

October 1, 2015

CONTACT:
Laura Sheinbaum
720.564.4646

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Boulder Housing Partners Starts Renovations of Six Properties One of Few Agencies in US to Recapitalize Public Housing

Boulder, CO— Boulder Housing Partners (BHP) will start large-scale renovations of six public housing properties next week, as part of an ambitious effort to preserve existing affordable housing throughout the city.

“[Project Renovate](#) is our top priority for 2015 and 2016,” said Betsey Martens, executive director of BHP. “We’ll preserve housing opportunities for our most economically vulnerable citizens while creating more opportunities for residents to gain in self-sufficiency.”

BHP is one of a select group of public housing authorities approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to recapitalize its public housing properties. By gaining local control of the properties, BHP can ensure quality affordable housing for Boulder’s most at-risk citizens in perpetuity.

Work is poised to begin on 279 apartments, townhomes and single family homes at six properties:

- [Diagonal Court](#): 30 townhomes in north central Boulder
- [Iris Hawthorne](#): 14 single family homes in central Boulder
- [Kalmia](#): 49 townhomes in north central Boulder
- [Manhattan](#): 41 townhomes and stacked flat units in southeast Boulder
- [Northport](#): 50 senior apartments in north Boulder
- [Walnut Place](#): 95 senior apartments in downtown Boulder

All of the properties were built in the 1970s and 1980s. Renovations will include new Energy Star appliances, bathroom and kitchen overhauls, open floorplans, additional storage and new lighting. Exterior work will include new siding, roofs, windows, doors and landscaping. Improvements will meet the Enterprise Green Communities standards and City of Boulder Smart Regulations.

Residents may relocate temporarily into a newly renovated unit in their building or permanently relocate with the provision of a Housing Choice voucher and moving assistance provided by BHP.

Residents who move back in after renovations will continue to pay at least 30 percent of their income in rent and utilities under a project-based Section 8 voucher program.

The Diagonal Court, Manhattan and Kalmia properties will have new community centers to provide space for education and training programs for adults and children.

“Our mission is as much about creating opportunity as it is about providing housing,” said Martens. “A wide variety of educational and job training programs are offered in the on-site community centers.” A prime example is the Bringing School Home program, developed 18 years ago with the I Have a Dream Foundation, which has resulted in a 92 percent high school graduation rate among BHP youth, versus a control group graduation rate of 63 percent.

Martens was recently named the first-ever [Affordable Housing Institute \(AHI\) Fellow](#) for her pioneering research into how affordable housing can be a critical link for low income children to catalyze lifelong achievement. The 18-month fellowship will focus on translating the Bringing School Home Program ideas into a national policy agenda.

Boulder Housing Partners has assembled \$42 million for the renovations and construction of three new community centers. Funding sources are Low Income Housing Tax Credit Equity and Private Activity Bonds. Partners include the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Colorado Housing and Finance Authority, Enterprise Community Investment and FirstBank. Renovations are being managed by Palace Construction, with architectural design by Caddis Architecture and EJ Architecture.

At a time when the federal government is steadily disinvesting in public housing, BHP wanted to take a bold and innovative approach to preserving its most affordable apartments. This renovation will ensure that these assets remain physically and financially sound so the affordability can be preserved in perpetuity. The public-private partnership could be a model for the future of housing solutions in Boulder.

In the last 12 years, Boulder has lost an average of 471 units of market affordable rental housing each year. If current trends continue, by 2020 Boulder will have no homes affordable to households with annual incomes under \$50,000 other than those homes in the city’s permanently affordable program. For these reasons, Boulder Housing Partners updated its strategic plan to help the city course correct and remain consistent with the vision articulated in the Boulder Valley Comprehensive Plan.

About Boulder Housing Partners: Boulder Housing Partners is the housing authority serving the City of Boulder since 1966. BHP builds, owns, and manages quality affordable housing for low and moderate-income Boulder residents, and helps those residents pursue successful, productive, and dignified lives. BHP is one of only 35 public housing authorities in the United States participating in the prestigious Moving to Work program, which encourages innovation by providing flexibility in the use of federal funds. Its communities have won national and international awards for sustainability and affordable housing development.

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