

Shaheen secures \$1.5 million for Beard Street property

By CHRISTOPHER ROBERSON

NASHUA - U.S. Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) recently awarded \$1.5 million to Gateways Community Services to construct a nine-unit apartment building at 4 Beard St.

Sandy Pelletier, president and CEO of Gateways, said the organization has owned the parcel for the past 23 years.

However, at 124 years old, the group home is no longer suitable for Gateways' clients.

"This property requires significant maintenance and upgrades that are not financially viable even in this real estate market," said Pelletier.

Therefore, demolishing the current structure and constructing an apartment building has become the best option. Pelletier said the total cost is estimated at \$4 million.

She also said Gateways is partnering with the city on this project.

"The city shares the same vision as Gateways in providing a mechanism to revitalize the downtown area with new housing," said Pelletier. "Gateways' Board of Directors and leadership are excited by this opportunity and committed to raising the funds to make this low-income housing project for individuals with developmental disabilities a reality."

In addition, Pelletier called attention to the hostile housing market.

"Rental prices have skyrocketed," she said. "It is not surprising that with single-family prices rising and home interest rates above seven percent for the first time in 20 years, apartment prices have also significantly risen."

According to apartments.com, Nashua has become "one of the most expensive cities in the U.S." A one-bedroom apartment now costs an average of \$1,925 per month, an increase of four-and-a-half percent over the past year. It is also 25 percent higher than the national average of \$1,536 per month.

The \$1.5 million from Shaheen is part of a \$100.4 million package which will be used to fund 85 projects throughout the Granite State.

"By investing in local projects across New Hampshire, we can support programs that help Granite Staters afford housing, access child care, get workforce development training, attain the health care they need and so much more," said Shaheen. "As the annual government funding legislation moves into its next stage, I'll keep fighting for these direct investments in our state and to ensure New Hampshire gets its fair share of resources."

The following four Nashua projects were also selected to receive funding from Shaheen's \$100.4 million package.

- \$2.7 million for a new mammography machine at St. Joseph Hospital

- \$337,000 for Air Traffic Control workforce training at Nashua Community College

- \$200,000 to the Nashua Regional Planning Commission for its online entrepreneurship toolbox

- \$85,000 to the Nashua Police Department for a de-escalation range simulator