
MEDIA RELEASE

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SHA Reaffirms Resident-First Approach Amid Blueprint 15's Pause in East Adams Redevelopment Efforts

Syracuse, NY – February 10, 2025 – The Syracuse Housing Authority (SHA) was surprised and disappointed to learn that Blueprint 15 has suspended its efforts to develop the Children Rising Center on land currently owned by SHA in the McKinney Manor public housing complex just east of downtown Syracuse. The Children Rising Center is an important part of the East Adams Street Neighborhood Transformation Plan – a project spearheaded by SHA and the City of Syracuse in which hundreds of millions of dollars will be invested over the next decade to transform one of the poorest neighborhoods in the region, for the benefit of the families who live there and for the central New York community as a whole.

For years, SHA has been working diligently on this project with the City, the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the State of New York, Blueprint 15, and SHA's contracted developer McCormack Baron Salazar. Blueprint 15's surprise announcement is a setback to the ongoing efforts of all these parties, and to the hopes of all the children and other community members who will benefit from the project.

It is important to clarify certain misconceptions that have been reported since Blueprint 15's announcement. First, SHA is on track to receive approval from HUD this year to transfer the Children Rising Center site to the City of Syracuse, so that Blueprint 15 can begin construction of the Children Rising Center this year. SHA has not missed any deadline in this regard, and any assertion to the contrary is simply incorrect.

Second, the only deadline that has been missed is a deadline that Blueprint 15 itself apparently created – with all good intentions but also with a lack of understanding of the regulatory process, perhaps borne out of Blueprint 15's inexperience in this area. Blueprint 15 evidently arranged for certain funding that was contingent on Blueprint 15 obtaining control of the Children Rising Center site earlier than was possible given the mandatory HUD approval process.





Third, Blueprint 15's inability to meet its self-created funding deadline this Spring does not compel Blueprint 15 to withdraw from the project. Blueprint 15 can apply for similar funding again. Given the widely recognized importance of the project to the community, Blueprint 15 has an excellent chance of obtaining similar funding again. For the good of the residents and the community, SHA hopes that Blueprint 15 will make this effort.

Fourth, HUD approval for the transfer of the Children Rising Center site could have happened more quickly had SHA not needed to accommodate Blueprint 15's several changes to the project plans. In particular, Blueprint 15 insisted on accelerating the development of the Children Rising Center by moving it from Phase 3 of the East Adams project to Phase 1. Blueprint 15's change resulted in the need for SHA to relocate many families living on the site far earlier than had been planned. This required SHA to amend its application to HUD for approval of the site transfer. This inevitably slowed the approval process.

As Central New York's public housing authority, SHA has decades of experience with large scale development projects requiring complex public/private funding packages and regulatory approvals from multiple government agencies. Among many other projects, SHA opened the Freedom Commons building in 2018. And just two months ago, in December 2024, SHA closed on a \$106 million project for redevelopment of the Almus Olver Towers, where 191 people live. Notably, SHA successfully closed that deal with largely the same team of devoted and experienced employees, consultants, and contractors that are now working on the East Adams project.

At SHA, our experience has taught us that large public development projects are never easy and that there are always some unexpected bumps in the road. But if we stay the course and do not give up when faced with adversity, the end result is well worth the effort and the wait. The important thing for all parties to remember is that, when difficulties arise, we should focus on patience, collaboration, and communication rather than infighting, casting blame, and looking for the closest exit. After all, this is for the good of the community.

SHA knows that its community partners, including Blueprint 15, share SHA's vision of a transformed East Adams neighborhood that improves the lives of its residents and of all people in central New York. We hope that we can move forward together to make that vision a reality.

