

Press Release: HOUSING AUTHORITY OF MARICOPA COUNTY

Date: 27 July 2009

From: Doug Lingner, Executive Director

Subject: Neighborhood Stabilization Program Update

Housing Authority receives federal funding to revive distressed neighborhoods

In May of 2009, the Housing Authority of Maricopa County (HAMC) received \$6.3m through the Housing and Economic Recovery Act (HERA 2008). With these funds, HAMC has been creating a program designed to revive neighborhoods in Buckeye, Goodyear, El Mirage, and Tolleson.

Homes will be purchased in each area as the real estate market allows under the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) guidelines. First, the program will identify, acquire, rehab, and resell foreclosed properties to FHA qualified buyers. Second, using a comprehensive outreach program, the program will identify owners that meet the income requirements, counsel, pre-approve, match to a home, sell and provide a two year warranty experience to every participant. The goal is to be able to upgrade at least 150 units to Energy Star standards within the next three years.

In 60 days, we have constructed the team that will oversee acquisition, sale, rehab, monitoring, and customer service of the program. The team members include: Ben Chao, Director; Connie Alvarado, Grants Compliance; Sherry Grau, Development Associate; Neal Sparks, Construction Coordinator; and John Deal, IT Specialist.

The group has thoroughly solicited and identified partners to make this program successful. While the details are being finalized over the next few weeks, personal contact is being made with each city outlining the goals of the program, identifying specific target neighborhoods to maximize impact, and building a resourceful communication base for HAMC to interact. The "Homes to Owners" branding was created to make a distinction between this program and other programs while more readily building public response and provide an important focal point for buyers.

The HAMC Board of Directors approved the team's recommended purchase and rehabilitation standards which will be used on each home acquired. The three focus areas follow: Energy, Sustainability / Conservation, and Accessibility features. Each home will be brought to increased efficiency standards, home performance by Energy Star, or higher as the market and product constraints allow. The goal is to not only to rehabilitate the home, but reduce the burden of daily homeownership with lower utility bills and a healthier living environment.

<http://www.maricopahousing.org/filesnsp/nsp-standards.doc>

To better assist many low and low-middle income buyers to qualify for their own home, HAMC will provide a limited number of six month "Lease to Own" agreements for those buyers that are capable of overcoming minor financial hurdles during that timeframe. This is in addition to the already discounted and upgraded home they are acquiring through the program.

All Homes to Owners Program inquiries should be directed to:

Sherry Grau – 602-744-4592 – s.grau@H2Oarizona.org