



CELEBRATING
30 YEARS



Lakewood Development transforms former school into 59 apartments—project complements Central NY Rising revitalization

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Auburn, NY West Middle School Apartments, the transformation of a vacant school building into a three-story development with 59 affordable apartments has opened. 15 of the units will include mental health support services. The development complements Central New York Rising, the region's Upstate Revitalization Initiative that is a blueprint for growing the economy and creating opportunity.

Lakewood Development is the developer for this \$20.2 million project.

Two Plus Four president and managing member of Lakewood Development Susan Kimmel said, “This is a win-win situation for everyone. The school district is not burdened with an unneeded building, the city of Auburn gets a property break on the tax rolls, Unity House is able to expand its office space, and most importantly, those city residents who are most vulnerable are getting a fresh start through this new affordable housing option.”

The supportive housing residents will receive on-site services from Unity House of Cayuga County, a nonprofit organization founded in 1977 and designed to enrich the lives of people with disabilities. Unity House’s headquarters have transitioned into new office space within the building as well.

The renovation meets the NYSERDA Low-Rise Residential New Construction standards as well as the Enterprise Green Communities Criteria, which aligns affordable housing investment with sustainable building practices that make housing healthier and sustainable. The building is located at 217 Genesee St. in a residential neighborhood near the city’s main commercial corridor and close to a Central New York Regional Transportation Authority bus stop.

New York State Homes and Community Renewal provided \$7.6 million in financing for the project in the form of tax exempt bond financing and subsidy loan. HCR’s annual Federal tax credit allocation generated \$6.5 million in tax credit equity. Additional capital funding includes \$4.4 Million from the New York State Office of Mental Health, as well as Federal and State Historic Tax Credit equity. OMH is also providing long term debt service payments, start-up funds, and ongoing services and operating funding.

West Middle School Apartments features a community room, laundry area, and on-site parking. Many original features of the school were preserved, including original artwork and lockers that line the halls. In addition, the school auditorium remains intact and is available for public events.

“This new affordable housing development will provide quality housing to some of our most vulnerable New Yorkers,” governor Cuomo said. “The addition of West Middle School Apartments will keep Central New York’s economy rising and create strong, safe communities

as we continue to build a better New York for all.”

Governor Cuomo’s commitment to providing all New Yorkers with access to safe, affordable housing is reflected in the State’s unprecedented \$20 billion, five-year Housing Plan. The plan makes housing accessible and combats homelessness by building and preserving 112,000 units of affordable housing - enough to house the population of the city of Buffalo. The plan, which includes 6,000 units of supportive housing, is a comprehensive approach to statewide housing issues and includes multifamily and single-family housing community development, and rent stabilization.

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