

# Park Avenue Apartments

Minneapolis, Minnesota (opened September 2008)



**Developer/Sponsor** Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota (LSSMN)

**Architect** BKV Group

**General Contractor** Weis Builders

**Units** 48

**Project Description** Park Avenue Apartments is built adjacent to Lutheran Social Service's new service center, the Center for Changing Lives, which opened in the winter of 2008. The new center provides mental health counseling, after school services for kids, wellness, housing, and financial services. All 48 units are affordable, with 38 units targeted for households earning up to 45 percent area median income, and the remaining ten units targeted for households earning up to 15 percent area median income. Thirteen apartments are specifically designated for households experiencing long-term homelessness or near homelessness. These households pay no more than 30 percent of their income towards rent.

**A Green Advantage** Park Avenue Apartments was constructed using various sustainable methods and includes a variety of green features that benefit both the residents and the surrounding community, including:

- Redevelopment of an urban site close to transit and within walking distance of nearby amenities to encourage residents and staff to bicycle, walk, and/or use public transportation.
- Approximately 65 percent of all construction and demolition waste was diverted from the waste stream through recycling and reuse.
- 10 to 15 percent of building materials are recycled/reused.
- Rehabilitation of a Brownfield site.
- Low-impact native and adaptive landscaping.
- Management of storm water on site through collection of water in rain gardens and drywells.
- Energy modeling predicts the project will surpass current energy code by at least 30 percent.
- Energy Star appliances and lighting and daylight sensors for outdoor fixtures.
- Low- or no-VOC paints, sealants, adhesives, and finishes to improve comfort and health.
- Water conserving appliances and fixtures will reduce consumption by approximately 40 percent.
- Underground parking (with reduced number of spaces) creates a more walkable site, reduces need for impervious surfaces, and reduces heat island effect.
- Limited or no carpeting usage.



## Project Financing

<b>Minnesota Green Communities</b>	<b>\$27,000</b>
Low Income Housing Tax Credits	\$7,003,700
State of Minnesota General Obligation Bonds	\$2,052,656
Hennepin County Affordable Housing Incentive Fund	\$1,000,000
City of Minneapolis Affordable Housing Trust Fund	\$500,000
State of Minnesota Planning Grant	\$350,000
General Partner Equity	\$153,000
Minnesota Housing Ending Long-Term Homelessness Initiative Fund	\$140,077
Family Housing Fund	\$27,000
<b>Total Project Financing</b>	<b>\$11,253,433</b>

**Rents** Park Avenue Apartments consists of nine one-bedroom units (three near-homeless units at \$400 and six units at \$600), 15 two-bedroom units (five units at approximately \$200 for long-term homeless, and \$750 for remaining ten units), 20 three-bedroom units (five long-term homeless units at approximately \$250, and \$860 for the remaining 15 units) and four four-bedroom units (\$960 each).

**Amenities** Park Avenue Apartments are next to the Lutheran Social Service’s Center for Changing Lives with access to a variety of social services and community support. The development is well-located on a major bus line and within walking distance of commercial and retail establishments. The apartments are in the same neighborhood as newly built Midtown Exchange, Kaleidoscope Place (the after-school program for neighborhood kids), and the Global Market. It is also within blocks of the Midtown Greenway—a major bicycling trail for recreation and commuters, and a bike lane in front of the building travels the one mile north to downtown Minneapolis.

Park Avenue Apartments offers a variety of unit sizes and layouts to appeal to both individuals and families with children, and provides convenient on-site laundry facilities and a playground. For residents with automobiles, underground parking is included with the rent.

**Social Services** Services are provided by Lutheran Social Service’s Housing Services, a leading provider for the past 20 years. With compassion and fairness, LSS helps individuals and families identify their needs and develop a plan to achieve their goals using the *Strength Based Model*.

**Developer** Lutheran Social Service, founded in 1864, is the largest private, nonprofit organization in the state of Minnesota, providing social services to over 100,000 Minnesotans every year. LSS has acquired, owned, and managed properties for decades and became involved in housing development in the early 1990s. Through its involvement with the Phillips Park Initiative and previous ownership experience, LSS embarked on this journey to rebuild its service center and develop 48 units of affordable housing.



**Lessons Learned** “If you want to make a building LEED certified, or even green, start early. It is important to have the opportunity to build a structure with LEED certification, but it can be a lengthy process.”

“It was great that we had an entire team there at the beginning of design—not just architects, but the contractor with their pricing expertise, funders’ representatives, property management people, building management people, and would-be tenants. We had a very interactive feedback loop on design, and I really think we have a better building because of it. But we could have benefited from more consistency in the design staff from the architecture firm. Consistency—when you have the right people—is golden.”

—Pat J. Connolly, Housing Development Director, Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota



Minnesota Green Communities, a collaboration of the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund, the Family Housing Fund, and Enterprise, is an initiative designed to foster the creation of affordable, healthier, and more energy-efficient housing throughout Minnesota. The initiative will support the production of affordable housing with markedly reduced energy costs, use of materials beneficial to the environment, conservation-minded land use planning, and attention to the creation of healthy environments and lifestyles for individuals, children, families, and communities. For more information, please visit [www.mngreencommunities.org](http://www.mngreencommunities.org).

Minnesota Green Communities c/o Greater Minnesota Housing Fund

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