

Governor opens Gateway to Lynn

PHOTO BY PAULA MULLER

Governor Charlie Baker announces a \$100 Million MassHousing fund for the creation of workforce housing.

By **GAYLA CAWLEY**

LYNN — The **Gateway Residences on Washington** will be the first housing development to benefit from a **\$100 million fund to create** workforce housing.

Gov. Charlie Baker told a crowd Wednesday across the street from the vacant 2.5-acre parcel that the project will use a portion of the money.

The 71-unit mixed-income housing complex on lower **Washington Street** will receive financing for 10 units, reserved as workforce housing – tenants who are overqualified for affordable housing yet can't afford market rate dwellings.

"I'm very excited to be able to kick it off in Lynn," Baker said.

The project will also receive additional funding from the **Department of Housing and Community Development** for low-income units.

Under the statewide initiative, 1,000 new units of affordable housing for middle income households would be created. Up to \$100,000 in subsidies will be provided for each unit. New construction or refinancing of an existing housing community would qualify for creation of the units. To do this, the Baker administration is working with MassHousing, a quasi-public agency charged with providing affordable housing in the state.

Tim Sullivan, MassHousing's executive director, said the initiative protects working families.

"Many middle-income families simply cannot afford market rate housing," he said. Those families feel the pain of annual rent increases, which have increased as much as 13 percent since 2010, Sullivan added. He said the infusion of cash is changing the way housing is looked at.

"The program is to help middle income people who are being squeezed out of the housing market," said **Michael Dirrane, MassHousing's board chairman**.

Peggy Phelps, director of planning and development for Lynn Housing Authority & Neighborhood Development, said being the first recipient of the fund is evidence that Lynn is being recognized for its efforts to create more affordable units.

"It's going to be a really great mixed income building," she said. Gateway Residences will feature a five-story, wood-frame building with 18 one-bedroom units, 46 two-bedrooms and seven three-bedrooms.

Eight units will market-rate. The project also will contain a common room, fitness center, laundry rooms and other common tenant spaces. Construction is set to begin on Gateway this summer and tenants are expected to move in by the year's end. *Gayla Cawley can be reached at gcawley@itemlive.com. Follow her on Twitter @GaylaCawley*