



NEWS FROM THE OFFICE OF
ADAM J. BELLO
MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

For Immediate Release

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO ANNOUNCES \$7.8 MILLION PLAN TO INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

County also to host roundtable with developers to create new and renovated affordable housing

ROCHESTER, NY — County Executive Adam Bello today announced four new pilot initiatives to create more affordable housing options for low- and moderate-income families and to help remove the barriers preventing the rental of existing affordable housing in Monroe County. The four initiatives will increase access to affordable housing, support housing seekers through the rental process, and help landlords update unrented units to bring them back in the rental market. The county will also host a roundtable with developers and New York State agencies to create new or renovated affordable housing units.

“The shortage of affordable housing is a national crisis that must be addressed through new thinking and strategic investment. With direct support to families looking for affordable housing and incentives for landlords to invest in their properties, we can close this housing gap,” **said County Executive Bello**. “The county will be the convener, bringing together all stakeholders—tenants, landlords, government partners and developers to work on sustainable solutions. This proposal further advances a priority of my administration to decentralize county services by creating additional access points directly in the community where people need them.”

The new initiatives include:

1. **Housing Search Navigator & After Care Program:** Housing search navigators and after-care case managers will connect up to 720 low- and moderate-income clients or voucher holders to quality and affordable housing. This program includes helping clients with housing options and listings, providing transportation to viewings, assisting with rental applications and providing application fees. After-care case managers will provide support for landlords and tenants if an issue arises during the tenancy.
2. **Landlord Incentive Program:** This program will encourage landlords and property owners to provide up to 1,500 additional housing units to low-income tenants and voucher holders by offering cash incentives such as leasing bonuses, limited warranties against unpaid rent or damages and referral payments.

3. **Rental Repair Program:** This program will offer financial support for landlords to help update up to 600 apartments making them ready to rent. Participating landlords must own no more than 10 units and enter an agreement that limits rent increases.
4. **The Landlord/Tenant Mediation Program:** This program provides funding to train additional certified mediators with the goal of preventing evictions by reconciling conflicts between tenants and landlords at the earliest stage possible to preserve housing stability. The program will serve up to 250 landlords and tenants.

Requests for proposals related to the pilot programs will be issued later this month. The Department of Human Services (DHS) will administer the pilot initiatives. DHS provides public benefits including financial and medical assistance, as well as comprehensive services designed to promote a higher quality of life for children, families and disadvantaged or elderly adults.

DHS participates with several community task forces such as the Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative (RMAPI) Housing Working Group, supporting our residents to acquire safe, stable, and permanent housing. A 2021 [housing study](#) identified barriers to permanent housing for Monroe County residents. These new housing initiatives directly address the issues raised in this study and follow the recommendations of the RMAPI Housing Working Group.

“The City and Monroe County, along with our many partners, work together on housing issues daily,” said **Rochester Mayor Malik D. Evans**. “Our close working relationships ensure that we maximize budgets and extend each other’s reach. The programs Monroe County is announcing today are thoughtful and powerful additions to the tools we currently have to serve our residents and improve our quality of life.”

“It is not enough to make housing affordable, it also needs to be accessible for everyone,” said **Monroe County Department of Human Services Commissioner Thalia Wright**. “This work is a reflection of our commitment to ensuring that every resident of Monroe County has access to safe, stable, and affordable housing.”

In addition to the above initiatives, Monroe County will host a Housing Developer Roundtable to include the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, New York State Office of Mental Health, and New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR). This presentation will describe the capital and operational funding for development of affordable housing projects to a targeted audience of local developers.

“As the Executive Director of RMAPI, I know that housing is a crisis for many in our community,” said **Aqua Porter, executive director of RMAPI**. “The lack of affordable options and rising rents is disorienting and making it tough for families to find stability. We've been working together, residents and housing providers, to craft solutions that can really make a difference. The initiatives being proposed by Monroe County are a direct result of this hard work with RMAPI's Housing Working Group. We're confident these Housing Stability initiatives will bring relief to countless county residents, offering them a stable housing and supportive services to ensure they are able to maintain suitable housing for their families.”

Media inquiries:

Gary Walker, Director of Communications

GaryWalker@MonroeCounty.gov

(585) 753-1064

Meaghan M. McDermott, Deputy Director of Communications

MeaghanMcDermott@MonroeCounty.gov

(585) 469-4365