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## Governor Cuomo Announces Groundbreaking Of \$37 Million Affordable Housing Development In The Town Of Cheektowaga

### Apple Blossom Apartments to Provide 110 Affordable Homes with Supportive Services

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced that construction has begun on a \$37 million affordable and supportive housing development in the Town of Cheektowaga. Upon completion, Apple Blossom Apartments will have 110 affordable apartments, with 48 reserved for individuals with mental illness who will have access to supportive services onsite.

"Affordable and supportive housing is critical to revitalizing communities and providing vulnerable New Yorkers with a secure place to call home," **Governor Cuomo said.** "As we break ground on this much-needed development in the Town of Cheektowaga, we are demonstrating once again New York's unwavering commitment to providing greater access to housing and reducing homelessness in communities across the state."

"This housing project will increase access to affordable units and support economic growth in Cheektowaga and Erie County," **said Lieutenant Governor Kathy Hochul.** "The Apple Blossom Apartments will offer onsite services for residents and ensure an inclusive and safe community. The development builds on our commitment to add and retain affordable housing across the state as part of our efforts to combat homelessness and enhance quality of life for all New Yorkers."

Apple Blossom Apartments will feature three buildings named after apples grown in New York State—Honeycrisp, Empire, and Cortland. Two of the buildings are currently under

construction and a third existing building is being renovated and expanded to include additional apartments. The apartments will be affordable to households with incomes at or below 60 percent of the Area Median Income with monthly rents that range from \$350 to \$800.

Apple Blossom is part of the Governor's unprecedented \$20 billion, five-year Housing Plan to make housing accessible and combat homelessness by building or preserving more than 100,000 affordable homes and 6,000 with supportive services. The plan is a comprehensive approach to statewide housing issues and includes multifamily and single-family housing and community development. Since 2011, HCR has invested more than \$274 million in the Western New York region that has created or preserved affordable housing for nearly 9,250 residents.

Supportive housing gives individuals with mental illness an affordable housing option with on-site services that help them maintain independence, master life skills, and succeed in recovery. Research shows that supportive housing improves health outcomes for people with mental illness through housing stability and appropriate supports. Supportive housing can help prevent homelessness, while also reducing the use of costly, publicly-funded services, emergency room visits and inpatient hospital stays.

Each building will have an elevator, community room with kitchen, lounges with computer access, laundry rooms on each floor, and storage areas within each apartment. Additional amenities include onsite parking and meeting space for tenant support services such as medical and mental health case management, and the ability to connect with other community based social services and programs.

HCR financing for Apple Blossom Apartments includes \$19.2 million in tax-exempt bonds, federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits that will generate \$9.7 million in equity, and nearly \$12.8 million in Supportive Housing Opportunity Program subsidy. Additional financing includes \$13 million of Capital funds from the New York State Office of Mental Health well as a \$120,000 Project Development Grant. The New York State Energy Research and Development Authority supplied \$86,000. DePaul is the developer and supportive service provider.

**New York State Homes and Community Renewal Commissioner RuthAnne**

**Visnauskas said,** "Apple Blossom Apartments will expand affordable housing opportunities for more than 110 people and strengthen the entire Cheektowaga community. As Governor Cuomo's commitment to housing has demonstrated time and again across the state, affordable homes with support services are key to helping people live productive, independent lives in the communities they love."

**New York State Office of Mental Health Commissioner, Dr. Ann Sullivan said,** "The Apple Blossom Apartments will give individuals with mental illness the opportunity to live independently, with support and services on site to help them thrive. I am excited to see how this development changes lives for individuals in Erie County by offering housing stability for the most vulnerable populations."

**Alicia Barton, President and CEO, NYSERDA, said,** "New York continues to lead by example in providing safe, affordable, comfortable housing that reduces energy use and costs for our most vulnerable residents under Governor Cuomo's leadership. This forward-thinking approach to affordable housing offers a holistic tenant experience and services that can be applied in communities across the state."

**Senator Tim Kennedy said,** "Apple Blossom Apartments will help to fulfill a critical need in the Western New York Community with the addition of 110 affordable apartments to our local affordable housing stock. Not only will this expand our supply of affordable housing, but this project will have a special focus on tenant support services, including medical and mental health case management. I applaud DePaul Properties, New York State Homes and Community Renewal, and the Office of Mental Health for their commitment to this impressive project."

**Senator Rob Ortt said,** "Because of the outstanding history that DePaul Properties has with the constructions of previous affordable housing projects, I am certain that this Cheektowaga facility will be another resounding success. By including onsite services in this complex, we are helping increase access to local and state programs for those who need them the most. It is my hope that we will continue to see increased investment into projects such as the Apple Blossom Apartments because for those who reside in these complexes, the safety, security, and access to essential programs these residences provide are life-changing."

**Assemblymember Monica Wallace said,** "I'm thrilled to welcome Apple Blossom Apartments to the Cheektowaga community. As our region continues to grow, so too does the need for affordable housing options. DePaul Properties recognizes that need through their investment in Cheektowaga, and I look forward to seeing the benefits that this project will have within our community."

**Erie County Executive Mark Poloncarz said,** "Too often, individuals and families are unable to secure affordable housing and our neighborhoods suffer as a result. The Apple Blossom Apartments in the Town of Cheektowaga will bring not only affordable housing but supportive services and will bring new life and new energy to the community. This \$37 million project is an investment that will improve quality of life for residents and make a stronger Town as well."

**Erie County Legislator Tim Meyers said,** "The Apple Blossom Apartments serve as another promising example of our state and local governments working together to address the needs of our community. This project not only offers opportunity to those who are struggling to make ends meet, but also takes the important step of providing tenants onsite access to important social, medical, and mental health services. I commend DePaul Properties for the dedication they've shown to the success of this property, and thank them for their commitment to the shared responsibility of providing affordable, supportive housing".

**Cheektowaga Supervisor Diane Benczkowski said,** "Affordable housing is a growing need in Cheektowaga and I'm proud that DePaul will be expanding their affordable housing options in Cheektowaga. The Apple Blossom Apartments project will provide much needed new and affordable housing options to the most vulnerable in our community including seniors, individuals with a mental health diagnosis and individuals who are deaf. This is an exciting project and I look forward to its completion."

**DePaul President Mark H. Fuller said,** "DePaul is pleased to be a community partner in the redevelopment of the Apple Blossom campus. We wish to thank Governor Cuomo and the State for providing DePaul with the funding that has made this project a reality. The DePaul Apple Blossom Apartments is an example of progress and partnership in action."

## Contact the Governor's Press Office



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