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MassHousing Closes on \$49.3 Million in Financing for the Ongoing First Phase of the Whittier Choice Neighborhoods Initiative in Roxbury

Overall, the Agency has committed \$53.5 million for the initial phase of the redevelopment of the Boston Housing Authority's Whittier Street Apartments by the Madison Park Development Corporation and Preservation of Affordable Housing

BOSTON – April 5, 2018 – MassHousing has closed on a total of \$49.3 million in affordable housing financing to affiliates of Preservation of Affordable Housing (POAH) and the Madison Park Development Corporation, to support the ongoing first phase of the [Whittier Choice Neighborhoods Initiative](#). The MassHousing financing will advance the phased demolition and redevelopment of the [Boston Housing Authority's](#) 200-unit Whittier Street Apartments in Roxbury.

As part of the Whittier Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, [Preservation of Affordable Housing](#) will utilize a total of \$27.4 million in MassHousing financing to construct the 92-unit Whittier at Cabot apartments, in a midrise building and adjacent townhomes, on the site of the current Whittier Street Apartments. Concurrently, [Madison Park Development Corporation](#) will use \$21.9 in MassHousing financing to construct the 76-unit Madison Melnea Cass Apartments in nearby Madison Park Village.

Both new residential communities will contain a mix of affordable housing units with a preference for current Whittier Street residents, workforce housing units, and market-rate housing. The phased redevelopment of the Whittier Street Apartments will ultimately redevelop and preserve 200 public housing units, and create an additional 309 housing units.

“We are very pleased to be part of this major initiative that is going to transform the Whittier neighborhood for the residents of Roxbury,” said **MassHousing Executive Director Chrystal Kornegay**. “The Whittier Choice Neighborhoods Initiative will not only result in the development of new housing in the neighborhood, but also spur economic, educational and social opportunities for the broader Lower Roxbury community. This highly impactful redevelopment is the result of a determined partnership between stakeholders at the local, state, and federal levels. The residents of Whittier Street, along with Madison Park and POAH, devoted years to building a comprehensive vision for building prosperity and equity in their neighborhood. It’s thrilling to be a partner in helping their vision come to fruition.”

The Whittier Choice Neighborhoods Initiative represents a collaboration between the City of Boston, the Boston Housing Authority, POAH, Madison Park Development Corporation, the Commonwealth, and the

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US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The Initiative seeks to increase economic prosperity and reduce the concentration of poverty in Lower Roxbury, while improving educational and economic outcomes for neighborhood residents.

The project has been [awarded](#) a \$30 million implementation grant through HUD's highly competitive [Choice Neighborhoods](#) program, which helps communities transform neighborhoods by revitalizing severely distressed public or assisted housing and catalyzing critical improvements in the neighborhood, including vacant property, housing, businesses, services and schools.

"POAH is grateful for the support of Whittier Street residents, the Boston Housing Authority, and a myriad of community-based organizations for allowing us the opportunity to provide new housing and economic development opportunities in this neighborhood," **said POAH President and CEO Aaron Gornstein**. "We also greatly appreciate the incredible support from Mayor Walsh, MassHousing, and HUD for providing the critical funding so that we can build the first phase of this development."

"We're proud to break ground on the first phase of this ambitious Whittier Housing Neighborhood Transformation Plan," **said Madison Park Development Corporation's Chief Executive Officer Jeanne Pinado**. "Our project will provide new homes for a broad range of low and moderate-income families and create a new edge to Melnea Cass Boulevard, making it safer and more pedestrian-friendly."

MassHousing is supporting the development of POAH's 92-unit Whittier at Cabot apartments through a total of \$14.7 million in permanent financing, an \$11.2 million tax-exempt bridge loan, and \$1.5 million in Workforce Housing Initiative funding. The transaction also includes a total of \$31.9 million in federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit equity, \$1.25 million in direct support from the [Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development](#) (DHCD), \$2.55 million from the City of Boston, and \$4.1 million in Choice Neighborhoods funding.

