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## **Task Force Recommends Funding for Affordable Housing Projects**

### **County Housing Trust Fund Will Support Projects Resulting in More than 65 Housing Units**

The Albany County Housing Trust Fund Task Force has forwarded recommendations to Albany County Executive Mike Breslin and the County Legislature of funding for housing projects. Recognizing a need for affordable housing in Albany County, County Executive Mike Breslin committed \$300,000 in his 2007 budget to seed an Albany County Housing Trust Fund. The Trust Fund aims to create and preserve affordable housing and meet the variety of housing needs throughout the County.

"The County Housing Trust Fund is a first step in our commitment to develop resources for affordable housing. This collaborative community effort will fund multiple projects that will address a balanced variety of affordable housing needs throughout the County," said Breslin.

Legislative Majority Leader Frank J. Commisso said "The County Legislature shares the County Executive's concern that there is a pressing need for affordable housing options for our citizens, and unanimously supported his initiative last year to set up the Housing Trust Fund with a \$300,000 appropriation to begin to address the shortage." Commisso said the Audit and Finance Committee later this month will review the proposal for distribution of the funds.

The Task Force selected six proposals totaling \$304,700 for funding. The funding from the Trust Fund will support more than \$7.8 million in projects that will result in the rehabilitation or new development of 68 housing units. The proposals include:

- **Albany Community Land Trust, 122 Fourth Avenue Project: \$24,700**

The Albany Community Land Trust will complete the rehabilitation of 122 Fourth Avenue, which is a two-family building with two 3-bedroom units. The building is currently owned by the Albany Community Land Trust and rehabilitation is underway. The project will fit in with the South End Action Committee's plans to redevelop affordable housing.

- **Albany Community Land Trust, 80 First Street Project: \$15,000**

The Albany Community Land Trust will acquire and rehabilitate the two-family home located at 80 First Street. This building includes a three bedroom and a two bedroom unit. Albany Community Land Trust will acquire the property so that it may be sold to an income-eligible family.

- **Albany Housing Authority, 41-59 North Swan Street & 155 Clinton Avenue: \$75,000**

The Albany Housing Authority will rehabilitate and develop 23 units in three existing and seven new buildings on North Swan Street in Arbor Hill.

- **Albany Community Land Trust, 152 ½, 154, 154 ½ Clinton Avenue: \$20,000**

The Albany Community Land Trust will complete the rehabilitation of 152 ½, 154, 154 ½ Clinton Avenue (three single family homes with four bedrooms each).

- **Capital District Habitat for Humanity, Odell Street: \$120,000**

The South End Renewal Project will develop housing for sale to income eligible owner occupants. Habitat for Humanity will build eight affordable houses on Odell Street in the South End of Albany.

- **Albany County Rural Housing Alliance, Various rural areas (Berne, Knox, Westerlo, Rensselaerville, Coeymans, New Scotland, Cohoes, Altamont, Ravena): \$50,000**

The Albany County Rural Housing Alliance's Rehab Program is a scattered site program and is intended for moderate to substantial rehabilitation to owner occupied homes in rural areas of Albany County. The number of homes that will be rehabilitated is estimated to be 30.

"We are very pleased that the Albany County Housing Trust Fund will be providing funding for 3 Albany Community Land Trust rehabilitation projects in its initial round of funding. This financial support will enable us to develop 7 affordable housing units in 5 buildings" said James Bouldin, president of the Albany Community Land Trust.

"The funding from the new Albany County Housing Trust Fund will be a tremendous help to the low-income families and seniors in our rural towns and villages who need assistance with home repairs" stated Bobbi Carter, board member of Albany County Rural Housing Alliance.

"We are thrilled for the Arbor Hill community that the County of Albany has selected the Authority's mixed-use redevelopment initiative on North Swan Street for funding in the inaugural year of its Housing Trust Fund. The County of Albany continues to be a friend of affordable housing and neighborhood revitalization," said Executive Director Steven Longo of the Albany Housing Authority.

"We at Capital District Habitat for Humanity are honored to be a grant recipient of the Albany County Housing Trust Fund in its inaugural year. Our mission - to build decent and affordable homes for deserving low income families - is affirmed and supported by our partnerships with governments, corporations and individuals and our ongoing partnership with County Executive, Mike Breslin, and the County legislature is demonstrated today by this funding," said Executive Director Steve Haggerty of Capital District Habitat for Humanity.

The awards are subject to the approval of the Albany County Executive and the County Legislature.

Ten proposals were submitted for review by the screening committee. Municipalities, non-profit organizations and developers were encouraged to apply for funding from the County Housing Trust Fund. Applications were due to the Albany County Department of General Services, Purchasing Division by July 12th.

"I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the screening committee for their commitment of time and hard work in reviewing these important projects," said Breslin.

The Albany County Housing Trust Fund, the first of its kind in the State, is a public-private partnership among non-profit organizations, financial institutions and public officials. The Task Force hopes to provide a model of how the State and local governments, local community groups and non-profits can work together to best meet the broad needs for affordable housing.

Breslin and members of the Housing Trust Fund Task Force have reached out to local State representatives for additional funding for the Trust Fund and have urged municipalities in Albany County to adopt resolutions supporting efforts to create and preserve affordable housing. To date, the city of Cohoes, the towns of Coeymans and Colonie, and the villages of Colonie and Ravena have adopted such resolutions.

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