

## MASS AVE RENTALS OFFICIALLY OPENS NEW HOUSING UNITS DOWNTOWN

*Building Now Offers 29 New Market Rate Housing Units With Parking*

*Attached photos: Ribbon cutting of the new apartment building*

February 9, 2024 – GARDNER – Mayor Michael Nicholson, City Council President Elizabeth Kazinskis, State Representative Jon Zlotnik, members of the City Council and the Gardner Redevelopment Authority and other joined with the owners of Mass Ave Rental as they officially opened their new housing development in Downtown Gardner.

"The need for housing is at an all-time high and a pressing issue in our community. Projects like this development address that need head-on," said **Ali Lorden of Mass Ave Rentals**. "We are so happy to be bringing 29 units to the downtown area of Gardner, a city that has been working tirelessly to improve for its residents and future residents."

"Gardner, like every other community across Massachusetts needs more housing," said **Gardner Mayor Mike Nicholson**. "This project gets us one step closer to getting us where we need to be. We know there are over 225 market rate housing units currently being planned for the downtown and we know our population in this area is continuing to grow. Over the last five years, our population has grown by over 10%, and that trend is continuing, with the biggest demand being for one- or two- bedroom units for young professionals or families who are just starting out on their own. This project really starts the City working to meet that demand and launch ourselves forward."

These buildings, formerly known as the Temptations Block and the Ryan Block buildings, were first purchased by the City in 2017 utilizing funds from the Commonwealth's Site Readiness Grant Program. The City and the Gardner Redevelopment Authority then worked with the property's new owner, Mass Ave Rentals to renovate the formerly blighted and run-down properties into the promise that we see today.

In 2021, the Commonwealth awarded a \$900,000 Underutilized Properties Program grant to the project that was matched by over \$3 million in private investment by Mass Ave Rentals.

"I'm very excited about this project," said **State Representative Jon Zlotnik**. "The state grants that helped make this possible, and attract much needed private investment are a crucial part of the city's redevelopment efforts downtown. This shows the importance of the state continuing to support these funding opportunities."

Today, the property is set to go with 29 units of solely market rate housing right in the heart of Downtown, with most of these units already spoken for. This is the first instance market rate housing has been constructed in downtown in almost two decades.

“This project really helps ,” said **Mayor Mike Nicholson**. “When you look at the conditions that these buildings were in before, compared to what they are now – its unbelievable. Downtowns need people to thrive and support the business community. By having project like these we not only transformed blight into promise with the structures themselves, but also provided a reason to entice new businesses to look at Gardner.”

Aside from the buildings themselves, the development also comes with its own dedicated parking lot for the tenants of the building with each new apartment unit having parking spaces accounted in an off-street lot behind the building.

"We are lucky to have such strong state and private investment in Downtown Gardner," said **City Council President Elizabeth Kazinskas**. "This project was possible because of support from Rep. Zlotnik and our State partners through grant funding, and significant investment by Mass Ave Rentals. It's wonderful to have a beautiful new housing development downtown, and especially one that so clearly helps fulfill housing demand with many of the units already full. The positive transformation of Downtown Gardner continues to complement our local investment throughout the city, and it's very exciting."

Anyone interested in the remaining available units is asked to contact Mass Ave Rentals directly, but not to delay because the building is almost full. [massaverentalsllc@gmail.com](mailto:massaverentalsllc@gmail.com)

“Over the last three years, we’ve invested a lot into making the downtown reach the potential that it has. This is just one step in that process,” concluded **Mayor Nicholson**. “We will continue to do everything we can to partner with those in the private sector and re-build the heart of our City into a thriving, lively, and destination area. I’d like to thank all of our partners in the Healey-Driscoll Administration, our legislative delegation, MassDevelopment, the City Council, and our private sector partners for continuing to invest in Gardner and help us get to where we need to be.”

###