year the percentage of CHA heads of households who are working rose from 39 to 40 percent. As important, 71 Housing Choice

Voucher Program participants graduated this year from the Family Self-Sufficiency Program, having increased their incomes from \$12,343.06 to an average of \$25,193.37 at the conclusion of the five-year program.

“All in all,” said Jordan, “it’s been a good year.”

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