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COMMISSIONERS RECOGNIZED FOR SUPPORT OF HOUSING PROJECT

This morning, during the Commissioners' weekly General Session meeting, Franklin County Commissioners were presented with the 2011 Gabe Zimmerman Award for Public Service for their leadership in the development of the Commons at Buckingham project, a Rebuilding Lives Initiative.

The award, formerly called the Audrey Nelson Community Development Achievement Award, is given each year as part of a national competition to identify and recognize exemplary uses of Community Development Block Grant funds which best address the needs of low-income families and neighborhoods.

Franklin County was recognized, along with the City of Columbus and National Church Residences on Friday, January 21, 2011, during the National Community Development Association's (NCDCA) Winter Legislative & Policy Meeting Awards Luncheon in Washington, D.C. The County was selected as a recipient of the award for supporting the Commons at Buckingham project, a 100 unit efficiency apartment community designed to house both low-income individuals and individuals who have experienced long-term homelessness.

"Franklin County is always interested in partnering to provide quality, affordable housing to low income individuals, families and senior citizens in our community," said Commissioner Marilyn Brown. "To date, this is the 7th project on which we've collaborated with National Church Residences representing the creation of 305 affordable, safe apartment units for local families and a total County contribution of nearly \$3.1 million."

"Our longstanding collaboration with NCR has assured the public safety and made our community better," said Commissioner Paula Brooks. "By both creating jobs and providing safe and decent housing we enhance our community's value."

"In today's economic environment, projects like this are only possible when state and local funders get involved too," said Commissioner John O'Grady. "These apartments are an excellent example of what can be accomplished when the community works together to build quality, affordable, apartment homes for our residents."

The Commons at Buckingham opened in July 2010 and is located in downtown Columbus.