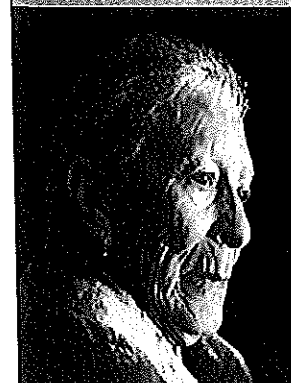
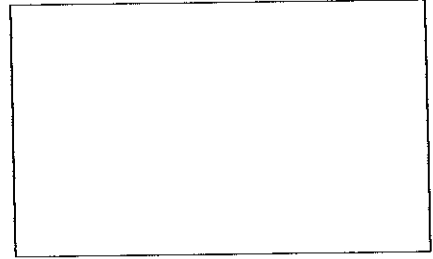


# Aurora Housing Authority Strategic Plan 2010 - 2015



*Renewed commitment in times of change*



2010 - 2015

*Our Mission:*

*Providing housing assistance for the citizens of Aurora with understanding, respect and professionalism.*

*Our Vision and Values:*

*Combining human resources, technology , education and well planned development to support healthy mixed income communities in safe, stable environments for the citizens of Aurora.*

**Dear Colleagues, Partners and Residents,**

The Aurora Housing Authority has an essential mission in our City – to provide housing assistance for people with low and moderate incomes. We recognize that to be a truly great city, Aurora must have affordable housing for people across the income spectrum.

Over the past forty years, we have provided housing assistance in Aurora utilizing traditional programs: Public Housing and Section 8 Vouchers funded by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Our public housing communities were built in the early 1970's to serve a City that was very different from our City today. Our community has changed and in recognition of these changes, our agency has developed this strategic plan to proactively meet the new challenges of housing Aurora's residents.

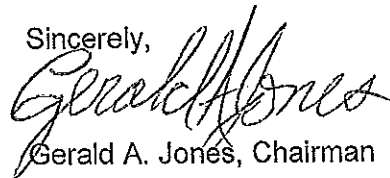
The Aurora Housing Authority is in transition from providing traditional housing assistance. We will become a catalyst to support healthy mixed income communities in safe, stable environments. This transition will involve the repositioning of all properties in our public housing portfolio and increased operational effectiveness to leverage dwindling federal resources.

Achievement of our new vision will require the redevelopment of obsolete public housing communities that no longer meet the quality of life standards for the citizens of our community. The results of our new vision will be the delivery of high quality affordable housing with increased opportunities for residents.

Through this strategic plan, the Aurora Housing Authority provides a **renewed commitment** to our core mission of providing housing assistance for low and moderate income residents of our City; however, in **times of change**, we must re-assess the way in which we provide housing assistance. To prepare for the challenges of tomorrow, we must redefine public housing and we must adopt a more entrepreneurial way of doing business.

This strategic plan for the next five years articulates our new direction. This plan was developed in partnership with city leaders, our residents, our partners and stakeholders. We look forward to working with all members of our community to achieve our new Vision.

Sincerely,



Gerald A. Jones, Chairman  
Board of Commissioners

## INTRODUCTION

The Aurora Housing Authority (AHA) has served the City of Aurora since 1949, originally as a Land Clearance Commission and later as a Housing Authority. Six traditional public housing communities were developed in the early 1970's in various locations on what was at that time, the outskirts of the City. In the 1980's, AHA developed scattered site housing throughout the City and began administration of the Section 8 Housing Assistance Program.

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*“Decent, affordable and accessible housing fosters self-sufficiency, brings stability to families and new vitality to distressed communities and supports overall economic growth...it improves life outcomes for children. In the process, it reduces a host of costly social and economic problems that place enormous strain on the nation’s education, health, social, service, law enforcement, criminal justice and welfare systems.”*

*The Millennial Housing Commission*

*June 2002*

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Since its inception, the Aurora Housing Authority has served the housing needs of Aurora's lowest income citizens through administration of the federal Public Housing and Section 8 Programs. Throughout its history, AHA has targeted housing and services primarily to the “poorest of the poor”, relying solely on funding from the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Even though AHA is chartered to serve residents up to 80% of the area median income (AMI), most residents served by AHA have had extremely low incomes, averaging below 20% of AMI.

The public housing communities built in the 1970's have been plagued with physical and social challenges. Some properties have serious structural problems while others have severe site problems. Individual units are functionally obsolete and do not offer basic amenities found in the private real estate market. Housing designed for senior citizens has transgressed to mixed populations with incompatible life styles. Some communities remain isolated from the surrounding neighborhood while others have seen surrounding areas developed in conflict with residential living. Concentration of poverty has impeded individual motivation and economic self-sufficiency.

