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**CITY AND HOUSING AUTHORITY PARTNER ON CRYSTAL TOWERS**  
*Property to be retained as Affordable Housing*

**January 18, 2022 (Winston-Salem, NC)** – The City and Housing Authority are building on the momentum of their \$30 million Choice Neighborhoods partnership by joining forces again in support of quality affordable housing – this time in the downtown core. The Housing Authority had previously planned to sell the Crystal Towers property and use proceeds of the sale to develop new, mixed-income housing. However, the new plan calls for the Housing Authority and City to jointly fund the capital need backlog and ensure that appropriate supportive services are in place. The approach facilitates Crystal Towers’ long-term operational and financial sustainability.

“As we said from the beginning, we never set out to sell the building,” said Housing Authority Executive Director Kevin Cheshire. “We set out to find a way to create better housing opportunities for the residents and we arrived at a sale as our only viable option. The decision to sell was the right decision at the time given market conditions, funding limitations, and the ability to leverage proceeds to develop alternative, mixed-income housing communities. That was the right decision then – but things have changed, and this is the right decision now.”

The Housing Authority has already begun the process of requesting proposals to modernize the elevator systems. Each elevator car will be replaced independently, allowing continued occupancy of the building during the pendency of the project. The Housing Authority is taking advantage of regulatory flexibility granted by HUD in response to the pandemic in order to utilize accrued capital funds to pay for the elevator modernization. Future capital fund allocations will be combined with City funds to address other aging systems and improve the security, livability, and aesthetic of the building.

“I want to thank Mayor Joines for his leadership on this issue,” Cheshire said. “He understood our funding limitations and the building’s challenges, but he was clear that we could not move forward in the absence of a plan to replace a critical mass of units in the downtown core. When market conditions and construction costs affected our ability to do that, he worked with us to craft an alternative strategy.

That alternative strategy includes a commitment to identifying a scope of work that will drastically improve the look, feel, functionality, safety, and security of Crystal Towers. It also includes a commitment to work with the design team to phase the project in such a way as to minimize or eliminate the need for temporary resident relocation while work is being undertaken.”

“I am delighted that the City and HAWS have arrived at a strategy to provide critical updates to Crystal Towers. My goal was to preserve affordable housing in the center city and this new initiative will allow us to do so,” said Mayor Allen Joines.

While specific funding commitments have not yet been finalized, the Housing Authority and the City are committed to working together in support of the residents of Crystal Towers and the creation and preservation of affordable housing in the downtown core.

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The Housing Authority of the City of Winston-Salem is a municipal corporation that administers approximately 4,500 housing vouchers and owns, operates, and manages approximately 1,400 affordable rental properties.