The 92 units at Whittier at Cabot will be contained in a new, midrise building, and new townhouse buildings. Forty-three of the units will be subsidized with a federal Section 8 Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract for low-income families, 22 will be affordable to households earning at or below 60% of the area median income (AMI), 15 units will be workforce housing units for households earning at or below 100% of AMI, and 12 units will be rented at market rates. The area median income for Suffolk County is \$103,400 for a family of four.

MassHousing is supporting the development of Madison Park Development Corporation's 76-unit Madison Melnea Cass Apartments through an \$11.15 million construction and permanent loan, a \$9.85 million construction bridge loan, and \$1.9 million in [Workforce Housing Initiative](#) funding. The transaction also includes a total of \$14.2 million in federal and state Low-Income Housing Tax Credit equity, \$3 million in direct support from DHCD, \$2.25 million from the city of Boston, and \$1 million in Choice Neighborhoods funding.

The Madison Melnea Cass Apartments will offer 33 apartments for low-income families that are subsidized by a Section 8 HAP contract. Twenty units will be affordable for households earning at or below 60% of AMI, 19 apartments will be workforce housing units for households earning at or below 80% of AMI, and 4 units will be rented at market rates.

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The Whittier Choice Neighborhoods Initiative advances the Baker-Polito Administration's goal of creating up to 1,000 new workforce housing units affordable to middle-income households through MassHousing's \$100 million Workforce Housing Initiative. Since the inception of the initiative in 2016, MassHousing has committed or closed workforce housing financing totaling \$49.7 million, to 23 projects, located in 13 cities and towns. To date, the Workforce Housing Initiative has advanced the development of 2,111 housing units across a range of incomes, including 538 workforce housing units.

In addition to the Whittier at Cabot and Madison Melnea Cass Apartments, MassHousing is supporting the ongoing first phase of the Whittier Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, by committing \$4.2 million in permanent financing to Madison Park Development Corporation's redevelopment of 2101 Washington Street. The 2101 Washington Street project, which is currently under construction, involves the adaptive reuse of the former Tropical Foods Supermarket into 30 new mixed-income housing units.

MassHousing has financed or manages the housing subsidy at 73 rental communities in Roxbury involving 7,415 units and \$333.6 in total financing. The Agency has provided \$1.1 billion mortgage financing to 8,235 Boston homebuyers and homeowners who refinanced their homes.

About Madison Park Development Corporation

Since 1966 MPDC has been an important leader in the revitalization of Roxbury and Dudley Square. As one of the first resident-led organizations to develop affordable housing, it has a well-respected track record of producing high-quality housing that is affordable to low and moderate-income families. It has developed 1,252 homes that house more than 3,000 residents. MPDC is a proven leader in community driven housing and economic development and provides a wide array of community and arts programs that seek to support a vibrant, healthy Roxbury neighborhood. For more information please visit www.madison-park.org.

About POAH

Preservation of Affordable Housing is a Boston-based nonprofit organization that owns and operates more than 9,000 affordable homes at 80 properties in nine states and the District of Columbia. POAH has rescued and restored some of America's most "at risk" rental housing and is known nationally for its ability to develop innovative financing structures and to close complex deals which preserve long-term housing affordability for seniors, individuals with disabilities and families priced out of the housing market. For more information please visit www.poah.org.

About MassHousing

MassHousing (The Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency) is an independent, quasi-public agency created in 1966 and charged with providing financing for affordable housing in Massachusetts. The Agency raises capital by selling bonds and lends the proceeds to low- and moderate-income homebuyers and homeowners, and to developers who build or preserve affordable and/or mixed-income rental housing. MassHousing does not use taxpayer dollars to sustain its operations, although it administers some publicly funded programs on behalf of the Commonwealth. Since its inception, MassHousing has provided more than \$22 billion for affordable housing. For more information, visit the MassHousing website at www.masshousing.com, follow us on Twitter [@MassHousing](https://twitter.com/MassHousing), subscribe to our [blog](#) and Like us on [Facebook](#).

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