

Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee: To expand access to affordable housing on Milwaukee's near west side

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The Housing Authority of the City of Milwaukee (HACM) is pleased to announce it is allocating 149 project-based vouchers to housing development projects located within the geographic footprint of Milwaukee's Near West Side. The vouchers will provide place-based U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development subsidies to help people afford housing in the private market.

From 2018 to 2021, HACM partnered with the Near West Side Partners and Marquette University on their \$1.3 million Choice Neighborhood Planning grant to develop a [transformation plan](#) for the Near West Side neighborhood. This allocation of vouchers supports the housing strategy portion of the plan and will help to increase the inventory of high-quality, affordable housing options available in the neighborhood.

The vouchers will be used in new construction, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse projects. Developers and property owners were selected through a competitive request for proposals process. The projects that were ultimately selected are in alignment with the housing strategy for the Near West Side.

"Quality housing offers stability to families and to neighborhoods. With efforts like this one on the Near West Side, we are building community strength and making Milwaukee safer," Mayor Cavalier Johnson said. "This is a step forward in realizing the plans that the Housing Authority and local partners have put together."

The Housing Authority's presence in and commitment to the neighborhood spans more than 50 years. Within the Near West Side, HACM provides affordable homes to over 350 seniors and adults with disabilities at its College Court and Merrill Park properties. The agency also has five single-family homes on State Street for low-income families. In an effort to better serve its residents, HACM developed partnerships over the years with the business community and several nonprofit organizations located in the Near West Side.

"Our agency prides itself on being a strong community partner and valuable resource for affordable housing opportunities. As the largest affordable housing provider in the Near West Side, it is important for us to continue our partnerships in that neighborhood. The success of the Near West Side is our residents' success," said HACM Secretary-Executive Director Willie L. Hines, Jr.

Patrick Kennelly, Director of the Center for Peacemaking at Marquette University and partner in the Choice Neighborhood Planning as well as a resident of the Near West Side shared, "It's great to see the collaboration between HACM, Near West Side Partners, the anchor institutions, and residents to improve the housing conditions on the Near West Side."

Project-based vouchers are a financing tool and a means to deepen the affordability of housing. Project-based vouchers are a component of HACM's Housing Choice Voucher program. With a project-based voucher, housing assistance is attached to a specific rental unit rather than to a family, and that assistance remains with the unit when an assisted family moves out of the unit. Project-based vouchers help ensure that affordable housing will be available to voucher-eligible families even when the rental housing market is tight. Families or individuals with project-based vouchers typically pay 30% of their income for rent and the subsidy pays the difference between the tenant contribution and the unit's total rent.