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## **Detroit Housing Commission hires former top Obama administration housing official Sandra B. Henriquez as Executive Director**

- **Henriquez, former Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing under President Obama, brings national experience to Detroit's public housing**
- **Additional experience in public and affordable housing at municipal, state and federal levels, as well as in the private sector**
- **Main focus will be on developing new affordable and public housing opportunities for the city and DHC**

The Board of Commissioners of the Detroit Housing Commission voted today to hire Sandra B. Henriquez as Executive Director, bringing a national expert to the city's public housing commission. Henriquez previously held the role of Assistant Secretary for Public and Indian Housing for the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) under President Obama from 2009 to 2014. There, she led the Obama Administration's oversight, compliance and monitoring of 1.1 million units of public housing and 2.2 million Housing Choice Vouchers operated by 3100 public housing authorities.

Henriquez will serve as chief executive officer for the Commission, directing a comprehensive program of public housing administration and development, including the administration of affordable housing, Housing Choice Vouchers, community enrichment programs, grants and related federal assistance programs. Henriquez will also lead policy making, planning and all fiscal matters for the commission. She will report to the Board of Commissioners and starts April 22.

"During my 5 years at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), I visited Detroit more than nearly any other city in the U.S. Every time I visited the city, the progress, the change, was palpable," said Henriquez. "It is exciting for me to think that I now have the opportunity to come full circle, developing new housing opportunities for DHC and the city."

### **Bringing national experience to Detroit's public housing**

Most recently, Henriquez served as Chief Operating Officer for Rebuilding Together, a national non-profit organization that provides free home repairs to low-income veterans, seniors and families with children. Before Rebuilding Together, Henriquez oversaw the nation's public housing and Housing Choice Voucher rental assistance programs that assist approximately 3.2 million people across the

nation. She was also responsible for HUD's Native American housing, serving 566 federally-recognized sovereign tribes. During her tenure at HUD, Ms. Henriquez was responsible for development, justification, oversight and administration of annual budgets in excess of \$27 billion.

“The Detroit Housing Commission could not have selected a better candidate for executive director than Sandra Henriquez, and I am so pleased that she is bringing her expertise to Detroit,” said Mayor Mike Duggan. “Sandra will be critical to our efforts to ensure Detroiters have high-quality, affordable housing options in neighborhoods across the city.”

For 13 years, before serving in the Obama Administration, Henriquez was the Administrator and Chief Executive Officer of the Boston Housing Authority (BHA), one of the nation's larger public housing authorities. At the BHA, she was responsible for an 850-person workforce, a \$280 million budget and nearly 25,000 units of public and other affordable housing serving approximately 65,000 low-income residents or 10% of the city's population.

### **Detroit Housing Commission, affordable housing progress continues**

Henriquez comes to DHC after a number of moves to boost the commission, including the pending sale for \$23 Million of the former Frederick Douglass Homes public housing site to a joint venture led by a Bedrock affiliate, and the sale of nearly 400 vacant, obsolete public housing units, including Lee Plaza and 127 single family homes, to the City of Detroit for \$1.7 million. These transactions are allowing DHC to invest in resident services and make capital improvements across the existing housing portfolio.

“We've seen significant progress at DHC since emerging from receivership in 2015. Since then, our Housing Choice Voucher Program has been designated a high-performer by HUD and DHC has secured resources to invest in our assets, but with Sandra at the helm, we will be able to take the commission to the next level,” said Richard Hosey, President of the Board of Commissioners. “Sandra is perfectly positioned to help the Detroit Housing Commission achieve new goals, improve our competitiveness and continue our progress. We are so excited to get to work.”

The hire at the housing commission reflects the City's larger efforts to ensure that quality housing is available, affordable and accessible for families of all incomes. Those efforts include the city's Multifamily Housing Strategy, which calls for a high-functioning DHC, the Inclusionary Housing Ordinance and the city's \$250 million Affordable Housing Leverage Fund. That fund was established last year to invest in projects that preserve or create affordable housing in Detroit. Since then, the city has raised \$20 million of \$50 million total in grant funding towards the fund, with the remaining balance coming into the fund in the form of city investment and low-cost capital for affordable housing developments.