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CHA asks for feedback at “Cabrin NOW” community meeting to accelerate housing, economic development on Near North Side

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The Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) invites community members to meet their neighbors and share their feedback on a new draft development plan for CHA sites in the Near North Side.

CHA will host Cabrin NOW hot chocolate social and community conversation from 5 – 7 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 11 at St Matthew United Methodist Church, 1000 N. Orleans Street. The whole community is welcome to share their voice at this interactive event.

The meeting is the third and final community meeting planned for the year-long community-led planning process for the remaining Cabrin development sites. Cabrin NOW kicked off public engagement at a meeting attended by 100 community members on May 8. A second meeting on July 31 drew some 120 residents who gave feedback on initial draft concepts for new development in the area. This third meeting will help CHA gather a final round of feedback before finalizing a new planning framework in early 2025.

Cabrin NOW is a community-driven planning and design process to accelerate new mixed-income housing and economic development in the Near North neighborhood. This process builds on previous planning efforts, including the 2015 Development Zone Plan, to update and further the community’s vision for the neighborhood, and respond to current affordable housing needs in the area and across Chicago.

The hot chocolate social and community conversation will not only provide informational updates on the planning work done since the May 8 and July 31 community meetings but will also invite community members to share their views on the CHA’s latest plans to bring new development to the sites still awaiting redevelopment in the area.

“Cabrin, like Chicago as a whole, has continued changing since 2015,” CHA Interim-CEO Angela Hurlock said. “How the neighborhood looks and feels is fundamentally shifting with rising housing costs and significant new developments like the Bally’s casino, Lincoln Yards and North Union. CHA recognizes that it’s critically important for us to hear from community residents throughout this process. We have been doing that work for the last several months and we’re excited to share our draft plan for another round of community feedback to make the proposal even stronger.

“We’ve taken an inclusive approach to amplify diverse voices and aspirations and ensure that the resulting vision and plan is a true reflection of the entire community’s wants and needs. By proactively updating our plans for our large sites, we are laying the groundwork for more affordable

housing construction.”

The “Cabrini NOW” engagement process has been designed to be equitable and family-friendly with people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds encouraged to participate. The hot chocolate social will include specific opportunities for children and youth to contribute their views too.

Cabrini NOW goals include:

- Update and build on the existing 2015 community plans and vision in a changing neighborhood context.
- Respond to the current and future affordable housing needs of the neighborhood and Chicago.
- Embrace all voices in the neighborhood and co-create a shared vision for Cabrini’s future.

CHA has retained planning and architecture firm Solomon Cordwell Buenz to lead this process. At the end of the planning process, the project team will recommend an updated plan for Cabrini using the latest principles for building complete communities such as the 15-minute city concept popularized in Paris, as well as lessons learned in recent decades of community planning in Chicago.

Since 2005, CHA’s investments have resulted in more than 2,900 new homes in Cabrini, including almost 1,000 CHA-subsidized apartments. In addition to the Cabrini Now planning efforts, CHA also has three active development initiatives in the area:

- Oak & Larrabee (78 total homes, including 37 public housing units and 17 affordable rental units)
- Parkside 5 (99 total homes, including 37 public housing units and 28 affordable rental units)
- Clybourn & Larrabee (first phase under detailed design and development)

The draft plan to be presented at Wednesday’s meeting will show how the CHA could accommodate approximately 4,100 new homes on the 40 acres of sites in the Cabrini neighborhood available for redevelopment. After receiving another round of community and stakeholder feedback, the CHA’s consultant team submit a final report to CHA. CHA will then begin preparing the sites for redevelopment working with its partners, including making changes to the zoning for the sites and releasing solicitations for partners.

More information about Cabrini Now is available at thecha.org/cabrininow. Materials from the meeting including the presentation and a meeting recording will be posted on this website as soon as possible following the meeting.