

Portland Housing Bureau



Director's Message

November 2010

More than ever, housing needs in our community are increasing, as we continue to see the decline in public resources. Our staff and partners are well aware of the challenges that lie ahead, and we are bracing for challenging times.

Our housing finance team at the Portland Housing Bureau has been hard at work on a "Notice of Funding Availability" (NOFA) for affordable rental housing developments that consolidates local and federal resources to get money on the street as quickly as possible.

In this NOFA, \$7.9 million is available for affordable rental housing development. All projects must be targeted to renters whose incomes are 60% of median family income or below (or \$42,720 for a family of four).

PHB is looking for new construction or preservation projects either city-wide, or in the Lents Urban Renewal Area. To meet the City's business and workforce equity goals, all proposals must present a specific plan to hire women and people of color.

[Click here to learn more about the NOFA](#)

We hope to see you at the info session scheduled for Dec. 8. Our NOFA team will be on hand to answer questions about eligible projects, requirements, and other details.

Creating Home for Portlanders

Investing in opportunities: that's a critical part of PHB's efforts to provide homeownership opportunities for people breaking out of generational poverty. This month, the community celebrated the opening of two important homeownership projects in North Portland, both funded by PHB. Proud Ground's Woolsey Corner is a community of eight family-sized homes located in vibrant New Columbia. The homes are available to low- and moderate-income first-time homebuyers, and Proud Ground's land trust model ensures that the homes will remain affordable for many years to come.

We have heard from community partners the growing need for affordable homes in Portland that are suited for families. That is why we are proud of our investment in new townhomes offered by the Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives. PCRI celebrated the opening of four energy-efficient homes in the Portsmouth neighborhood. At 1,588 square feet a piece, the homes represent the largest single-family homes in PHB's portfolio.

See the photos: [Woolsey Corner](#) || [PCRI Exeter Fessenden](#)

Addressing Homelessness in Downtown Portland

On Nov. 10, the City Council heard from nonprofit leaders and community stakeholders about our latest approach to helping homeless people living on the streets in downtown Portland.

The Portland Housing Bureau received \$1 million in one-time general funds from the Portland City Council to relieve downtown homelessness, thanks to the leadership of Housing Commissioner Nick Fish and Mayor Sam Adams. Over the summer, Commissioner Fish and I convened a broad group of stakeholders to set priorities for how the money should be spent. We were fortunate to gain the wisdom and perspectives of many people who have a stake in the problem of homelessness: service providers, public safety officials, the business community, and our government partners.

The key question we sought to answer was: How do we help the most people really end their homelessness given the current economy and lessons learned from the local 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness? It soon became clear that the issue of downtown homelessness is best addressed. By helping people who are already using shelters or transitional housing make progress towards a permanent housing solution. In other words, we focused on relieving "bottlenecks" in various parts of the safety net that would allow all of us to serve more people. With these insights, PHB staff embarked on a competitive RFP process, to ensure that we're gathering the best thinking from people on the field.

We are proud of the collaboration that JOIN and six other community partners have proposed to eliminate bottlenecks in downtown shelters, and move people into permanent housing. The collaborative will get \$820,000 to ensure that people have the supports they need to become stable. New Avenues for Youth (NAFY) received \$180,000 to boost the Homeless Youth System, to help young people living on the street access stable housing. [Read more about these innovative approaches](#)

Welcome, Portland Housing Advisory Commission

The work we do on behalf of the community we serve is more impactful when we can bring together diverse voices at the table. We are so fortunate to have a group of strong, effective leaders as part of our inaugural Portland Housing Advisory Commission (PHAC). I am looking forward to working closely with our Commission, as they bring ideas, analysis, and perspectives to the table, as well as highlight opportunities for influence across a wide range of housing issues.

Members of the advisory group are: Jesse Beason, Proud Ground; Andrew Colas, Colas Construction; Rey España, Native American Youth and Family Center; Deborah Imse, Metro Multi-Family Housing Association; Marc Jolin, JOIN; Christine Lau, Asian Health & Service Center; Carter MacNichol, Shiels Obletz Johnsen, Inc.; Traci Manning, Central City Concern; Carmen Rubio, Latino Network; Tobias Washington, Investment banker (retired); Mark White, Powellhurst-Gilbert Neighborhood Association; and Brian Wilson, Kalberer Co.

In the midst of the City's budget season, our Commission has scheduled a number of upcoming meetings. Visit the [PHAC web page](#) for regular updates.

One-Night Homeless Street Count

On January 26-27, the Portland Housing Bureau will lead another Homeless Street Count, an effort to learn more about the individuals and families experiencing homelessness on a given night in Portland and Multnomah County. The street count captures a snapshot of those who are "unsheltered:" people who are sleeping outside, on the street, in a car or abandoned building.

The count provides important information about homelessness in our community and the need for services. The information we gather will help our bureau and policymakers better understand who experiences homelessness in our communities. Please consider volunteering for the January 2011 count.

To volunteer, email Zane Potter at zane.potter@portlandoregon.gov or call 503.823.4768.

To learn more about the street count, visit <http://www.portlandonline.com/phb/streetcount>

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