Compounding the local physical and social challenges has been the continued reduction of federal funding. Throughout the history of federal housing assistance, federal funding has fluctuated with the political tides.

**To hold to our mission**, we must become more operationally effective, efficient and entrepreneurial. **To embrace our vision**, we must reposition all properties and create mixed income communities of opportunity.

## **STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

**Repositioning the Public Housing Portfolio** - To reposition our public housing portfolio and lessen our dependence on federal funding we will adopt the successes, and improve on the challenges, of the federal Mixed Finance program.

The Mixed Finance Program was created in 1993 as a demonstration program and represents a new approach to the revitalization of public housing. It redefines public housing as mixed income communities serving very low income residents through the public housing program; moderate income residents through the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program and market rate residents through private investment. Federal resources are leveraged with state and local funds; equity from private investors and funding from private lenders.

The Mixed Finance Program offers a unique approach to neighborhood revitalization as reinvestment in Aurora's public housing sites will serve as the catalyst for broader investment in economically depressed neighborhoods.

AHA has developed repositioning strategies for each of the current properties which include the following:

- Partnerships with private real estate developers to redevelop current public housing communities;
- Conversion of scattered site single family homes to Homeownership opportunities;
- Designation of elderly only housing for peaceful enjoyment by our senior residents;
- Community partnerships with service providers to create designated housing with project based subsidies for our residents with special needs;

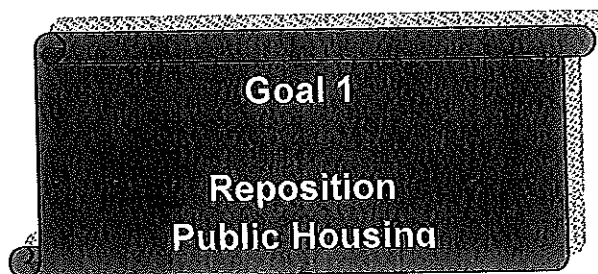
**Operational Effectiveness** – To become more operationally effective and efficient, AHA will introduce new business systems and processes focused on technological innovations that will reduce paperwork, improve customer service and enhance communication.

**Entrepreneurialism** – Additional ways to lessen our dependence on federal funding is to serve more households seeking workforce housing. These persons are not at the lowest income levels but still need rents and homeownership opportunities that are more affordable than typically found in the private market. Revenue generated by this type of entrepreneurialism can provide cross-subsidization to further our mission of serving very low income residents.

## **STRATEGIC GOALS**

### **Redevelopment**

The properties below will be redeveloped during the next five years.



*(Detailed redevelopment plans and corresponding timelines are located in the attachments to the strategic plan.)*

**Jericho Circle** – Jericho Circle will be demolished and the current site will be redeveloped into a new mixed income community. Residents will be relocated under the Housing Choice Program and will retain a first right of return upon completion of redevelopment activities.

**Maple Terrace** – Maple Terrace will be demolished and a plan for the best reuse of the current site will be developed. AHA will identify alternate sites for the development of elderly only housing and will work in partnership with appropriate community service agencies to develop housing alternatives for person with special needs. Existing singles residing at Maple Terrace will be relocated under the Housing Choice Program.

**Indian Trail Apartments** – Further viability assessment and a market appraisal will be completed on Indian Trail Apartments. The results of this additional study will determine whether AHA will redevelop this property into a mixed-use; mixed-finance community or dispose of the property for fair market value. If the current site is not viable for redevelopment, sales proceeds from the disposition will be utilized for development of a replacement mixed income community to be located elsewhere in the community.

### **Conversion**

**Scattered Sites** – The scattered site properties will be converted from public housing to Housing Choice Voucher project based assistance. Additional feasibility analysis will be conducted to determine if all scattered site units are financially viable to retain. Units identified as cost prohibitive to maintain will be disposed of for fair market value.

The scattered site single family homes will be converted to a homeownership program under the Housing Choice program; the remaining scattered site units will be maintained as rental housing under the Housing Choice program. Sales proceeds from non-viable units will be used as down payment and closing costs assistance for eligible homebuyers.

**Southwind Apartments** – AHA will continue to complete a comprehensive renovation program at Southwind Apartments to complete site improvements and upgrade all units in accordance with private market standards. Upon completion of all renovation, Southwind will be converted to project based Housing Choice vouchers.

### Designated Housing

**Centennial House and Annex** – Centennial House and the attached Annex will be designated as “elderly only” housing and will be retained as traditional public housing with such designation. Existing non-elderly residents will be provided with the option of relocating under the Housing Choice program or to other public housing to become available in the future. Relocation of non-elderly residents will be strictly voluntary. Upon receipt of designation, new admissions will be restricted elderly residents.

