

PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION CELEBRATES GROUNDBREAKING OF VOKE LOFTS

Project creates 100 local construction jobs, 84 mixed-income units

WORCESTER – Wednesday, August 22, 2012 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray today joined Congressman James McGovern and other state and local officials to celebrate the groundbreaking of Voke Lofts in Worcester. The redevelopment of a historic vocational school building, supported by the Patrick-Murray Administration with \$7 million in affordable housing resources, will create 84 units of mixed-income housing for families and create 100 local construction jobs.

“Voke Lofts is an exciting project that will create jobs and affordable housing opportunities for hard working families in Worcester,” said Lieutenant Governor Murray. “We are breaking ground today on a major investment for the city and region as a result of effective collaboration with the private sector and support across all levels of government to deliver critical resources to advance this project. I thank Congressman McGovern and the legislative delegation for their support of this project.”

“This project will play a vital role in the transformation of Gateway Park from brownfields and a rundown school facility to a vibrant mixed-use community in the center of Worcester,” said Congressman Jim McGovern. “Gateway Park is a shining example of the innovative results we get when all levels of government work closely with private developers, companies, and residents. Gateway Park – and CitySquare just blocks away – are the heart of the resurgence of downtown Worcester.”

The transit-oriented project being developed by WinnDevelopment is the sole housing component of Worcester's Gateway Park Master Plan. The construction is expected to create an estimated 100 local jobs for the area and will be LEED-certifiable. WinnDevelopment's two most recent projects have received platinum and gold LEED certifications.

“With the support of our state and local government partners, we are proud to be able to convert the historic Worcester Vocational Technical School into a LEED Certifiable, mixed-income residential building with an array of amenities to support a strong quality of life,” said Gilbert Winn, Managing Principal of WinnDevelopment. “This is the kind of project our company enjoys. It will not only provide residents with an affordable new housing option as part of the City of Worcester's Gateway Park Master Plan, it will also create new construction jobs to help contribute to the local economy.”

In addition to the affordable housing tax credits and subsidies, the project has received Massachusetts Historic Tax Credits, MassHousing funds as well as funding from the city. The general contractor is Dellbrook Construction and the architect is The Architectural Team, Inc. based in Chelsea, Massachusetts.

Since the beginning of their first term, Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Murray have worked with the Legislature and federal government to direct close to \$700 million in federal and state tax credits and state housing program subsidies to projects that improve the state's affordable housing stock, create jobs and build stronger communities. These investments have generated more than 14,000 jobs and 10,000 housing units, 9,000 of which are affordable.

"The Worcester Voke Lofts will be a welcome addition to the city, and are another example of the continued revitalization of the North Main Street area," said Senator Harriette Chandler.

"This project represents an ideal re-use of historic land for public benefit. These mixed-income apartments signify an investment in Worcester's downtown neighborhood, breathing new life into the area as well as preserving one of Worcester's most historic assets," said Senator Michael Moore. "I commend WBDC and City officials for making this project a reality."

"This leads to the revitalization of the Lincoln Square Section of Worcester. It's great news for the restaurants and businesses in the area," said Representative John J. Binienda.

"Once again, the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Murray has scored a victory for Worcester," said Representative John Mahoney. "The city is moving forward, and these lofts will add to the livability of our community."

"I have been encouraged by the growth and development of this part of North Main Street over the past decade. Our great City continues to develop into the 21st century. It is important to come up with new ideas for old spaces, and I am delighted that the old Worcester Vocational High School will now find a new use as a mixed income loft building," said Representative James O'Day. "Quality and accessible housing such as the Worcester Voke Lofts are key to our cities success."

"I am excited to be a part of the continued transformation of the North Main Street area, which has recently seen WPI's expansion of its life science center and dormitories, Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences renovations and expansion into the district, along with the continued growth of Gateway Park," said Mayor Joseph Petty. "I applaud WinnDevelopment for their commitment to this new project. This new housing project will continue to diversify the area and spearhead further growth and development."