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CHA Residents Pushing for Meeting with New CEO

Produced by **Natalie Moore** on Friday, February 01, 2008

A group of tenants in a Chicago Housing Authority development don't want their apartments to be transformed into a new community. They're hoping the agency's new CEO will listen.

Lathrop Homes is between the trendy Bucktown and Roscoe Village neighborhoods. It's one of the few CHA developments not located on the city's South Side.

Local Advisory Council President Juanita Stevenson has lived here for 25 years. Here's why she likes it:

STEVENSON: The different diversity of the people, the different cultures. We learn from each other. We have black, white, Spanish and we have had a few Asians come through from time to time.

Under the CHA Plan for Transformation, Lathrop is slated to be redeveloped to create a mixed-income community. One-third public housing, one-third affordable and one-third market rate.

The plan aims to erase concentrated poverty across the city. But Lathrop residents say their apartments aren't situated in pockets of poverty.

Demolition for the low-rise buildings is scheduled for 2009. Residents are trying to use this time to get the ear Lewis Jordan, the new CEO of the CHA. He took charge of the agency last month.

JORDAN: I'm very open to sitting down with residents, community advocates to talk about the plan – to better explain and give rationale as to why we're doing what we're doing.

The Chicago Rehab Network, an advocacy group, supports the residents' efforts. The Logan Square Neighborhood Association has also been working with Lathrop Homes residents to preserve low-income and affordable housing.

I'm Natalie Moore, Chicago Public Radio.