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# Urban Land Institute Releases Study Highlighting Atlanta Housing’s Progress in Advancing Housing Initiatives

*Findings amplify AH’s transformative progress and impactful trajectory*

**Atlanta, GA** – Atlanta Housing (AH) announced the release of an Urban Land Institute (ULI) Advisory Services panel report, which provides a thorough analysis of the housing authority and spotlights Atlanta Housing’s significant progress and strategic vision for advancing the city’s affordable housing initiatives. In support of AH’s plans for accelerated delivery of affordable housing in Atlanta through innovative public-private collaborations, AH Board Vice Chair Sarah Kirsch, former Executive Director of ULI Atlanta, and AH President and Chief Executive Officer Terri M. Lee advocated for the ULI review to equip Atlanta Housing with wide-ranging feedback and expert recommendations that will ultimately assist AH in achieving its aggressive goals.

“I am grateful for the rigorous steps taken by the Urban Land Institute to analyze Atlanta Housing’s strategic plan, our project portfolio, and the entirety of our operations,” said Terri M. Lee, President and Chief Executive Officer of Atlanta Housing. “Atlanta Housing must be known as an agency that embraces accountability, ownership, transparency, and trust in all that we do, and this report is a culmination of an open-door look into the inner workings of our agency.”

The report was shaped by ULI members curated for their housing expertise who volunteered as panelists from around the country to assist AH with strategic recommendations for enhancing affordable housing availability and quality in Atlanta. ULI’s methodology combined extensive stakeholder engagement on the ground in Atlanta, quantitative data analysis, in-depth interviews with key AH staff, and case studies to provide a broad understanding of Atlanta Housing and the city’s housing landscape.

“This collaboration with national experts in real estate, finance, and land use accelerates our quest for continuous improvement in how we serve the housing needs of Atlantans,” said Atlanta Housing Vice Chair Sarah Kirsch. “The findings from the ULI study inform how Atlanta Housing is on the right track as we build and preserve safe, quality, and affordable housing for our residents.”

## Key Findings and Accomplishments

The report found that AH has significantly enhanced its collaborative efforts with stakeholders, including developers, community organizations, and philanthropic partners. These partnerships broaden the resource base and demonstrate AH's commitment to culturally sensitive and community-responsive housing solutions. AH is also prioritizing engagement with minority- and women-owned businesses and developers. This includes mandates for minority participation in all Master Development Agreements, ensuring meaningful involvement in projects.

Findings also indicated that Atlanta Housing's adoption of new financing models and self-development strategies has led to more efficient resource use and quicker project delivery. Specialized consultants and upskilling initiatives have bridged the knowledge gap in navigating complex financial structures. Most notably, the implementation of the master developer model has streamlined project approvals and reduced resource competition, expediting progress on affordable housing developments. AH's people-focused approach was commended with acknowledgment that AH's regular community engagement and public disclosure show that development processes are transparent and inclusive.

The panelists reported that AH's initiatives now extend beyond housing to include education, health, and economic empowerment, noting that collaborations with local colleges for continuing education, job training programs, and health partnerships have been pivotal. The report also revealed that financial literacy training and community savings initiatives are helping residents achieve financial stability and self-sufficiency.

## Looking Forward

The ULI advisory panelists concluded that Atlanta Housing is well-positioned to continue making transformative, impactful developments in the affordable housing market, and they provided strategic recommendations for continuing progress. The ULI panel also recommended enhancing in-house financial modeling capabilities to optimize resource deployment; leveraging city resources and exploring new funding opportunities to alleviate financial burdens on AH projects, and prioritizing sustainability in all new projects, including mandating LEED certification for developers and construction teams.

The alignment between several ULI recommendations and Atlanta Housing's work towards its 5-year strategic goals, spearheaded in FY 2023 and well underway, indicates that with continued innovative collaborations and strategic leadership, AH is poised to address Atlanta's affordable housing challenges more effectively than ever. For everyday Atlantans struggling to find affordable housing, these findings signify the opportunity for stability and hope.

"Atlanta Housing came to the table with key resources and excellent opportunities for leverage, including land, investment capital, and housing vouchers," said Tyrone Rachal, chair of ULI Atlanta. "The outcomes of this report continue to build on Atlanta's strong housing ecosystem involving public and private efforts to meet both Atlanta Housing's plan to create and preserve 10,000 affordable units and the City of Atlanta's broader housing production goals. The expert ULI panel echoed Atlanta Housing's sentiment that Atlanta needs a multipronged approach that transcends traditional funding models and emphasizes both community impact and financial sustainability."

For more information and to access the full report, please visit [here](#). The full report can also be found on **ULI's Knowledge Finder** platform.

For more information about ULI's Advisory Services, click [here](#). This panel was a partnership between ULI Atlanta and ULI Advisory Services, with support from ULI's Terwilliger Center for Housing and the ULI Foundation. For more information about ULI Atlanta, click [here](#).

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## **ABOUT ATLANTA HOUSING**

President and Chief Executive Officer Terri M. Lee leads The Housing Authority of the City of Atlanta, Georgia (AH), the largest housing authority in Georgia and one of the largest in the nation. AH carries the prestigious Moving to Work (MTW) designation and serves as an industry leader in providing and facilitating affordable housing resources for nearly 27,000 low-income households comprised of approximately 45,000 people through its AH-owned residential communities, tenant-based and project-based vouchers, supportive housing, as well as down payment assistance, where innovation leads the approach to making the dream of homeownership attainable for more Atlantans. Atlanta Housing programs are funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Visit AH at [www.atlantahousing.org](http://www.atlantahousing.org) or follow us on social media @housingatlanta.

## **ABOUT THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE**

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