



January 12, 2024
For Immediate Release

Contact: Kate Lacher, klacher@cgdarch.com, 864.242.0761

Greenville County Redevelopment Authority Provides Affordable Homeownership in Greer

I. Introduction to GCRA and Fairview Townhomes

The mission of Greenville County Redevelopment Authority (GCRA) is to secure resources and educate stakeholders to improve the living conditions of County residents through affordable housing and infrastructure improvements.

In January 2020, GCRA and the City of Greer discovered an opportunity to turn an abandoned property on East Fairview Road into affordable homes. GCRA acquired the 3.1-acre site and initiated public input discussions to gain 'buy in' from the Sunnyside Neighborhood Association. Subsequently, GCRA rezoned the property to a Design Review District and obtained approval for a 33-lot subdivision for attached single family homeownership units. The grading and infrastructure improvements were completed by THG Construction Inc. and funded through HUD Community Development Block Grant Program, Greenville County Affordable Housing Fund (GCAHF), and Greenville County American Rescue Fund.

GCRA engaged Craig Gaulden Davis Architecture to design the upscale mixed-income housing complex to be constructed in two phases over the next 3-4 years. The elevated townhome design integrates a selection of complementary architectural materials, a composition of fiber cement plank, board and batten siding, and a standing seam metal roof. The interior spaces feature open floor plans with solid surface countertops, vinyl wood plank flooring, and stainless-steel appliances.

The site's walking trail, green space, and a fenced playground complete the residential complex providing opportunities for social outdoor engagement.

II. GCRA and City of Greer

The City of Greer has a long history of leveraging public funds to improve the quality of life for residents through community development and neighborhood revitalization. GCRA has partnered with the city and other housing partners to build new affordable homes in Needmore and Sunnyside neighborhoods which are in the heart of Greer. GCRA has also worked with the City to provide upgrades to the Needmore Community Center, infrastructure improvements such as stormwater management and new roadways and sidewalks, and utility relocation and upgrades on Tremont, Canteen, and Spring Streets.

In Greer, GCRA and United Housing Connections have completed a 70-unit affordable housing subdivision in Creekside that includes thirty-six units of senior housing while the rest are homeownership units for families earning up to 80% of Area Median Income (AMI). Fairview Townhomes is the next example of both the City and GCRA's desire to provide affordable housing options for current and future residents at an affordable price point based on income.

III. How many affordable homeownership units?

It is important to note that all thirty-three (33) housing units (3 bedrooms and 2.5 baths), are homeownership opportunities targeted for mixed-income households earning from 50% - 100% AMI. The housing units consist of six townhome buildings planned for families and will be built in two phases. Phase 1 of the project consisting of 14 units will be for mixed-income households earning from 50% to 80% of the Area Median Income. The second phase (19 units) will also be mixed-income households available for those earning up to 100% of the AMI. The construction and occupancy of the phase 1 units will be from October 2023 to December 2024. GCRA is dedicated to ensuring that the housing units in Greenville County are attainable and affordable.

IV. Who is partnering to make this happen?

GCRA's partners are U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Greenville County Administration, City of Greer, Sunnyside Neighborhood Association, Christopher Hill (previous property owner), County Bank, Seamon Whiteside (Engineering consultant), Craig Gaulden Davis (Architectural consultant) and THG Construction Inc. (General Contractor).

V. Facts about affordable housing?

There is a lack of affordable housing in Greenville County due to population growth in the Upstate Region of South Carolina. This has created a high demand for housing, especially for affordable housing. The demand for affordable housing in the County far exceeds supply. The two housing study reports completed in 2018 and 2020 echoed the lack of housing affordability in the County and emphasized the need to address the gap in affordable housing. Furthermore, the County's 2020-2024 Analysis of Impediments towards housing and the 2020 – 2024 Consolidated Plan further affirmed the lack of affordable housing in the County. Additionally, the recent increase in cost of construction since COVID-19, recession and high interest rate have further exacerbated the problem of making housing attainable to the public, especially to low and moderate income households. The 2018 Housing Study report prepared by CZB indicated a 9,500 affordable housing need in the County. This gap in housing needs is a continual annual increase due to the growth in the County's population. Notably for this reason, the County Administration, in 2019, established the **Greenville County Affordable Housing Fund (AHF)** for the purpose of providing \$5,000,000 in 5 years (\$1,000,000/year 2019 - 2023) towards workforce housing in Greenville County and making housing available and attainable. The 2024 County Budget has an additional \$5,000,000 allocation to be funded in the next two years. The **GCAHF** is administered by GCRA and used to leverage the County's Entitlement funds from HUD towards creation and preservation of affordable/workforce housing in the County.

Affordable homeownership opportunities are difficult to develop in the current economic environment, however this fully funded project from various leveraged sources have created an opportunity for qualified homebuyers to purchase their first homes and achieve the American dream of homeownership and while being a part of an overall community wide revitalization in the City of Greer.

About Greenville County Redevelopment Authority

Established in 1974, the Greenville County Redevelopment Authority (GCRA) works to improve the living conditions of the county's residents by building new homes, rehabilitating existing homes and improving the infrastructures within communities. By developing community partnerships and administering funds from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), GCRA works to build a better future for everyone.

Mission: The mission of the Greenville County Redevelopment Authority is to secure resources and educate stakeholders to meet the needs of Greenville County citizens through affordable housing.

GCRA's Practice: GCRA uses a holistic approach in the revitalization of communities focusing on the physical, social, and economic infrastructure of each neighborhood. GCRA's target communities are special emphasis neighborhoods. The communities are low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, where at least 51% of the households earn 80% or below of the Area Median Income (LMI).

About Craig Gauden Davis Architecture

Craig Gauden Davis (CGD) Architecture is an architecture, interior design, and planning firm with offices in Greenville and Baltimore whose community-centered projects focus on Education, Arts, Civic, Ministry, and Commercial sectors. After 66 years in practice, CGD has earned a reputation for professional excellence, innovative design, and technical expertise through a portfolio of hallmark projects in the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic.

#