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HANO Protects Guste High Rise Residents from Displacement- *HANO*

Intervention Secures Pathway from HUD to Preserve Guste High Rise as Senior Affordable Housing

New Orleans – The Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) successfully advocated on behalf of residents of Guste Homes High Rise, securing a path forward with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that prevents displacement and preserves the development as public housing for its elderly and disabled residents. Following discussions with HANO leadership, HUD has allowed the agency to submit a new Designated Housing Plan and a detailed plan to rehabilitate and fill 80 vacant units at Guste High Rise, allowing the property to avoid the Section 33 Mandatory Conversion process.

“HANO’s priority has always been protecting the residents of Guste High Rise and ensuring they can remain safely in their homes,” said Marjorianna Willman, HANO Executive Director. “We appreciate HUD’s collaboration in identifying a solution that avoids displacement while allowing us to move forward with plans to stabilize and improve the building. Our goal is to protect our residents and preserve this critical affordable housing resource for the community.”

“HANO is grateful for the steadfast leadership of Mayor Moreno and the City Council, including Chief of Staff Kevin Ferguson,” said Willman. “Their advocacy on behalf of Guste High Rise residents has been invaluable in making this outcome possible.”

The conversion process was initiated by HUD in December 2025 as HUD began requiring certain public housing developments with 250 public housing units or more to convert public housing units to tenant-based assistance as a more cost-effective alternative to modernizing and operating the development.

HANO requested that Guste High Rise be found exempt from the mandatory conversion process based on the following factors:

1. Guste High Rise houses elderly and disabled populations, not general occupancy residents. The conversion process specifically targets general occupancy public housing units.
2. HANO recognizes the need for repositioning the high rise building and indicated such in the last Public Housing Authority Annual Plan, which was approved by HUD on August 2, 2025. HANO

has moved forward in its plans by recently commissioning a Physical Needs Assessment (PNA) to better understand the condition of the building. HANO placed vacant units in modernization status illustrating HANO's intent to restore the units.

3. Moving through the required conversion process limits the various repositioning tools currently available to HANO and unnecessarily restricts the agency.
4. The City of New Orleans is experiencing a severe affordable housing shortage. Tenant-based vouchers alone are not helpful to the tenants without suitable, affordable housing options. It has been estimated that there is a shortage of 50,000 affordable housing units in New Orleans alone.

HUD notified HANO on March 3, 2026, that submitting a new Designated Housing Plan would remove the requirement to reposition the units under Section 33 of the Housing Act of 1937. The Designated Housing Plan will have a 30-day public comment period beginning Monday, March 9, 2026. At the end of the comment period, the plan will be submitted to HUD Headquarters in Washington, D.C., for approval. In addition, HANO must submit a detailed rehabilitation plan and timeline for addressing at least 80 vacant housing units.

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About Housing Authority of New Orleans

The Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) is focused on providing affordable housing opportunities for low-income residents of the city of New Orleans while laying the foundation for economic sustainability. HANO serves over 22,000 low-income families through its affordable housing programs. HANO also serves public housing needs for the elderly, disabled, and veterans.

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