



**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF THE  
CITY OF MILWAUKEE**

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November 4, 2004

## **MILWAUKEE'S FIRST 'GREEN' PUBLIC HOUSING FACILITY OPENS TODAY 'HIGHLAND GARDENS' GREEN ROOF LARGEST OF ITS KIND IN U.S.**

The doors to Milwaukee's first 'green' housing facility were opened today as Mayor Barrett and several partners of the City of Milwaukee Housing Authority cut the ribbon to 'Highland Gardens.' The mid-rise, located at 1818 W. Juneau Avenue, offers 114 affordable, handicapped accessible apartments to the elderly and persons with disabilities.

The Highland Gardens mid-rise features the nation's largest modular green roof. Modules of green vegetation turn a regular roof into a garden. It will result in lower energy consumption, longer roof life, storm water reduction and improved air quality. The plants absorb the storm water that would otherwise flood the sewer system. At the same time, the green roof will lower the amount of heat that is given off in the summertime – something that causes poor air quality in dense urban areas. Rain gardens and landscaping will also help to absorb and reduce storm water runoff, a contributor to sewer overflows. The building itself was designed using sustainable, or green, development practices. Features include recycled flooring, energy saving designs, and live green trees sprouting from the floor of a common area. Several public and private partners aided in the creation of this project.

"Highland Gardens represents my vision for Milwaukee," said Mayor Tom Barrett. "We must approach our challenges as a city through aggressive collaboration with public and private partners. The best ideas and the best solutions come from partnerships. Highland Gardens is a solution that improves the quality of life for our residents as it conserves our resources."

The opening of the Highland Gardens mid-rise building is the first step in the transformation of Highland Park from a traditional public housing 'super block' into an economically integrated neighborhood. Highland Park will offer public housing, rental and homeownership opportunities. The mid-rise building replaces two crowded high-rise towers and surrounding lots will feature new single-family homes. The two towers will be deconstructed and building materials such as cement and windows will be recycled for future use.

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*Highland Gardens*

*Add One*

*11/4/04*

The City of Milwaukee received a \$19 million dollar HOPE VI grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to turn this housing superblock into a neighborhood. Other partners in this project include the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority and U.S. Bank to provide Low Income Housing Tax Credits. Independence First, a non-profit group that advocates on behalf of persons with disabilities worked with the Housing Authority to apply universal design principles in all of the units. The units will adapt to the needs of its residents to ensure they are fully accessible.

At Highland Gardens, the Housing Authority and its partner agencies will house persons who previously lived in nursing homes and transition them back into independent living. Ten residents of Highland Gardens will live fully independent lives as a result of the services, programs and infrastructure that were created by the development of Highland Gardens. By providing integrated care that is seamless in delivery and consumer-centered, not only will residents be able to live their lives independently at Highland Gardens, over \$500,000 will be saved on nursing home costs on an annual basis.

HACM's lead agency at Highland Gardens is **SET Ministry**, a community-based, health care organization that serves persons in need, using a model of collaboration and participation that integrates the physical, psychological, social and spiritual aspects of a person's life.

The City of Milwaukee Housing Authority continues to work with residents, advocacy groups, designers and policy makers to create, renovate and modernize its facilities to better serve the diverse physical needs of those who live in or visit our dwellings.

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**Pictures attached**

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