

PRESS RELEASE



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Housing Authority of Baltimore City and National Not-for-Profit Welcome Nearly 100 Families to Homes in Higher Opportunity Neighborhoods

Completion of the Hollander Ridge plan fulfills a promise, increasing opportunity for low and moderate-income families to live in “Areas of Opportunity”

(BALTIMORE | April 20, 2021) – The Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) and the NHP Foundation (NHPF) have announced the completion of rehabilitation and leasing of 94 HABC single family affordable rental homes, scattered through several higher amenity neighborhoods in Baltimore City.

These one- to four-bedroom single family homes are in “Areas of Opportunity,” defined as thriving and diverse communities, including high performing schools, low crime, low rates of poverty, and with neighborhood amenities often not found in the lowest income areas including grocery stores, medical facilities and community centers.

The rehabilitation program stems from a decades-old class action lawsuit filed against the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (“HUD”), the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore, and HABC on behalf of public housing residents who alleged they were intentionally being segregated in high poverty areas.

This case was partially resolved in 1996 in a partial consent decree. A trial was held in 2003 in federal court on the portions of the lawsuit not resolved by the partial consent decree. In 2005, the federal court judge issued an opinion holding that HABC and the City were not liable, but that HUD was liable for failing to affirmatively further fair housing.

Although HABC was found not to be liable, HABC participated in the settlement with HUD and the plaintiffs, which replaced the partial consent decree and included this rehabilitation program. The current HABC administration fulfilled the promise of completing the rehabilitation program.

“We have worked so long and hard to bring this goal to fruition,” said HABC President and CEO Janet Abrahams. “We could not be happier for the 94 families fortunate enough to have this opportunity.”

Although the homes are in several sections of the city, the initiative is called Hollander Ridge, the name of a public housing development in east Baltimore that was demolished in 2000.

“The housing in the program provides opportunity for significant improvement in academic prospects and social mobility for families who formerly did not have access, and will result in children with better educations, higher likelihood of attaining higher education and college degrees leading to higher

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paying jobs and an improved quality of life,” said NHPF Vice President, Mansur Abdul-Malik, the lead developer on the project. “Children in the next ten to fifteen years are really going to show the impact of Hollander Ridge and its effect on the community.”

The housing types involved in this project represent Baltimore’s architectural diversity, including townhomes, single-family detached and semi-detached homes. These homes are spread across six geographical sections of the city. As part of the Hollander Ridge development program, each home underwent both interior and exterior renovation, as well as the creation of five homes that are 100% wheelchair accessible and compliant with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and its regulations.

“Scattered site housing as an asset class presents unique challenges and benefits to a developer,” added NHPF President and CEO Richard F. Burns, “This type of housing is more expensive than a multifamily building renovation. However, it is the most equitable form of affordable housing that can be built. There is no concentration of poverty since units are scattered. The affordable units are seamlessly integrated making for a diverse socio-economic community and residents have the ability to enjoy homeownership style amenities.”

Families living in these homes will also benefit from individualized coaching programs offered by NHPF’s Resident Services subsidiary, Operation Pathways.

“A resident services coordinator will coach families in achieving goals they set for themselves,” said Ken White, Executive Director of Operation Pathways. “This, resident-centered approach provides them resources, strategies, and motivation to assist them in defining their own success. As many of these residents will be caring for single-family homes for the first time, the service coordinator will develop resources and provide training and assistance as needed.”

Primary funding for this work came from a HOPE VI grant of approximately \$18 million, DHCD funds, tax credits and HABC funds.

This transaction received \$4 million in funding from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) consisting of \$2.5 million in Rental Housing Works funding and \$1.5 million in Partnership Rental funding.

“Financing the Hollander Ridge project would have been impossible without the low-income housing tax credit program,” added HABC’s Abrahams. “It allowed us together with NHPF to leverage these tax credits with other financing to be able to rehabilitate all 94 properties and allow our residents to move into newly renovated homes.”

About HABC

HABC is the fifth largest public housing authority in the U.S., providing quality affordable housing for more than 23,000 households. The agency creates diverse and vibrant communities, provides opportunities for self-sufficiency, and builds pathways for strong partnerships. #bmoreHABC

About The NHP Foundation

Headquartered in New York City with offices in Washington, DC, and Chicago, IL, The NHP Foundation (NHPF) was launched on January 30, 1989, as a publicly supported 501(c)(3) not-for-profit real estate corporation. For more information, please visit www.nhpfoundation.org.

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