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IMPLEMENTATION

After a collaborative and inclusive Choice Neighborhoods planning process, the City of Chicago Heights and the Housing Authority of Cook will continue to lead the implementation of the priority project initiatives, relying on identified partners where appropriate. Some of initial projects will be driven solely by the Housing Authority as those projects focus primarily on enhancing target housing properties through renovation and beautification. Other priority projects will involve the expansion of key partner services to meet the needs of the residents, as has been identified throughout the planning process.

The City and Housing Authority successfully engaged with residents and community partners to address issues identified through the resident needs assessment survey and have implemented early action activities that brought the community together and provided noticeable enhancements in the Downtown/East Side Choice Neighborhood. We are committed to continuing our efforts to address resident needs and ensure that resident voices are being heard, not only during the implementation phases but beyond.

The Housing Authority will act as the People Lead to ensure that Sunrise/Bergen/Mackler residents fully benefit from the strategies outlined to improve health, economic, self-sufficiency and educational successes. The City is the Neighborhood Lead and will continue to enhance public safety and improve the physical environment in the Downtown/East Side. The Housing Authority will lead implementation of the Housing Plan and leverage its experience as implementation begins to focus on providing affordable housing in the form of mixed-finance and mixed-income single- and multi-family developments, including new construction and rehabilitation. The Housing Authority will bring in other key partners where appropriate and necessary.

Although the City and the Housing Authority will lead the implementation effort, the Choice Neighborhood Plan requires the long-term commitment of a variety of partners, including organizations who were active participants in the planning process as well as additional partners who were engaged as strategies to address identified issues were crafted.

Responsibility for overseeing implementation will remain a joint effort, with the Housing Authority taking the primary responsibility for certain elements, particularly as it relates to the target residents (e.g. housing). The Housing Authority will also be responsible for convening regular meetings of the implementation team, which includes all resident meetings. The City will take the lead on all community-wide meetings. The City and Housing Authority will share responsibility for holding both partners and team members accountable; including resolving any conflicts that may arise during the various phases.

The overall governance structure during the Implementation phases will be consistent with that of the planning process, as it led to a successful outcome. Of course where necessary and appropriate some fine-tuning can be expected.

PRIORITY PROJECTS - THE FIRST 5 YEARS

The community's revitalization program presented in the Plan was developed by and for the residents of the Downtown/East Side Choice Neighborhood. It is designed to be flexible in its implementation; therefore, changes in timing and/or project direction may differ from what has been proposed in the Downtown/East Side Choice Neighborhood Plan. As conditions change and new opportunities arise, the project list can expand or be adjusted, as needed to address identified or emerging challenges.

The overall program is ambitious and will require many years to fully realize. However, each element of our Plan includes several priority projects that can be implemented over the next five years. Some projects are fully funded. Planning partners are actively pursuing funding for others. In all, approximately \$30 million in housing and community facility investments are in the works.

NEIGHBORHOOD

★ Veterans housing project

Develop 80-plus units of supportive veteran's housing on a portion of the former St. James Hospital site. **Implementation status:** \$22-\$25 million in funding is being secured through Illinois Housing Development Authority tax credits and other sources Target completion: 2025

★ Lincoln-Gavin park development

Create a new recreational space on available land next to Lincoln-Gavin School for children and the broader community to enjoy. **Implementation status:** \$750,000 investment; site assembly is in progress and partial funding has been secured to allow the initial phase of construction to begin. Target completion: 2023

★ Community Center development

Develop a Community/Early Childhood Center focused on providing innovative early education, after school programming, self-sufficiency, workforce development and senior services to a diverse population of Chicago Heights residents, including target housing residents. **Implementation status:** Construction of this facility will cost an estimated \$3 million and will be coordinated with the initial phase of new mixed-income housing development. Target completion: 2025

★ Housing Authority Central Management Office relocation

Relocate the Housing Authority's Central Management Office to the Downtown/East Side Choice Neighborhood to better serve South Suburban Cook County and expand the Chicago Heights employment base. **Implementation status:** fully funded \$2 million investment. Target completion: 2025

HOUSING

★ Sunrise/Bergen Improvements

Improvements include the renovation of the Sunrise and Bergen properties, except for the Sunrise units near Mackler Homes, north of 12th Street. **Implementation status:** \$1.5 million, fully funded Housing Authority improvement project; Target completion: Fall 2020

★ Mixed-Income housing development

Development of approximately 80 units of mixed-income housing to provide units for relocated Mackler/Sunrise tenants and other households. **Implementation status:** Potential development sites south of Lincoln Highway have been identified, but funding has not yet been secured.

★ Mackler/Sunrise demolition

Tenants living in the Mackler Homes and Sunrise units located north of 12th Street must be relocated before demolition can occur. The Housing Authority may be able to begin the tenant relocation process prior to the development of the planned new mixed-income housing through the use of housing choice vouchers and other housing options. This would provide these residents with a living environment that is less isolated than their current situation, but would not change the overall revitalization program.

PEOPLE

★ 5-step campaign for improving school attendance

Dramatically reducing absenteeism is the critical first step to improving academic performance. This initiative involves engaging students and parents, personalizing early outreach and developing programmatic responses to educational barriers. The goal is to cut chronic absenteeism at least in half and to improve test scores by 25% in year three.

★ Kindergarten readiness initiative

Improve the kindergarten readiness average from 12% to 50% in 3 years through an educational campaign focused on parents and local preschools.

★ EnVision Center development

Open a HUD-approved EnVision Center on the Housing Authority's Golden Towers campus by December, 2020. This facility will serve as a one-stop hub to help residents move toward self-sufficiency under EnVision's four pillars: 1) economic empowerment, 2) educational advancement, 3) health and wellness, and 4) character and leadership.

★ Healthy Lifestyle Campaign

Work with residents to encourage diet and exercise that prevent chronic illnesses common in the community such as diabetes and high blood pressure through a variety of interactive events and activities.