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**MAYOR BLOOMBERG AND CHAIRMAN RHEA CONGRATULATE NYCHA ON THE
75TH ANNIVERSARY OF PUBLIC HOUSING IN NEW YORK CITY**

More than \$943 Million in Capital Improvements Since 2002

Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg and New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Chairman John B. Rhea today congratulated the New York City Housing Authority on the 75th anniversary of public housing in New York City at a reception at Gracie Mansion, and honored NYCHA's rich history and those who contributed to the success of the nation's first and largest public housing agency. In February 1934, Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia signed into law a bill establishing the nation's first public housing authority – NYCHA – which grew out of a pioneering vision that reshaped the City's landscape by replacing run-down tenements with clean, safe and affordable housing for poor and working class families. Mayor Bloomberg and Chairman Rhea were joined by Deputy Mayor for Education and Community Development Dennis M. Walcott, NYCHA Board Member and Environmental Coordinator Margarita López, former residents, such as National Basketball Retired Players Association Executive Director and one-time New York Knicks player Mel Davis, and approximately 1,000 NYCHA residents, tenant leaders, elected officials and other supporters of public housing.

“Since the completion of NYCHA's First Houses in 1936, New York City has remained committed to preserving this vital resource for its working families and those in need,” said Mayor Bloomberg. “Public housing has given many New Yorkers the foundation they need to make their way up the economic ladder and to move on to successful lives. And with new leadership in John Rhea, we will continue to revitalize, reinvigorate and make NYCHA an even more important resource for its residents.”

Starting with developments that are now official city landmarks - such as First Houses, Harlem River Houses, and Williamsburg Houses - NYCHA oversaw the construction of federal, state, and city-financed developments from the 1930s through 1970s which have revitalized communities and provided low- and moderate-income families with decent and affordable homes.

“Since opening its doors to the First Houses, NYCHA has not only provided a safe and affordable place to live, but has also given our residents a sense of community, home, and belonging,” said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea. “Today we look back with pride at our accomplishments, and we look forward together with confidence to writing the next chapter of the NYCHA story.”

NYCHA has continued to safeguard its proud legacy by maintaining and modernizing its buildings, delivering important social services, recreational and educational programs, and providing

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job training initiatives. During difficult decades that saw public housing in major American cities suffer, NYCHA has continued to preserve and upgrade New York's public housing. Since 2002 NYCHA's Capital Projects Unit installed 130 new roofs at a cost of \$227 million; 71 boilers and heating upgrades for \$82 million, upgraded the grounds at 77 developments at a cost of \$100 million; spent \$289 million at 122 developments to replace bricks; invested \$96 million to replace elevators at 41 developments; renovated apartments at 131 developments for \$136 million and spent \$13 million to install closed circuit television to help deter crime at 55 developments.

NYCHA has completed the expenditure of \$300 million in bonds issued in 2005 to address critical capital needs such as structural brickwork repair and roof replacements at 135 buildings in 32 NYCHA developments. As part of President Obama's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act signed into law in February 2009, NYCHA received \$423 million of stimulus funds which will allow the Authority to invest in essential projects over the next two years. From critical elevator repairs, to apartment renovations, boiler replacement and heating upgrades, these projects will not only improve the quality of life for NYCHA's residents, but will help to increase energy efficiency. The single largest investment of stimulus funds, \$87 million, will go toward the renovation and reconfiguration of 1,610 apartments at Whitman-Ingersoll Houses in Brooklyn, and has already awarded 45 stimulus projects for a total amount of more than \$150 million.

Today, NYCHA's portfolio consists of over 178,000 apartments in 2,611 buildings in 338 public housing developments throughout the five boroughs, serving more than 408,000 residents. In addition, NYCHA administers a Section 8 leased housing program that includes more than 32,000 participating landlords and over 95,000 voucher holders. One in 13 New Yorkers are NYCHA residents or Section 8 voucher holders making NYCHA New York's largest landlord as well as the nation's largest and foremost provider of public housing. Five percent of the city's population lives in one of NYCHA's 338 housing developments. NYCHA is home to approximately 30 percent, or 120,000 of residents under age 18, and more than 17 percent, or 71,000, of seniors age 62 and older.

On display at the reception were a special, pieced quilt, depicting NYCHA's rich history, and covering its 75 years from the perspective of its residents, as well as an accompanying photo exhibit of NYCHA's storied past. The quilt was created by seniors from Frederick Douglass and East River Houses in Manhattan, and Surfside Gardens in Brooklyn, and will become part of a special traveling exhibit as part of the NYCHA borough festivals throughout the summer. The images selected for the quilt span NYCHA's history and illustrate sporting events, carnivals, plays, music, art, and hand screen printed images of original artwork of sea life as inspired by the beauty of Coney Island, where Surfside is located. Harborview Visual Arts Program participants from Manhattan's Campos Community Center created 75th anniversary vases that were used as centerpieces at the Gracie Mansion event, and the NYCHA 75th Anniversary Band performed a medley of songs with members of the NYCHA Youth Chorus and residents.

NYCHA's website <http://www.nyc.gov/nycha> features a photo gallery and also provides a chronology that looks at major NYCHA events over the past 75 years.

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Contact:	Stu Loeser/Dawn Walker	(212) 788-2958
	Howard Marder (NYCHA)	(212) 306-3322