For Immediate Release

Construction Begins for Jefferson Oaks, a New Mixed-Income Community that will Bring High-Quality, Affordable Homes for Families and Individuals in the Region

- Innovative $17.6 million adaptive reuse of the Thomas Jefferson School building and campus will provide 60 new homes when completed in 2018
- UnitedHealthcare is the largest investor, providing $14.6 million through partnership with Cinnaire

Oak Park, Mich. (June 27, 2017) – Community leaders, residents and development partners came together today to celebrate the start of construction for Jefferson Oaks, a new 60-unit mixed-income community designed of high-quality residential homes, which will be built and maintained to be appealing and affordable for hard-working families and individuals.

Developed by Community Housing Network (CHN), the new community is being built on the site of the vacant Thomas Jefferson School building and campus, which will be transformed into 20 apartments and eight new townhome-style buildings with an additional 40 homes. In total, the new community will include 9 one-bedroom apartments, 11 two-bedroom apartments, 24 three-bedroom townhomes and 16 four-bedroom townhomes. Twenty-one of the units are set aside for supportive housing.

“We are very excited to start the construction of this new community in Oak Park and appreciate all the partners involved in helping make this groundbreaking possible,” said Marc Craig, president of Community Housing Network. “When completed next year, Jefferson Oaks will be a model community that brings quality homes with on-site amenities for individuals and families who want a wonderful place to live and play.”

Jefferson Oaks will feature on-site amenities for residents, including a community room with a library, computer lab and meeting space, and a playground. There will also be controlled entry and security features, along with 120 off-street, surface parking spaces.

"This is an important moment for our community as we work together to bring new, quality homes for individuals and families in Oak Park," said Marian McClellan, mayor of Oak Park. “With the support of so many partners, Jefferson Oaks is a visionary model on how we can lift up and support residents as they build their future for themselves and their families.”

Project and development partners include the City of Oak Park, Cinnaire, Community Housing Network, Huntington Bank, Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA), Minnesota Equity Fund (MEF) and UnitedHealthcare.

“Today marks an important milestone in helping create new models for quality, affordable housing in Michigan,” said Earl Poleski, executive director, MSHDA. “Jefferson Oaks will provide new hope and opportunity for the families and individuals who get to call it home.”

MSHDA approved the use of Low Income Housing Tax Credits for Jefferson Oaks with Cinnaire and its strategic partner MEF securing $14.6 million in equity funding from UnitedHealthcare, the largest investor in the new development. Cinnaire is also providing a $2.3 million loan, with CHN providing
$692,000 through multiple fundraising resources for the $17.6 million development. Construction financing was secured through Huntington Bank.

“UnitedHealthcare’s investment in Jefferson Oaks is part of a company initiative to help people live healthier lives by connecting quality and affordable housing to better health,” said Dennis Mouras, CEO, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of Michigan, which employs 1,100 people in Michigan and serves the health care needs of more than 800,000 residents in the state. “We are grateful for the opportunity to work together to help expand housing opportunities for the residents of Southeast Michigan.”

UnitedHealthcare has invested $34.8 million to help build four affordable housing communities in Michigan through its partnership with Cinnaire and MEF.

“Cinnaire partners with socially motivated companies like UnitedHealthcare to make economic investments in well-designed, high-quality affordable-housing developments,” said Mark McDaniel, president and CEO of Cinnaire. “This investment will help meet a critical need in Michigan and we are proud to be a partner and help break ground on such an important housing community in Oak Park.”

“At Huntington Bank, the development of affordable housing is a priority. Our family of bankers believe it is our responsibility to not only provide the highest quality products and services in the communities we serve, but also to enhance the quality of life in those communities,” said David Lochner, Huntington Bank Regional President. “One of my greatest privileges as a regional president for Huntington is to foster close partnerships with those organizations that are committed to moving our community forward, and are helping to make affordable housing dreams come true.”

Jefferson Oaks is expected to open in the Spring of 2018. O’Brien Construction Company is managing the building and construction with Fusco, Shaffer & Pappas, Inc. as the architects. CHN will partner with Piper Management Group to provide property management and on-site supportive services. Information about rental applications and how to support the new community can be found at communityhousingnetwork.org.

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