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**Philadelphia Housing Authority Commits 240 Properties  
for New Affordable Housing**

*Community nonprofits will acquire the land and develop permanent,  
affordable housing in Eastern North Philadelphia*

PHILADELPHIA – As new market-rate development continues to span across Eastern North Philadelphia neighborhoods, the Philadelphia Housing Authority (PHA) is committing 240 properties, which includes vacant structures and lots to several community nonprofits to develop new permanent, affordable housing. This major initiative has been in the works for years.

PHA’s proposal to transfer the parcels is through an initiative led by Councilmember Maria D. Quiñones Sánchez (7<sup>th</sup> Council District) and CEIBA, a non-profit organization that serves Philadelphia’s Latino community. Through this partnership, the vacant properties will be transferred to several local community service providers that will develop the parcels into new affordable housing, while at the same time addressing neighborhood blight and housing affordability in rapidly gentrifying communities. Partners in this initiative includes HACE, Esperanza, the Norris Square Community Alliance and Asociación Puertorriqueños en Marcha (APM).

“The city’s affordable housing crisis requires an absolute commitment from partners who are in the business of creating affordable housing,” said PHA’s President and CEO Kelvin Jeremiah. “We work with like-minded organizations to leverage resources and invest in building new affordable housing units in communities that are becoming unaffordable. Our community and elected stakeholders help us bring these plans to fruition and achieve impactful results for the entire city. These efforts will help balance the increasing volume of market rate development in these neighborhoods and ensure that the properties will be available for future affordable development. I’d like to thank Councilmember Maria D. Quiñones Sánchez and our 7<sup>th</sup> District partners for their leadership and collaboration on this important initiative.”

Roughly 80% of all of the proposed parcels are vacant lots, which are located within the boundary of Second and Sixth streets and Cecil B Moore and Lehigh avenues. Portions of these neighborhoods have been experiencing an influx of market-rate development extending from Fishtown, East Kensington and Northern Liberties.

“We need to do everything we can to create new affordable housing for our neighborhoods most in need,” said Councilmember Sánchez. “Bringing city agencies and community partners together is how we will solve the city’s affordable housing crisis. The new housing will provide new opportunities to lift up individuals and families across our Latino neighborhoods, along with those who live in some of our most vulnerable communities.”

For more than seven years, PHA has been working with its nonprofit and CDC partners in the 7<sup>th</sup> Councilmanic District to develop and preserve approximately 500 affordable housing units in one of the city’s most underserved communities, including nearly 400 units receiving capital or rental subsidy support from PHA. Examples of these affordable housing developments include, HACE’s Case Indiana and Casa Caribe; Esperanza’s Roberto Clemente Homes; APM’s Paseo Verde and Norris Square Community Alliance’s scattered site project-based development.

“We appreciate the city’s collaboration with Latino community-based developers to address the urgent need for affordable housing in our neighborhoods,” said Rev. Luis Cortés, founder and CEO of Esperanza. “Based on our collective capacity, we believe we can play a very important role in increasing the affordable, safe, stable housing options for our community’s residents – contributing to the strength, stability, and prosperity of the city as a whole.”

“We have an urgent need for affordable housing in our community, and this partnership will help us meet this need and help our families to have a safe place to live, thrive, and achieve economic mobility,” said Michelle Carrera, Executive Director of the Norris Square Community Alliance.

PHA has been working on this initiative for more than two years, which will now culminate with the transfer of 240 vacant properties, in phases, to the non-profit development partners, subject to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) review and approval. As the partners receive approval for their development plans, PHA will transfer the required number of parcels for the respective scope of project. HACE already has plans to develop 10 new affordable homes starting in early 2021 and anticipates developing almost 80 permanent, affordable homes over time. The remaining parcels will be transferred to Esperanza, APM and Norris Square as their development plans are funded and approved.

“Now more than ever, community development work requires partners with a shared vision and values to rebuild neighborhoods that have suffered from decades of disinvestment,” said Maria N. Gonzalez, President of HACE. “HACE is fortunate to have the Philadelphia Housing Authority as a partner that is committed to supporting our affordable housing agenda for the Fairhill and St. Hugh Neighborhoods in Eastern North Philadelphia. The donation of these vacant lots will help HACE realize its plan for equitable development and long term affordable homeownership housing through the creation of the Good Lands Trust.”

"Gracias PHA for engaging with Latino organizations in our quest for equitable community development in Eastern North Philadelphia. Your commitment is now an important ingredient in our Collective Impact strategy to increase affordable housing in the neighborhoods that need it the most," said Will Gonzalez, the Executive Director of Ceiba.

PHA will transfer each property to the partnering nonprofits for nominal value. Properties will be developed and available to low-income families based on the Area Medium Income. The transfer of the vacant properties are subject to PHA Board and HUD approval.

“This initiative is another way that we work with our community partners to leverage our combined resources to address our housing needs and get these projects across the line,” said Jeremiah. “We all work together to accomplish the same goal; provide new affordable housing opportunities in our city.

PHA has worked with its partners to build and preserve more than 2,500 permanent affordable housing units in just the last few years. It has also invested more than \$74 million to rehab almost 2,000 long-term vacant scattered site units. As the largest housing provider in Pennsylvania, the Philadelphia Housing Authority provides housing for 80,000 residents citywide.

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