

## Low-income apartment complex planned near Switchyard Park

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Bloomington residents will soon have more options for affordable housing with the creation of Switchyard Park Apartments.

The South Rogers Street property butts up against the future site of Switchyard Park, a 65-acre park with a dog park, a Bloomington Police Department substation, an 11,000-square-foot pavilion, pickleball courts, basketball courts, a playground, a splash pad area, a performance stage and lawn areas.

The proposed apartment complex will have 16 "permanently affordable units" for low-income families, including three specifically designed for individuals with disabilities, which will be administered by LifeDesigns. It will also feature a community room, a laundry site and a community garden in between the east and west buildings.

The affordable housing project was announced Wednesday during a news conference on its future site at 1901 S. Rogers St. It is a collaboration among the city of Bloomington and its parks and recreation department, the Bloomington Housing Authority and its nonprofit affiliate the South Central Indiana Housing Opportunities, or SCIHO.

Mayor John Hamilton said making Bloomington livable for people of all walks of life remains a priority for his administration and the partner agencies involved in the Switchyard Park Apartments project.

"Great parks make great neighborhoods. Great neighborhoods make great cities, and we want those neighborhoods and those parks and this city to work for all people," Hamilton said. "This is just what we want to have happen around the park. We want to make sure that we're protecting the ability of people from all walks of life to enjoy this great park on the way."

Rents will be targeted for low-income households, with a one-bedroom unit renting at \$550 to \$650 per month, and a two-bedroom unit renting for \$655 to \$850.

The project will be constructed in two phases of eight units each, and while funding is still being secured, SCIHO's executive director Deborah Myerson said the plan is to begin construction in January 2018, with a completion date sometime in the first quarter of 2019. The first phase of construction is expected cost \$1.2 million, with the second phase in a comparable range, Myerson said.

Housing and Neighborhood Development Director Doris Sims said SCIHO, as a Community Housing Development Organization, is eligible for federal Housing and Urban Development Department HOME funds.

"We are so glad to work with this new CHDO to help provide attractive, affordable housing for families in our community. The city is reviewing a commitment of up to \$200,000 to assist in the construction of the units through its annual allocation of CHDO set-aside funding for such projects, and HOME dollars can be used to support SCIHO operating expenses during the design and construction phases," Sims said.

Construction of the adjacent Switchyard Park is expected to begin in late spring 2018 and should take around a year and a half.

"Simply put: this site is an outstanding location," Myerson said during the news conference. "Not only does it share its backyard with Switchyard Park — which will soon be the newest gem among our city's parks — but it's in a walkable location on a bus line and the B-Line Trail, with easy access to employment, grocery and educational opportunities."

Local firm Springpoint Architects is designing the complex. Springpoint is also currently designing a renovation in the Crestmont neighborhood for the Bloomington Housing Authority.

The Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department, which currently owns the property that the housing project will be built on, will meet Tuesday to discuss approving a 99-year, \$1 lease with SCIHO, which will own and operate the housing complex.

The city of Bloomington purchased the land at 1901 S. Rogers St in addition to 1607 and 1803 S. Rogers St. from Triple C. Corp. in December 2013 for \$1,406,250, according to Monroe County property records.