



Why is this project needed?

Through years of talking with residents, studying the housing market, working with tenants and landlords to rehabilitate existing properties, and preventing eviction through direct assistance and connection to legal and code enforcement resources, one thing has become very clear: Beechwood's rental housing stock is in trouble. The average age of rental housing in the neighborhood is around 100 years old, and much of it has not been maintained to the quality standards that all residents deserve. This has resulted in vacant properties and demolitions, squeezing the rental housing market and limiting options for residents. With the average renter paying between 38 and 50% of their income to rent, housing cost burdens often block families from building the savings they need to move into homeownership if that is their goal.

Enter the Beechwood Family Apartments. This low- to medium-density development is made for Beechwood specifically; these apartments match the fabric of the neighborhood without the huge challenges of the aging and distressed rental housing that too many renters have to deal with. This project is a step toward making sure everyone in our neighborhood, regardless of income or status as a renter or homeowner, has an affordable, high-quality, and attractive place to call home.

We believe that new residents and gentle increases in density can have a positive impact on neighborhood safety and character in the following ways:

- New buildings reactivate vacant lots that otherwise become locations for loitering or dumping, conditions that we observed at these locations during site visits for the project.
- More density provides more "eyes on the street," reducing vacant land and buildings that contribute to harmful behaviors. Infilling with low- to moderate-density ensures that residents of newly developed lots are invested in monitoring activities and behaviors going on in their immediate vicinity.
- More density supports neighborhood retail and a healthier environment.
- New, quality homes will positively contribute to the neighborhood character by filling gaps in the housing stock and providing affordable alternatives to aging apartments and disinvested buildings.



What types of buildings will be included in the Beechwood Family Apartments?

The Beechwood Family Apartments development will consist of 2 single-family homes, 15 duplexes, one four-family home, and three six-family homes. Units will have between 2 and 4 bedrooms.



How will the properties be managed?

While this project cannot resolve existing safety or neighborhood character concerns raised by the residents, we are confident that our approach to building and site design and Home Leasing's reputation as a considerate and invested property manager will mean that the new homes constructed in Beechwood will not exacerbate or create new problems. In fact, reducing the number of vacant, City-owned lots in the neighborhood significantly through careful development will address resident concerns about adverse behavior and lack of security on those 27 lots. These concerns were shared consistently by residents throughout the process of canvassing and analyzing vacant lots through the Parcel-by-Parcel analysis conducted in 2019-2020.

Home Leasing maintains apartment homes at or above industry-recognized standards and responds to service requests within 24 hours or one business day. They follow green management practices, abide by Fair Housing Law and treat each resident equally, honestly, and courteously. Home Leasing is committed not only to the residents they serve but also to the communities in which they work. They take pride in their buildings and commit to managing them for decades; they are legally required to manage and maintain properties typically for 30-50 years. Community Leaders (property managers) are encouraged to be engaged and responsive to neighbors. They hire maintenance staff to manage landscaping and site cleanliness, plow parking areas and sidewalks, handle the garbage/recycling pick-up, and properly maintain the buildings and units so that they can continue to provide quality housing well into the future. Additionally, the following design features addressing safety and neighborhood character are incorporated into each of the four multifamily sites:

- 1.Exterior Site lighting
- 2.Trash and recycling totes on fenced-in concrete pads at the rear of the property (out of sight)
- 3.Off-street parking spaces
- 4.Landscaped yards



Will this project put a strain on parking?

The development team recognizes that parking is often a cause for worry. At Beechwood Family Apartments, each site will include off-street parking spaces, including a handicap parking space where we provide an apartment for the mobility impaired. At the multifamily buildings, space is limited for off-street parking, but Home Leasing finds that nearly half of our residents do not own cars, and this is particularly true in urban locations such as Beechwood. In Beechwood, only approximately 51% of neighborhood renters own vehicles, which further justifies the amount of parking currently proposed for these sites.



I have experiences with some poorly maintained rental properties in our neighborhood. What makes this project different?

See “How will the Properties Be Managed”

Because Connected Communities is a partner in this development, you can also reach out to us by phone, email, or even dropping by our office during business hours if you notice any issues that affect you as a neighbor of the property. Both Home Leasing and Connected Communities will hold ourselves accountable for ensuring high maintenance standards and protecting the right to quiet enjoyment of both tenants and their neighbors.



How will you address poor tenant behavior if it arises?

Tenants sign standard lease agreements and addendums that address the non-smoking policy, drug-free policy, pet policy, and community rules. Community rules address topics such as the overall wellbeing and aesthetics of the community, maintenance requirements, peaceful enjoyment and quiet hours, and motor vehicle rules. These standards are strictly enforced by Home Leasing and any concerns can be brought to their team or Connected Communities.



I’m worried about crime rates. What impact could this have on crime in the neighborhood?

We can’t predict the exact outcomes of every single site. However, multiple studies show that vacant parcels contribute to higher crime rates. One study found blocks with vacant land and structures with no residents or owners onsite to secure them overall were twice as likely to experience drug and theft crimes and had twice as many crimes than blocks with no vacancies. Another Philadelphia study found a significant increase in aggravated assault rates in areas with concentrated vacant parcels.

Onsite management and eyes on the street are critical factors in lowering crime. Our commitment to residents is to ensure that management and security on these sites are at a high standard that contributes positively to the surrounding area.



What is the plan for recreational space for families at these properties?

The development team recognizes the community’s concern that the new development would remove several informal open spaces from the neighborhood while increasing density in several locations; however, these lots are not true community recreation spaces. We would like to focus on the following key points:

1. There are several existing community recreational resources within a 10-minute walk from each of the four proposed sites.
2. The proposed uses—including the proposed density—is consistent with the 2020 Comprehensive Plan for the EMMA and Beechwood Neighborhoods, the Rochester 2034 comprehensive plan, and with the Beechwood rezoning effort that was unanimously approved in July 2021.
3. The Comprehensive Plan for the EMMA and Beechwood Neighborhoods identifies other parcels for green space and new recreational space.
4. Each site plan includes landscaping and grass lawns for resident use.

These community resources are also accessible via public transportation:

- *Ryan Recreation Center (premises at School #33)*
 - ~ Features a “playground” as well as play equipment that includes an outdoor basketball court, baseball diamond, and two separate playgrounds at the same location as School #33 (EPK-6th grade). There’s also the recreation center itself and the Sully Public Library.
- *Grand Avenue Park (center of the project area)*
 - ~ Features the newly installed KaBOOM! playground that is adjacent to the Community Place of Greater Rochester, Inc., a nonprofit providing robust after-school and summer programming with amenities targeting both younger children and pre-teenagers/teenagers, and an adventure course installed in Summer 2021. This over \$200,000 investment in youth recreation was incorporated as part of the Comprehensive Plan and led by Connected Communities, and Roc the Future. This space has been meaningfully activated through community-led events including vaccination pop-ups, food truck events, and other instances of combining fun, resources, and educational opportunities for Beechwood families.
- *Fourth Street and Peck Street Park*
 - ~ Features a “playground” splash pad that keeps children entertained and refreshed in hot summer months.



How does this project fit into the larger Housing Plan for Beechwood?

Check out the full Community Housing Plan, which showcases the rehabilitations and new builds of both single-family homeowner opportunities and high-quality rentals.

How has the community been engaged to create this plan?

Check out our Timeline of Engagement, showcasing the work we’ve done to create a plan that works for our neighborhood’s needs and values.