



NEWS

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

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Amarillo affordable rental market to receive boost from state housing agency

(AUSTIN) — Recognizing that many young families and older Panhandle residents are struggling to keep pace with rising rent levels, the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) and State Representative David Swinford have announced a major funding award to the nonprofit developers of a 252-unit affordable rental property in Amarillo that will bring stability to the lives of tenants and much-needed economic benefits to the local construction industry.

TDHCA awarded Panhandle Regional Housing Finance Corporation (HFC), the developers of the proposed Jason Avenue Apartments, \$1.1 million in financing through the Housing Tax Credit Program. Panhandle Regional HFC will utilize the credits in conjunction with its own issuance of \$13 million in mortgage revenue bonds to construct new, high quality rental housing that can offer tenants a reduced rent.

“Amarillo is fortunate to have a healthy housing market, but as a result we are seeing rent levels move beyond what many tenants can afford to pay,” said Representative Swinford, who represents House District 87 which encompasses much of Amarillo. “I am pleased to see our state housing agency making an investment which will help create jobs and provide quality apartment homes with affordable rents.”

“Our goal is to provide attractive, high quality housing with an affordable rent while offering tenants the long-term benefits of a stable, secure home life,” added Michael Gerber, TDHCA Executive Director. “The added bonus of this award will be additional construction jobs and a significant infusion of payroll funds into the community.”

In addition to a lowered rent, properties funded through the mortgage revenue bond and housing tax credit programs also provide supportive services designed to foster self-sufficiency among young families or promote a healthy environment for older tenants. Examples typically include credit counseling, financial and computer literacy classes, and General Educational Development (GED) courses for younger adults; and transportation services, health screening, and nutrition programs for seniors.

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Jason Avenue will serve as an intergenerational development, meaning some units will be set aside specifically for older residents, while others will cater to younger families. In either case, eligible tenants must not earn more than 60 percent of the area median family income, which for Potter County equals an annual income of \$31,080 for a family of four.

The development will be constructed near the intersection of Jason Avenue and River Road, just south of East Hastings Avenue. The unit mix will include 50 one-bedroom/one-bath units, 106 two-bedroom/two-bath units, 80 three-bedroom/two-bath units, and 16 four-bedroom/two-bath units. Proposed rents will range from \$371 to \$463 per month for the senior units and from \$587 to \$734 per month for the larger, family oriented units.

The Housing Tax Credit Program is the state's primary means of directing private capital towards the creation of affordable rental housing. The tax credits provide investors of affordable rental housing with a benefit that is used to offset a portion of their federal tax liability in exchange for the production of affordable rental housing. The value associated with the tax credits allows units to be leased to qualified families at below market rate rents.

About The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs

The Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs is the state agency responsible for affordable housing, community services, energy assistance, and colonia housing programs. The Department annually administers more than \$400 million through for-profit, nonprofit, and local government partnerships to deliver local housing and community-based opportunities and assistance to Texans in need.