

## ELLICOTT COMMONS/OAK STREET SCHOOL - BUFFALO, N.Y.

### Developer/Sponsor

Rocco Termini, Burke Homes LLC

### Project Type

Mixed-use, historic rehabilitation, new construction

### Square Footage

Ellicott Commons - 65,584 square feet

Oak Street School - 30,495 square feet

96,079 total square feet



*Ellicott Commons*



*Oak Street School*

### Investment

\$10.5 million construction/mini-perm loan and tax credit equity

### Description

Ellicott Commons and Oak Street School are located on nearby sites in downtown Buffalo, New York. Ellicott Commons is composed of several adjacent structures in a Main Street setting. One of the structures was preexisting and the others were new construction with historic design elements to blend in with the streetscape. The project contains 32 market-rate rental apartments and approximately 27,000 square feet of commercial space. Current and identified commercial tenants include an upscale neighborhood grocer, a copier/fax technology company, a voice-over-internet firm, and a collection

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agency. Oak Street School, a historically significant site previously used as a school, was redeveloped into 29 loft-style market-rate rental apartments and approximately 8,400 square feet of commercial space.

The projects are located in a qualified census tract under the New Markets Tax Credits program, due to a poverty rate of 59.5% in the 2000 census. In addition, the projects are located in a redevelopment area designated by the city of Buffalo.

## **Investment Type**

Funding for Ellicott Commons/Oak Street School included senior and subordinate debt, historic tax credit equity and New Markets Tax Credit equity. The \$10.5 million investment from Citibank was provided through an investment partnership with Enterprise, and financed the acquisition and redevelopment of the property. This investment generated approximately \$4.1 million in New Markets Tax Credits for Citibank.

## **Market**

The downtown Buffalo market is challenged by high vacancy and regional population loss. However, there are pockets of success. Prior to this project, on an adjacent site, the developer successfully built and leased Ellicott Lofts, which represented the first successful market-rate housing development in downtown Buffalo in many years. The influx of new residents helped attract a neighborhood grocer to the Ellicott Commons project, and a number of other small commercial tenants are moving in as well.

## **Community Impact**

Continued growth in number of residents and businesses downtown is vital to Buffalo's recovery from historical job losses and population decline. The two projects create a walkable, mixed-use streetscape that augments existing entertainment venues, bars and restaurants nearby.

## Developer

Rocco Termini, in his capacity as Director of Development for Burke Homes LLC, has developed several multifamily and single-family affordable housing projects in the last 10 years. Recently, Mr. Termini developed Ellicott Lofts, a successful rehab of warehouse space and new construction, which provided 38 market-rate apartment units on a site contiguous to the project. All 38 units leased at proforma rents in six months.

David Burke Construction, LLC, the general contractor, has built hundreds of single-family detached homes, both market-rate and affordable, in the Buffalo area. Burke is a designated builder in the city of Buffalo and a builder for the town of Tonawanda.

## Investor

[Citibank Community Development](#) (CCD) provides innovative, comprehensive and cost-effective financing packages for affordable housing and community revitalization projects in locations around the country. CCD's products meet both the short- and long-term needs of for-profit and nonprofit organizations that build and operate affordable housing, commercial developments and community facilities that benefit low- and moderate-income neighborhoods and populations.

CCD makes equity investments in New Markets Tax Credit transactions, Low-Income Housing Tax Credit funds, private equity funds and other opportunities that foster economic development in underserved communities. CCD also makes loans that address the needs of national intermediaries and nonprofit organizations through equity bridge loans and warehouse lines, and other structured finance products.

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