



INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION OF NORTH DAKOTA

Jack Dalrymple
Governor

Wayne Stenehjem
Attorney General

Doug Goehring
Agriculture Commissioner

NEW

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DEVELOPMENT WILL PROVIDE AFFORDABLE HOUSING FOR MEDICAL PERSONNEL IN WILLISTON

WILLISTON, ND – Gov. Jack Dalrymple and representatives from Mercy Medical Center and the North Dakota Housing Finance Agency (NDHFA) today celebrated the completion of Mercy Heights Apartments, a new complex in Williston that will provide affordable housing for medical personnel. The \$11 million project received a \$1 million allocation from the North Dakota Housing Incentive Fund (HIF), reserving 20 units for low- to moderate-income households.

"The completion of Mercy Heights Apartments is a great example of the progress we are making through public-private partnerships promoted by the Housing Incentive Fund to address North Dakota's affordable housing needs," said Dalrymple. "Providing affordable housing for essential services employees and those on fixed incomes is critical as we continue to address the impacts of rapid growth and enhance the livability of our communities."

Located at 301 2nd Street East in Williston, the modern four-story building has 66 apartments, underground tenant parking, and main floor commercial space. Two-thirds of the rental units are expected to be occupied by Mercy Medical Center employees.

According to Mercy Medical Center President Matt Grimshaw, the recruiting and retaining of quality healthcare staff has been difficult in recent years, with the lack of affordable housing a key issue. The medical facility established a long-term approach to address its housing needs by developing Mercy Heights Apartments. The complex is expected to make it easier to fill vacant positions at Williston's hospital.

"To address the staffing challenge, Mercy began planning for a permanent solution to our housing needs, and with the support of our parent organization, Catholic Health Initiatives, and the State of North Dakota, it is now a reality," said Grimshaw.

Mercy Heights was one of 24 housing projects selected by the state for development assistance in 2011/12. HIF contributions from Gate City Bank and American State Bank & Trust Company of Williston supported the state's funding commitment of \$1 million for the project.

"With the demand for development resources growing, more local, state and private dollars are needed to address North Dakota's affordable housing needs," said Jolene Kline, NDHFA acting director. The agency administers HIF.

The state legislature reauthorized HIF during the 2013 legislative session, giving NDHFA a \$15.4 million general fund appropriation and the authority to issue up to \$20 million in state tax credits to further capitalize the program. NDHFA has made conditional commitments to 18 new HIF projects so far. The agency will announce more commitments in November.

To support new projects, NDHFA needs to fully capitalize the new fund by Dec. 31, 2014. Contributions to HIF can be directed to a specific project or community. More information on the program is available online at www.ndhousingincentivefund.org.

In addition to the Mercy Heights Apartments, Catholic Health Initiatives (CHI) has made significant commitments to the communities it serves in western North Dakota. With recent expansions at Mercy Medical Center and the construction of a new hospital campus in Dickinson, CHI has invested \$150 million in the region. For nearly 100 years, CHI facilities have been meeting the healthcare needs of the people in the area, and these investments will strengthen these communities for years to come.

NDHFA is a self-supporting state agency that finances the creation and rehabilitation of affordable housing across North Dakota. The North Dakota Industrial Commission, consisting of Dalrymple as chairman, Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring and Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem, oversees the agency.

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