**Special Needs Housing** – AHA will work with community service providers to assess current special needs residents at Centennial House and Maple Terrace. AHA will provide project based Housing Choice Vouchers for housing units equal to the number of current residents with special needs. Specific designations will be acquired for the type of special needs identified.

### Public Housing Renovation

**Eastwood Apartments** - Eastwood apartments will be retained as traditional public housing during the time period covered by this strategic plan. Physical improvements will continue to upgrade units to private market standards as capital funding is available under the HUD capital fund program.

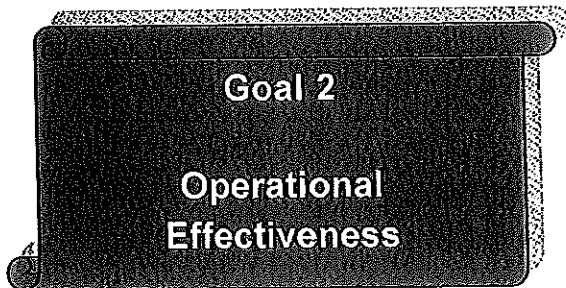
### Resident Support

**Relocation Services** – AHA will provide comprehensive relocation services for any resident that is required to relocate as the result of any repositioning strategies identified in this strategic plan. All relocation services will be provided in accordance with a HUD approved relocation plan.

**Self-Sufficiency Opportunities** – A key component to the repositioning strategies is economic self-sufficiency opportunities for current and future residents. Mixed finance redevelopment activities will include community and supportive services programs inclusive of educational and job training opportunities; credit repair; and pre and post purchase homebuyer counseling. While self-sufficiency opportunities will be voluntary, all affected residents will be strongly encouraged to participate and right of return options will be premised on successful participation in self-sufficiency activities.

## **Business Systems and Processes**

**Technology** – AHA will identify innovative technological solutions that will improve business systems and processes including:



- Implementation of web-based partner portals
- Mandatory direct deposit for landlord payments
- Reloading bank cards for payment of utility reimbursement payments

**Inspections Standards** – AHA will adopt inspection standards consistent with the City of Aurora rent licensing standards and will coordinate mandatory inspections with the City as feasible to eliminate duplicate inspection processes for rental housing.

**Accountability for HCV Landlords and Participants** – As the Housing Choice program continues to grow as a result of repositioning strategies, AHA will implement an enhanced accountability and compliance program for Housing Choice participants and landlords. Additional educational and briefing requirements will be mandated to assure strict lease enforcement by landlords resulting in responsible tenants that will be welcomed in all neighborhoods of our City.

## **Human Resources**

**Environment** – AHA will create and maintain a working environment where employees are supported in meeting AHA's expectations and in their commitment to AHA's Mission and Vision.

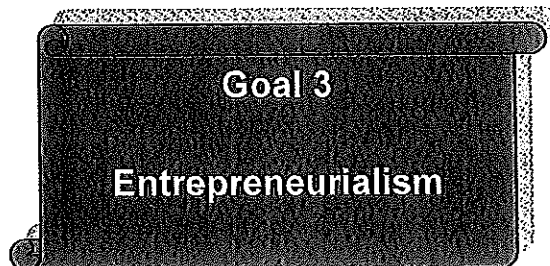
**Effective Work Force** - AHA will increase the effectiveness of our work force through implementation of succession planning for key leadership positions; enhanced recruitment; competitive compensation strategies; targeted training programs; and consistent communication to all staff on the organizational goals and objectives.

### **Sustainability through Diversification**

**Maximize Use of Resources** – AHA will leverage current real estate assets to maximize return on investment that will assure organizational sustainability to continue to achieve our Mission.

**Partnerships** – AHA will seek private public partnerships that maximize investment and seek new opportunities to generate revenue.

**Related Entities** – AHA will develop non-profit related entities that will explore new opportunities for revenue generating programs or partnerships that will be tested in the market place for potential practicality. Sole purpose related entities will be formed to support AHA in its strategic direction and goals.



### **Sound Business Practices**

Through the strategic planning process, AHA identified business practices that are important to our success. It is important to articulate these practices and refer to them frequently to assure continued success in our work as we move forward with our strategic initiatives.

**Superior Property Management** – AHA will exemplify the qualities of a superior property management organization with regard to maintenance standards, tenant relations, leasing, communication and financial performance.

**Superior Non-Profit Management** – AHA will exemplify the qualities of a superior non-profit organized for public benefit. Focus will be retained on effective, accessible services and community building practices that increase stability and self-sufficiency of AHA residents.

**Superior Administration** – AHA will administer the rent subsidy program with specific focus on program integrity, participant and owner relations, responsiveness to community needs and financial performance.

**Superior Public Management** – AHA will exemplify the qualities of a well run public agency through efficiency, fairness and integrity; AHA will promote values and practices in support of fairness among people of all races and classes.