



LIHTC Development Helps Families Near Penn State

An affordable housing development 3 miles from Pennsylvania State University gets passing grades from residents—mostly because it provides an alternative to high prices resulting from students who attend the nearby university.

STATE COLLEGE, PA.
LEAD DEVELOPER
PROGRESS DEVELOPMENT GROUP
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
PENNSYLVANIA 5TH RENTAL HOMES
36
CATEGORY
FAMILIES



Rendering: Courtesy of UpStreet Architects Inc. / Photo: Courtesy of Heidi Lynn Photography



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Limerock Court, which opened in early 2014, features 36 rental homes spread across five residential buildings in College Township, within the borough of State College, Pa. It was made possible through funding from low-income housing tax credits (LIHTCs) and PennHOMES funding.

As is the case with many other college towns, student-driven demand for housing in State College pushed rental rates beyond the budget of many working families. "One of the issues is that the rental market is heavily tailored to student housing and the rents are much higher, due to this demand," said Ara Kervandjian, managing member of Progress Development Group, which developed the property. At the time of the construction of Limerock Court, there were more than 400 families on a waiting list for affordable housing.

"We needed to find housing for people who are working for and supporting the community and can't find homes for their own families," said Laura Northup, director of development for Mullin & Lonergan Associates Inc., a

consulting firm that helped PDG with its funding application and is the property's compliance manager.

The situation in State College isn't unique. Northrup said it's common to see families struggle to find housing near universities, because property owners can generate more income by renting to students. Those students typically rent individual rooms, allowing property owners to charge multiple renters for one house, rather than a family renting the apartment as a single household.

Limerock Court features 17 two-bedroom and 19 three-bedroom garden-style apartments. Rental homes were constructed as townhomes stacked above flats. Four are available to households earning 20 percent of the area median income (AMI), 15 are for households earning up to 50 percent of the AMI and 17 are open to households earning up to 60 percent of the AMI.

Residents have private front and rear porches or balconies and have their own washer and dryer. There is a separate centrally located community center building with a large recreation area, kitchen and offices for supportive services and management teams.

"What impressed us with Limerock is that it's workforce housing in an area where the demand is high," said Brian A. Hudson Sr., Pennsylvania Housing and Finance Agency's executive director and CEO. PHFA awarded the LIHTCs and PennHOMES funding. "More importantly, the location is within easy access to downtown State college, the historic district, grocery shopping and transportation."

Karen Welsh, president of UpStreet Architects Inc., said her team designed Limerock to be marketable and complementary to the surrounding neighborhood. "The site is on the edge of the historic community of Lemont and the materials and style were selected to reflect the community," she said. Features and amenities were chosen for marketability, durability and efficiency in this large rental market. Visibly, it is a quality housing development. Operationally, it is affordable and efficient." ❖

LEAD DEVELOPER PROGRESS DEVELOPMENT GROUP	CATEGORY FAMILIES	CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT PENNSYLVANIA 5TH	RENTAL HOMES 36
FINANCING			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$2.1 million in PennHomes funding \$1 million in LIHTCs \$630,000 first mortgage 			

