



Homes and Community Renewal (/)



SEPTEMBER 9, 2021

Governor Hochul Announces Opening of \$37 Million Affordable Housing Development in Erie County

The Apple Blossom Apartments in Cheektowaga Feature 110 Affordable Homes for Low-Income Households and Adults in Need of Supportive Services

Sustainably Designed Buildings Accommodate Residents with Hearing or Visual Impairments and Residents with Physical Disabilities

Governor Kathy Hochul today announced the opening of a \$37 million affordable and supportive housing development in the town of Cheektowaga. Apple Blossom Apartments offers 110 affordable homes with 60 apartments for individuals in need of supportive services.

"The coronavirus pandemic created unprecedented challenges for New Yorkers already struggling with housing insecurity," **Governor Hochul said.** "Providing individuals and families with a safe and secure home is transformative and benefits the entire community. Apple Blossom Apartments is truly a welcome addition to Western New York."

Apple Blossom Apartments consists of three buildings named after apples grown in New York State - Gala, Empire and Cortland. All apartments are affordable to households earning at or below 60 percent of the Area Median Income.

Forty-eight homes are reserved for individuals who are eligible to receive on-site mental health treatment services, licensed by the New York State Office of Mental Health (OMH) under the Apartment Treatment Program. Twelve additional supportive homes are funded through the Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative (ESSHI) and administered by OMH. The remaining 50 apartments are set aside for income-eligible households. There are 28 apartments with ADA accessibility and 45 apartments with hearing and vision accessibility throughout the development.

The development complex was designed in compliance with the Energy Star Certified Homes Program path with input from the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority, which incorporates energy efficient building material and Energy Star appliances throughout the project.

Each of the three buildings feature a community room with kitchen, resident lounges with computer access, laundry rooms on each floor, and storage areas within each apartment. Meeting rooms in each building accommodate tenant support services.

Apple Blossom Apartments is located close to grocery shopping, schools, places of worship, medical care, banks, libraries, and government agencies.

DePaul Community Services is the service provider and developer. Financing for Apple Blossom Apartments includes \$19.2 million in permanent tax-exempt bonds, Federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits that generated \$9.7 million in equity, and nearly \$12.8 million in subsidy from New York State Homes and Community Renewal. OMH provided \$13 million in construction funding, as well start-up funding through a \$120,000 Project Development Grant. OMH is also providing \$300,000 in annual support services funding through the ESSHI program. NYSERDA provided \$86,000.

Apple Blossom Apartments is part of the state'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.

HCR Commissioner RuthAnne Visnaukas said, "We are so pleased to welcome home more than 110 new residents to the Apple Blossom Apartments in Cheektowaga. Thanks to DePaul and our partners in state government, this \$37 million housing community will enhance the everyday lives of adults in need of support services. All New Yorkers deserve to live affordably and comfortably in homes that meet their unique needs, and it is our mission at HCR to expand access to quality housing opportunities like the Apple Blossom Apartments in every region of the state."

OMH Commissioner Dr. Ann Sullivan said, "Supportive housing provides people living with mental illness the opportunity to be independent and live successfully in their own communities. New York has been a national leader in the development of supportive housing, and our Empire State Supportive Housing Initiative has given thousands of vulnerable individuals and families a stable, safe home with the services they need. The Apple Blossom Apartments in Cheektowaga offer people living with mental illness independence and support in a beautiful, welcoming home."

Doreen M. Harris, President and CEO of NYSERDA said, "The Apple Blossom Apartments project showcases energy-efficient technology that will ensure a comfortable, well-insulated, and enjoyable living environment for Western New Yorkers. The complex utilizes up-to-date equipment and construction techniques to deliver energy and cost savings to residents, supporting the State's commitment to ensure low-income residents receive an equitable share of the benefits of clean energy investments."

DePaul President Mark Fuller said, "DePaul is grateful to our state partners for assisting us in increasing our ability to provide long-term or permanent housing where residents can access the support services they require to live successfully. We look forward to changing even more lives for individuals in Erie County and across New York State by offering housing stability for the most vulnerable populations."

Senator Tim Kennedy said, "With a combined multimillion dollar investment from state and federal resources, we now have 110 new affordable homes in Cheektowaga. This is once again a demonstration of New York's commitment to making housing more accessible and affordable statewide, and a testament to DePaul Community Services' vision to meet a significant need in our community."

Assembly Member Monica Wallace said, "With housing costs rising dramatically across the nation, it's more important than ever that we invest in affordable housing for the most vulnerable individuals in our society. With the completion of Apple Blossom Apartments, the state has added more than 100 new housing units, including dozens that have services and accessibility for those with special needs. Thank you to Governor Hochul and New York State Homes and Community Renewal for their commitment to providing safe, affordable, and supportive housing for those who need it most."

Cheektowaga Supervisor Diane Benczkowski said, "How fortunate the Town of Cheektowaga is to have the Apple Blossom Apartments be part of our community. DePaul has once again lived up to their mission of providing opportunity, support and hope and we know the new residents will flourish."

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