

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact:

Jamie Frumusa

585-683-5439

Jamie@tippingpointcomm.com



CHANGING THE FACE OF PUBLIC HOUSING

*Rochester Housing Authority Launches New Mission to Elevate Living Standards
for Low-Income Rochestarians*

ROCHESTER, N.Y., January 17, 2017 – Today, The Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) cut the ribbon at 54-66 Garson Avenue, a rehabilitated public housing property in the Marketview Heights neighborhood. The project was a \$410,000 investment and included updates to both the interior and exterior of the 4-unit site using RHA’s 2016 HUD Capital Fund Grant.

Garson Avenue is the first of several RHA public housing properties set to undergo interior and exterior remodels not only to improve quality of life for residents but also enhance the surrounding neighborhoods. This site was selected because of its proximity to the Public Market, a high-traffic area, making it the perfect visual example of additional public housing improvements to come.

“Who says public housing needs to look like public housing?” asked Mr. John Hill, Executive Director at The Rochester Housing Authority. “We want to literally change the face of public housing by providing our residents with safe and desirable places to live, but also theoretically by positioning the agency as a developer of affordable housing. We plan to do this by growing and building opportunities for modernization and community development that will stabilize neighborhoods and increase investments.”

“As part of our five-year strategic plan, we have been actively working to develop quality, and affordable public housing,” said George Moses, Rochester Housing Authority Board Chairman. “Bringing in a new Executive Director last year, who has the knowledge and vision to move things forward, was a critical step to making this happen. The Board is excited to support capital projects, like Garson Avenue, that will have a significant, long-lasting impact on our community and the people we serve.”

Hill began using the phrase *Changing the Face of Public Housing* after his hire in mid-2016. His vision coincides with the Boards’ goals for public housing. The agency is also changing the way it does business overall by expanding staff capacity, improving communications and efficiency and using a shared leadership model to improve company culture.

To further the initiative, the Housing Authority brought three new architect-engineering firms under contract, Lothrop Associates LLP, Konopka Architecture and the Liro Group. In addition, RHA will complete the process of selecting a developer partner within the next 60-days and expand its major grant writing capabilities. This will enhance the organization’s ability to develop larger properties and obtain alternative sources of financing.

-more-

With 54-66 Garson Avenue completed, RHA has also identified other sites that will continue feeding the pipeline for change with four additional comprehensive modernization capital projects slated to begin the initial planning phases this year.

“I want to thank the Rochester Housing Authority for launching its ‘Changing the Face of Public Housing’ initiative, which extends the right to safe, decent and affordable housing to all citizens regardless of their income,” said Mayor Lovely A. Warren. “People who live in a place they are proud to call home are in a better position to help us create more jobs, safer more vibrant neighborhoods and better educational opportunities for all of our citizens.”

About 54-66 Garson Avenue

Garson Avenue is a public housing property with four townhouse style units that can serve up to 24 residents (each unit has a separate basement with laundry hook up) units are approximately 1,265 square feet each.

Construction Upgrades: Garson has four three-bedroom units with 1 ½ baths, full basements and private parking in the rear. Full interior demolition and asbestos abatement, new roofing and siding, front and rear porches added to each unit, green space in rear yard was enhanced with privacy fences, units upgraded to copper wiring, removal of kitchen and dining room walls to create a modern open floor plan, rear parking lot site lighting added for additional resident safety.

Interior Upgrades: New high efficient LED lighting, new 95+ efficient furnaces, new cabinets, doors, flooring, and fixtures throughout.

Project Duration: Construction began in March of 2016 and was completed in December 2016.

About Rochester Housing Authority

Established in 1955 as an independent public corporation by New York State Public Housing Law, the Rochester Housing Authority (RHA) serves more than 25,000 lower-income families, seniors and disabled residents and program participants in the five-county Greater Rochester area. Approximately 20% of those reside in the 2,400+ RHA public housing units, while others served receive assistance in the form of voucher or certificate programs that help them afford eligible, private housing. In 2015, RHA received a “High Performer” rating from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Rochester Housing Authority does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, family status or disability in leasing, rental, occupancy, use or other disposition of housing or related facilities.

###