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**MAYOR BRANDON JOHNSON ANNOUNCES NEW LEADERSHIP APPOINTMENTS
TO THE CHICAGO LOW-INCOME FAMILY HOUSING TRUST BOARD**

*New board will help guide critical investments in rental subsidies and affordable
housing programs across Chicago*

CHICAGO – Mayor Brandon Johnson announced new appointments to the Board of Directors of the Chicago Low-Income Family Housing Trust (CLIHTF), marking a renewed phase of leadership dedicated to expanding housing access and deepening the City's investment in affordable living options for Chicago's lowest-income residents.

These appointments reflect Mayor Johnson's ongoing commitment to his [Build Better Together](#) initiative, reinforcing a strategic focus on housing equity, transparency, and inclusive governance. This renewed leadership comes at a pivotal moment for CLIHTF, as the City deepens its efforts to ensure long-term housing stability for its most vulnerable residents. With a revitalized board and strengthened collaboration across City agencies, CLIHTF is well-positioned to expand its impact through annual rental subsidies and innovative affordable housing initiatives.

"This board will help steward one of the most important tools we have for keeping Chicago families safely and affordably housed. Affordable housing is one of the four core pillars of my administration, and I ran on a clear commitment to ensure every Chicagoan—regardless of income or zip code—has access to safe, stable, and affordable housing," said **Mayor Brandon Johnson**. "These appointments are a direct reflection of that promise and a concrete step toward delivering real results for working families, seniors, and residents most at risk of displacement. I look forward to seeing the work that they accomplish."

Over the past year, Mayor Brandon Johnson and Department of Housing Commissioner Lissette Castañeda worked to identify and appoint a group of highly qualified, mission-driven individuals to lead the CLIHTF board. During this process, and in close coordination with DOH, the Mayor identified opportunities to strengthen the organization's structure, such as the need for greater alignment



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around strategic goals and a more balanced approach to long-term funding sustainability.

“We are entering a new era for housing in Chicago, one where partnerships, equity, and accountability are front and center. With new Board leadership at CLIHTF and continued collaboration on the long-term stability of the organization, we are building a stronger foundation to serve our residents,” said **Commissioner Lissette Castañeda**. “Our priorities moving forward include increasing access to deeply affordable units, streamlining how we deliver subsidies, and ensuring that housing resources are directed where they are needed most, especially in communities that have been historically under-resourced.”

The newly appointed Board of Directors of the Chicago Low-Income Housing Trust Fund (CLIHTF) brings together a dynamic and diverse group of leaders from across Chicago. These individuals represent a range of professional expertise, from housing and public health to education, community development, and financial services, reflecting the City’s deep commitment to equitable, community-centered governance.

The Chicago Low-Income Housing Trust Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation. The Board of Directors provides strategic oversight, sets organizational policy, approves the annual budget, and monitors expenditures. The 15-member board is composed of residents of the City of Chicago, each appointed by Mayor Johnson and confirmed by the City Council. Board members represent nonprofit organizations, private corporations, and City government. The Board meets monthly and operates through four standing committees: Allocations, Executive, Finance, and Outreach.

The new and returning members of the CLIHTF Board of Directors include:

Vicky Arroyo – Stearns Bank (Treasurer, Board Member since 2022)
Adonya Little – Lawndale Community Church
Cameron Kinch – Department of Family & Support Services
David Kern – Chicago Department of Public Health
David Stieber – Chicago Public Schools
Fatmah Farraj – Mercy Housing Lakefront
Isabel Kennon – Illinois Justice Project
Joseph Lopez Jr. – Spanish Coalition for Housing
Katanya Raby – Our Urban Dreams
Lynette McRae – Connecting Capital & Community (3C)
Meredith Muir – Chicago Department of Housing
Dr. Milka Ramirez – The Institute for Clinical Social Work
Samuel Paler-Ponce – Chicago Coalition to End Homelessness



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Sherri Allen-Reeves – Phoenix Foundation

CLIHTF is a key beneficiary of the Affordable Housing Opportunity Fund (AHOF), which was created using in-lieu fees collected through the City's Affordable Requirements Ordinance (ARO). Under the ARO, residential developers may pay fees in lieu of including affordable housing units in their projects. These in-lieu fees are deposited into AHOF and reinvested by the City. Half of the AHOF supports the CLIHTF, which currently provides annual rent subsidies to approximately 2,700 extremely low-income residents. The other half is used to support the development, rehabilitation, and preservation of affordable housing across the city.

When Commissioner Lissette Castañeda joined the Department of Housing in January 2024, her more than 20 years of experience enabled her to swiftly identify key areas for improvement—one of the most urgent being the management and expectations surrounding AHOF. Under her leadership, and with Mayor Johnson's commitment to strengthening the City's housing infrastructure, it became evident that AHOF was never intended to serve as a stable or predictable revenue stream. Funding levels were subject to market conditions and development trends—factors largely outside the City's control—yet programs and outcomes were increasingly being planned around this volatile resource.

"The Affordable Housing Opportunity Fund has been a great resource for the Department of Housing for many years, and the Chicago Low Income Housing Trust Fund has benefited from that," said **Commissioner Lissette Castañeda**. "However, it was set up as a way for developers to opt out of providing affordable units in their developments. Developers are now providing units on site in the vast majority of cases, as was always the goal of the Affordable Requirements Ordinance. We remain committed to working with CLIHTF on finding new and alternative sources of funding."

In previous years, the fund was used as a primary source of revenue instead of a supplemental source, due in part to overestimated in-lieu fee projections and the long-term financial disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Since 2020, DOH has disbursed nearly \$30 million to CLIHTF more than anticipated from AHOF. While AHOF has been a useful tool in the past, especially during times of crisis like the pandemic, the Johnson administration is now working to strategically adjust the use of the fund to better meet the reality of the current housing market.

"This isn't just about policy—it's about people. It's about making sure that Chicago remains a city where long-time residents can stay, where families can grow, and where every person has the dignity of a roof over their head," said **Mayor Brandon Johnson**. "The new Board leadership at CLIHTF will work alongside the Department



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of Housing and community partners to expand our reach, build trust, and deliver on a future where affordable housing is treated as a human right. Their guidance will be critical in ensuring the management of our housing investments is maintained responsibly, ensuring that vital resources like the Affordable Housing Opportunity Fund are used sustainably and equitably for the long term.”

To date, AHOF has contributed to the creation and preservation of more than 2,700 affordable rental units across 31 developments citywide. In addition to rent subsidies, AHOF has supported several major housing initiatives, including:

- Opportunity Investment Fund
- Preservation of Existing Affordable Rental (PEAR) Program
- Micro-Market Recovery Program
- Building Neighborhoods and Affordable Homes
- 606 Bloomingdale Trail Home Improvement Program
- Emergency Relief for Affordable Multifamily Properties Program (ERAMP)

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