

A MISSION THAT GOES
beyond housing

In residential real estate, they say it's all about location. As it turns out, that's also true for commercial real estate. You need to be where your customers are.

Hamilton Health Center in Harrisburg understands that well. But being where its customers are has been no easy feat. The center started in 1972 and initially worked out of a trailer. Today, it provides healthcare services out of five separate locations — certainly an improvement, but not the optimal situation. Services include medical and dental care; women's healthcare; services for the women, infants and children (WIC) program; and more.

Its clients include underinsured, uninsured, and insured adults and children, meaning it has to keep a close eye on its finances. Consolidating its operations was expected to cost a sizable \$21.5 million. Nevertheless, with a 29 percent increase in its number of patients during the past three years, customer demand was pushing the search for a solution.

Commonwealth Cornerstone Group (CCG), created by PHFA to be a nonprofit community development entity, is proud to be playing a role in the center's consolidation and expansion plans. CCG committed an \$8.1 million New Markets Tax Credit allocation that provides

Commonwealth Cornerstone Group (CCG) was established by PHFA in 2004 to make loans for the development or rehabilitation of real estate that can stimulate economic revitalization and help business development in underserved communities. During its first six years, CCG has received \$148 million in New Markets Tax Credit allocations and, as of June 30, 2011, has invested more than \$100 million to support strategic development in distressed areas. Hamilton Health Center in Harrisburg, led by CEO Jeannine Peterson, is a worthy recipient of assistance from CCG.

a portion of the financing necessary for the center to move forward with the first phase of its construction plans. An existing building in the city's rough-and-tumble Allison Hill neighborhood provides the right location and a sound structure to rehab into its much-needed new facility. Construction is now underway.

"It's been great working with Commonwealth Cornerstone Group to make this happen," says the center's CEO Jeannine Peterson. "We know the healthcare business, but construction is a new area for us. Commonwealth Cornerstone Group has certainly been helpful with that part of this project. Without them, we would not have been able to accomplish this."

Just what will the expanded and upgraded health center mean to residents in southcentral Pennsylvania? It will certainly mean improved medical care, including discounted pharmacy and laboratory services. But Peterson is quick to point out that the expanded facility will add healthcare and construction jobs to the local economy, too. Plus, its need for a wide range of supplies will bring more business to area firms. The positive ripple effect will benefit the entire capital region.

