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# **Stimulus money will help pay for 108 new homes for needy Houston residents**

## **Houston Housing Authority will demolish Kennedy Place, build new apartments if federal government approves**

*August 24, 2009* – Needy residents of Houston’s Fifth Ward will get 108 new homes under a plan to use \$7.8 million in federal stimulus money to help demolish and rebuild the Kennedy Place public housing community, Houston Housing Authority officials announced today.

In an effort drawing strong support from families living in the development, the Housing Authority’s Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to ask the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for permission to demolish the 27-year-old Kennedy Place apartments at 505 Bayou. The Housing Authority’s plan is to replace the old worn-out 60 housing units at Kennedy Place with 108 brand new homes, complete with central heating and air conditioning, individual garages, washer and dryer connections, dishwashers and energy efficient appliances.

If HUD approves the plan, the Houston Housing Authority will tear down the old rental units and build the new Kennedy Place. The new development will provide more than 100 families, elderly and other individuals with affordable homes compatible with new housing being constructed in the area. Construction would start near the end of this year and take about a year to complete, officials said.

“We are working to transform neighborhoods in Houston,” Housing Authority President Ernie Etuk said. “This stimulus money gives us a chance to provide great new homes for people who need them, and to help revitalize an historic and important neighborhood.”

The decision, which came after several community-wide meetings including public sessions, drew praise from residents who want the new homes.

“Tearing down and starting over is the best thing for us,” said Kennedy Place resident Sheila Johnson who along with the other residents will be relocated to other public housing communities during the demolition and reconstruction. Kennedy Place Resident Council President Stephanie Gaston agreed: “This is long overdue. We approve of this. It’s the best thing for us,” she said to applause from the residents.

The Housing Authority will now send to the federal government the request to demolish the property. Housing Authority officials expect a response from HUD within a few weeks.

In the meantime, the Housing Authority is scheduling meetings with Houston Independent School District officials to plan the transition to other schools of students who will be moving out of Kennedy Place temporarily during demolition and reconstruction.



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Kennedy Place was built in 1982 at a cost of \$2.99 million and has not had major renovations. The latest renovation was 13 years ago and included roofs, exterior wood and painting and new landscaping. The old development had minimal amenities, including linoleum flooring, washer connections only and a community laundry room.

The new Kennedy Place, in addition to the central air, individual garages and washer-dryer connections, will have microwaves, wall-to-wall carpeting, cable wiring and a park pavilion. The new development will feature an amphitheater and a walking path, a playground and barbecue grills for family get-togethers.

Housing Authority officials plan to rebuild Kennedy Place at its present site on 5.5 acres in the heart of historic Fifth Ward, just south of Interstate 10 and east of Highway 59.

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**Below are pictures of the current Kennedy Place and the proposed plans for revitalization.**

### **Current photo of Kennedy Place Apartments**





**HOUSTON**  
HOUSING AUTHORITY

Transforming Lives & Communities

## Proposed Plans for the Kennedy Place Revitalization



**COURTYARD & PARKING VIEW**



### **KENNEDY PLACE**

Apartment Homes

Mucasey & Associates, Architects



**GILLESPIE STREET VIEW**



### **KENNEDY PLACE**

Apartment Homes

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