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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MAYOR APPOINTS EX-OFFICIO DIRECTOR TO HOUSTON LAND BANK BOARD;  
NEW POSITION TO ENHANCE COORDINATION WITH COMPLETE COMMUNITIES**

Opening the door to broader partnerships for the creation of affordable homes and other community development activities, the Houston Land Bank (HLB) Board of Directors' newest member represents the Mayor's Office of Complete Communities and brings valuable expertise and perspective.

On April 9 Christa Stoneham, Division Manager in the Mayor's Office of Complete Communities, was sworn in as the first ex-officio member of [HLB's Board of Directors](#), which includes 13 voting members. The newly filled role, designated for Houston's mayor or designee according to HLB's bylaws, is to generate additional coordination between HLB and the City of Houston, expanding on HLB's ongoing partnership with the City's Housing and Community Development Department.

"Christa's experience in community engagement and project management makes her the right person for the Houston Land Bank Board of Directors. She works closely with nonprofits and community stakeholders, and I am confident she will represent my vision for Complete Communities as the ex-officio Director of the HLB," Mayor Sylvester Turner said. "I also am excited about this appointment because Christa is a young professional engaged in some of the most important work in our city; she is the kind of future leader we need to keep Houston moving forward."

"We are excited for the skills and expertise Ms. Stoneham will add to the land bank's efforts," Board Chair Nick Hall said. "This is an important connection between the City and HLB and will only enhance our success in achieving the City's goal of healthy, resilient communities across Houston."

Ms. Stoneham was appointed to the Mayor's Office of Complete Communities after serving five years in the Planning and Development Department, where she was a senior planner who led the Acres Home Complete Community work and presented several variances and development applications to the Houston Planning Commission. As the Division Manager in the Mayor's Office, Ms. Stoneham oversees community relationships in the 10 Complete Communities neighborhoods: Acres Home, Alief-Westwood, Fort Bend Houston, Gulfton, Kashmere Gardens, Magnolia Park-Manchester, Near Northside, Second Ward, Sunnyside, and Third Ward. She is responsible for managing and developing strategic partnerships with the local government, elected officials, school districts, civic organizations, and nonprofit agencies. She works closely with the Director and Assistant Director to establish and cultivate those alliances; she also supports the office's fundraising strategy and the

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implementation of various projects, in addition to directing the work of staff within community-based organizations responsible for implementing community development, leadership development, and civic engagement programs, services, and activities.

A native of Dublin, California, Ms. Stoneham is a proud graduate of Prairie View A&M University, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Architecture, a Master of Architecture degree, and a Master of Community Development degree.

### **Houston Land Bank Background**

HLB is a not-for-profit local government corporation incorporated in the State of Texas and is a component unit of the City of Houston. HLB is committed to be a strong, innovative partner in the equitable redevelopment of vacant, abandoned or damaged properties in Houston's neighborhoods, and a good neighbor to the communities in which we work to provide affordable homes for low- and moderate-income Houstonians.

HLB was established by the City of Houston in 1999 as the Land Assemblage and Redevelopment Authority (LARA), a local government corporation charged with facilitating redevelopment of vacant and/or tax-delinquent residential real estate in targeted Houston neighborhoods. In 2018, the organization realigned its strategic activities to better serve neighborhood revitalization activity in the City of Houston and changed its name to the Houston Land Bank to reflect its core function of transforming vacant parcels into affordable housing; its amended bylaws and articles of incorporation were passed by City Council in August 2018. HLB's now 14-member Board of Directors includes representatives appointed by Houston's mayor and City Council, Harris County and the Houston Independent School District. HLB receives local funds from the City of Houston and anticipates additional revenue from the sale of lots and homes. For more information, visit <http://www.houstonlandbank.org>.

### **About the Mayor's Office of Complete Communities (MOCC)**

Complete Communities is a signature initiative of City of Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner. Its mission is to ensure that all Houstonians have equal access to quality services and amenities that improve their lives. By developing public-private partnerships that tap into the strengths of Houston's residents, nonprofits, businesses, and philanthropic partners, together, we can build a stronger, more resilient city and make transformational change where it's needed most. The Complete Communities initiative was launched by Mayor Turner in April of 2017 with five pilot communities – Acres Home, Gulfton, Near Northside, Second Ward, and Third Ward – and the initiative expanded to 10 communities in June of 2019 with the inclusion of Alief-Westwood, Fort Bend Houston, Kashmere Gardens, Magnolia Park-Manchester, and Sunnyside. To learn more about the Complete Communities Initiative, visit [www.houstontx.gov/completemunities](http://www.houstontx.gov/completemunities).

