



MEDIA RELEASE

St. Paul's Area Transformation

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Tidewater Gardens Redevelopment Officially Begins

City of Norfolk and Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority Break Ground on Transformative Project

NORFOLK, Va. – The City of Norfolk, Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority (NRHA), and a host of officials from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) broke ground on the redevelopment in Tidewater Gardens today, the first phase of a long-awaited transformation initiative in the St. Paul's community.

Joining Mayor Kenneth C. Alexander, Ph.D., and NRHA Executive Director Ron Jackson at the ceremony were more than 100 partners, residents and stakeholders who helped make this project a reality. Representatives from HUD, Brinshore Development, the Franklin Johnston Group, Banc of America CDC, as well as state and local elected officials, government leaders, and members of the St. Paul's Advisory Council were among the attendees.

"Transforming Tidewater Gardens is about more than bricks and mortar," Mayor Alexander said. "This redevelopment initiative is about transforming lives with a holistic approach that uplifts families today and provides hope for better tomorrows."

The more than \$300 million initiative, which includes a \$30-million HUD grant, is one of the largest redevelopment projects for the City and NRHA. Scheduled for completion by 2025, the first of the two housing block developments, currently referred to as Blocks 19 and 20, is located on Wood Street between St. Paul's Boulevard and Fenchurch Street.

Block 19 will consist of a 72-unit, four-story senior living apartment building with a variety of one- and two-bedroom units, an amenity space with a community room kitchen, fitness room, computer lab, classrooms for service providers, and a conference room with on-site management and parking. Block 20 will be a 120-unit family development with one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments in addition to 3,600 square feet of indoor community and amenity space, outdoor gathering space, playground, on-site parking. It also includes 7,300 square feet of retail space along a realigned Church Street that will provide a commercial storefront for rent by neighborhood and community serving groups. Both buildings will be equipped with high-end interior finishes and will be Earthcraft Gold certified, with Energy Star-rated appliances and water-conserving fixtures. The redeveloped community will include one-third for rent-subsidized housing, one-third for affordable housing, and one-third for market-rate housing.

A Choice Neighborhood Initiative (CNI) grant provided by HUD guarantees the original families the right to return to the revitalized community, if they choose, a measure that has been supported by both City policy and NRHA resolution that guarantees them the right.

While construction is underway, families have been relocated to either temporary or permanent housing, depending on their personal choice, with financial support from both the City and NRHA. The city has earmarked \$3.5 million per year

through 2025 to provide both relocation support and holistic services to families in the areas of housing stability, education, economic mobility, and health and wellness. NRHA has provided funding to cover moving expenses, security and utility deposits and will do so for those moving back as well.

These relocation services are being administered by People First empowered by Urban Strategies, Inc., a nonprofit that provides customized supportive services to Tidewater Gardens families to ensure they are stable and thriving. Since the start of the redevelopment, People First has helped over 80% of Tidewater Gardens residents relocate to new homes of their choosing with several families achieving homeownership. Of those residents who have relocated, 85% have moved to neighborhoods with low poverty rates. To date, 82% of the 618 families have chosen to remain in Norfolk and, of the residents currently engaged in the process, over 53% have indicated a desire to return to the newly developed community.

More information can be found at www.stpaulsdistrict.org/groundbreaking.

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